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**The Seventy-fourth annual meeting of the English Section  
of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association  
was held at the University of Saskatchewan  
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CANADIAN CATHOLIC HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

***HISTORICAL STUDIES***

*Historical Studies*, a publication of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association, features papers read at its annual conference. All articles are refereed, and are usually on the history of Catholicism in Canada or on topics having a connection with the Catholic Church in Canada.

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**Patricia E. Roy** is a professor emeritus of History at the University of Victoria. Her recent publications include *The Triumph of Citizenship: The Japanese and Chinese in Canada, 1941-67* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007) and, with John Herd Thompson, *British Columbia: Land of Promises* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2005). She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

## Editors' Foreword

We are pleased to present Volume 74 of *Historical Studies*, featuring papers presented at the 2007 annual meeting of the English Section of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association at the University of Saskatchewan. Papers presented at the 2007 conference but not published here for various reasons (either papers given without a view to publication or not offered to the editors) are listed separately on page 6.

Once again, all of the articles included in this edition of the journal have passed through a rigorous “double-blind” review process, meaning that they have been accepted on the recommendations of at least three assessors. We are indebted to all of the individuals whose cooperation in the writing, assessing and revising of these papers has made this edition of *Historical Studies* possible. The journal and the association continue to be grateful to Fr. Edward Jackman, O.P., Secretary General of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association and the Jackman Foundation for the generous support and encouragement that has made this, along with previous volumes, possible.

This volume contains a Historical Notes section, sometimes used in past volumes. Included as well are the submission guidelines for prospective authors which appeared in the last volume. As introduced in Volume 72, full-run back issues of the journal and a detailed bibliography are available for purchase through the Association, either in hard copy form or on CD. The Association continues to make selected articles from the previous years’ journal accessible on the CCHA homepage ([http://www.umanitoba.ca/colleges/st\\_pauls/ccha.html](http://www.umanitoba.ca/colleges/st_pauls/ccha.html)).

Dr. Indre Cuplinskas of Saint Joseph’s College, University of Alberta is the new Associate Editor. Saint Joseph’s College is providing Dr. Cuplinskas with some of the necessary materials to carry out her editorial duties for *Historical Studies*. We are grateful for this support.

Finally, the Editor is deeply appreciative of the work undertaken by her predecessors Richard Lebrun and Peter Meehan – splendid editorial role models. The new editorial team will continue to rely on their wisdom and advice.

Elizabeth W. McGahan  
Indre Cuplinskas

**Papers presented at the Annual Meeting**

University of Saskatchewan, 28 May – 29 May 2007

but not included in this volume:

**Keith Thor Carlson**, “Saskatchewan: A Re-appraisal of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Oblate-Aboriginal Relations: Oral History and Archival Documents in the Middle-ground of Memory”

**Michael Pomedli**, “Ojibwa and Christian Sources for William Whipple Warren’s Robust Moral Code”

**Elizabeth Smyth**, “Reading the Faith: Instructional Texts in Ontario Catholic Schools”

**Jon Mays**, “A Crime Against Moral and Divine Law: Catholic Protests Against Eugenic Sterilization Legislation in Manitoba During the 1930s”

**Glenda Lynna Anne Tibe Bonifacio**, “Gender and the Care Divide: Filipino Catholics in Canada, 1992-2005”

**Glenn Wright**, “Father Andrew MacDonell (1870-1958): A Scottish Benedictine and His Passion for Canada”

**Christine Lei**, “Mount Mary Academy: The Sisters, Servants of Mary Immaculate (SMMI)”

**Magdalen Stengler, OSU**, “Tapestry of Change: Ursulines of Prelate, 1919-2007”

**Heidi MacDonald**, “Coming of Age in the Convent during the Great Depression”

**Susan Neylon**, “John Webster Grant’s Contribution to Catholic Historiography”

**John H. Young**, “John Webster Grant as Church Leader”

**Paul Dekar**, “John Webster Grant’s Contribution to Protestant Religious Historiography”

**Robert P. Cole**, “Researching Prairie Church History Online: Materials related to the Catholic Church on the Peel’s Prairie Provinces Web Site”

**Chris Hackett**, “Realizing the Digital Dream and Avoiding the Nightmare: Looking at the Impact of Digital Repositories on the Study of the History of Religion in Western Canada”

**Elizabeth McGahan**, “Governance and Mission within the Sisters of Charity: Chapter Reports as Primary Sources”

**Teresita Kambeitz, OSU**, “Shaping a Gentle Province: the Role of Catholic Sisters in Saskatchewan”

## “The Pirates of the Penitentiary”: Religion and Politics in late 19<sup>th</sup> Century British Columbia

Patricia E. ROY

In April 1895, amateur singers in New Westminster, B.C. presented the popular Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, “The Pirates of Penzance.” The New Westminster *British Columbian* suggested local librettists could “produce a new, political, opera-bouffe on ‘The Fitzsimmons Re-instatement.’” It explained:

We cannot just at present suggest an appropriate alliterative title, unless ‘Pirates of the Penitentiary’ would do. There might be a good deal about ‘orphans,’ too. In this case, the ‘pirates,’ instead of working upon the humane rule of exempting orphans from their depredations, might go the ‘Penzance’ marauders one better by making it a canonical virtue to steal and rob on behalf of the ‘orphans’ at every opportunity; and, incidentally, the ‘pirates,’ or, at least, the ‘Pirate King,’ in this new opera, ought to be an ‘orphan’ himself, so that he might be doing a virtuous and commendable act whenever he broke the eighth commandment.<sup>1</sup>

Approximately fifty orphans resided at what was popularly known as the Good Shepherd Orphanage recently established by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd at a site adjacent to the penitentiary;<sup>2</sup> the ‘Pirate King’ was James Fitzsimmons, the deputy warden. Despite several inquiries and a Royal Commission, it is difficult to tell who bore false witness.

The story illustrates the importance of religion in Canadian politics and government in the late nineteenth century. Immediately after Prime Minister Mackenzie Bowell told the Senate of his latest plan to resolve

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Thank you to the editor and the anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments.

<sup>1</sup> New Westminster *British Columbian*, 26 April 1895.

<sup>2</sup> *The Month*, January 1893, 57. Thank you to Jacqueline Gresko for information about the orphanage.

the Manitoba School Question in July 1895,<sup>3</sup> Senator Thomas McInnes of British Columbia introduced an issue without “politics, religion or race.” He excluded politics because the B.C. Members of the House of Commons and Senate agreed on it; he excluded religion and race (a reference to French and English) because most of the principals were Irish Roman Catholics.<sup>4</sup> Contrary to McInnes, who read the short report of the Royal Commission to Investigate the Administration of [the] New Westminster Penitentiary into the Senate debates, religion, in the form of intervention by the Catholic clergy across the country, had a role. Catholics were about a quarter of B.C.’s population nevertheless they had little political influence since many were aborigines who could not vote.<sup>5</sup> Catholics as a whole had little influence in the province. Thus, the provincial government could, for example, ignore requests by the province’s bishops for support for Catholic schools but anti-Catholicism was not rife: several Catholics were prominent politically and although both the “pirate” and the orphans were Roman Catholics, in the controversy surrounding the penitentiary, the local press and politicians focussed on mismanagement rather than religion.<sup>6</sup>

### Dramatis personae

As part of the Terms of Union by which B.C. entered Confederation in 1871, Ottawa agreed to build a federal penitentiary there.<sup>7</sup> As the building neared completion, would-be wardens applied for the job but neither they nor their supporters mentioned religion.<sup>8</sup> Arthur H. McBride, the man chosen, was well-qualified. He had served in the Irish militia, was colonial gaoler in

<sup>3</sup> The Manitoba School Question began in 1890 when Manitoba withdrew financial support from Roman Catholic schools despite a guarantee for their support in both the Manitoba Act, 1870 and the British North America Act. When the courts ruled that Manitoba must support Catholic schools, the province refused. The Bowell government tried to force through remedial legislation to restore funding to the schools and in so doing tore itself apart. Ironically, Wilfrid Laurier, the Liberal leader and a French Canadian and Catholic, won the 1896 election by defending Manitoba’s right to establish its own school policies.

<sup>4</sup> Canada, Senate, *Debates* [hereafter CSD], 8 July 1895, 587.

<sup>5</sup> In 1881, Catholics were 28.6% of the population; Anglicans, 22.1%, and Presbyterians, 11.6%. In 1891, Roman Catholics were 21.8%; Anglicans, 24.7%; and Presbyterians, 16.0%. Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 383.

<sup>6</sup> For a brief discussion of the bishops’ petitions see Vincent J. McNally, *The Lord’s Distant Vineyard: A History of the Oblates and the Catholic Community in British Columbia* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2000), 201-203. McNally notes that Anglican Bishop George Hills favoured separate schools.

<sup>7</sup> McBride and others had applied for the wardenship in 1872. Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Department of Justice Records (hereafter, DJJust), v. 57, f. 1883-385 and v. 29, f. 1873-215.

<sup>8</sup> The letters are in DJJust, v. 40 (MFT4328).

Victoria for two years before taking charge of the colonial/provincial gaol at New Westminster in 1870, and had testimonials from many of the province's leading political figures and the endorsement of James Cunningham, a Methodist from Ireland, former mayor of New Westminster and its Liberal M.P. from 1874 until he resigned in January 1878.<sup>9</sup>

As news leaked out that McBride would likely become warden, B.C.'s three senators (all Conservatives), claiming to speak for four of the province's six Members of the House of Commons, reminded the Justice Minister that they favoured another candidate. They conceded McBride's good work as provincial gaoler but doubted if "he could satisfactorily discharge" the "far more responsible" duties at the Penitentiary. The senators agreed that the government should consult the local Member about appointments in his district but this one had more than local interest.<sup>10</sup> In May 1878, before a federal election returned the Conservatives to power, McBride's appointment was approved by order-in-council. Both New Westminster newspapers welcomed this based on his "first-class record" at the gaol.<sup>11</sup>

McBride never had full authority as warden. Initially a locally-based part-time Assistant Inspector of Penitentiaries, Dr. W. Wymond Walkem, a medical doctor and brother of Premier George Walkem, oversaw his work. Dr. Walkem resigned effective 1 January 1881 and was not replaced but later complained to James George Moylan, the Inspector of Penitentiaries and head of the federal penitentiary service, that McBride repeatedly rejected instructions to confine convicts to their cells when they were not employed, explaining that the "Inspector has directed him [not] to do so."<sup>12</sup>

Moylan plays a leading role in this story. A native of Maynooth, Ireland, he came to Canada in 1856 as professor of Classics and English literature at the Jesuit College in Guelph. Two years later, he became editor

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<sup>9</sup> Information is from testimonials for McBride in DJust, v. 29, file 1872-914. With his wife, Mary D'Arcy, a Roman Catholic from southern Ireland, he then had four children, all of whom were baptized in the Anglican Church although Arthur was a Presbyterian. A colonial baptismal register records the baptism of a daughter of Arthur McBride and Mary Dorsey in St. Andrew's Roman Catholic Church in Victoria. "Dorsey" may be a corruption of D'Arcy. There is no further evidence of this child who may have died in infancy.

<sup>10</sup> DJust, v. 40, file 1878-576, R.W.W. Carrall, W.J. Macdonald, C.F. Cornwall, and F.J. Roscoe, M.P. to Minister of Justice, 18 March 1878. A year later, Cornwall, Macdonald and Edgar Dewdney again wrote to the Secretary of State championing Capt. Layton to replace McBride who, they claimed, was "quite unfitted" for the position. DJust, v. 43, file 1879-479, Carrall, et.al. to Secretary of State, 12 May 1879.

<sup>11</sup> New Westminster *Mainland Guardian*, 14 August 1878; *Dominion Provincial Herald* quoted in *Victoria Colonist*, 13 June 1878.

<sup>12</sup> DJust, v. 50, file 1881-1076, Walkem to Moylan, 18 February 1881. Walkem was still paying penitentiary accounts at the end of April 1881.

and proprietor of the *Canadian Freeman*, a defender of the cause of Irish Catholics. After breaking with the Reformers because they did not support Separate Schools, Moylan became a strong supporter of John A. Macdonald and the Conservatives. His reward was an appointment to the Board of Directors of Penitentiaries. The Alexander Mackenzie government abolished the board but made him inspector of penitentiaries. His biographer described Moylan as “the most powerful voice in Canada in penitentiary reform and administration” but notes that ministers of justice made all major staff appointments and frequently ignored his suggestions for reform. Moylan, with a reputation for being “officious and arbitrary, was used to getting his own way.”<sup>13</sup> He was superannuated in January 1895 at age 69, but events in New Westminster, not just age, help to explain his retirement.

Moylan came to New Westminster in 1878 to assist McBride set up the institution and sent James Fitzsimmons as chief keeper with instructions to consult with the warden and to administer the new penitentiary along the same lines as the one in Kingston, Ontario. Fitzsimmons, a Roman Catholic native of Ireland, had served in various capacities at Kingston since 1858. Moylan’s first report from British Columbia praised Fitzsimmons’ “practical knowledge of farming, draining and fencing” and “his great experience in regard to the rules and discipline.” He recommended a salary increase and a rise in rank to that of deputy warden.<sup>14</sup> Thomas R. McInnes, the Independent M.P. for New Westminster, agreed.<sup>15</sup> In their annual reports to Moylan, McBride and the two chaplains, especially Father E.M.J. Horris, an Oblate of Mary Immaculate (OMI), often commended Fitzsimmons as a “jack of all trades” in repairing the drains, clearing the grounds, and cultivating the fields, a point echoed in the local Catholic magazine, *The Month*.<sup>16</sup>

### Act I: Rumours of Mismanagement

While Moylan received reports at least annually from the warden, the chaplains, and other officers, he ignored repeated hints from McBride and others of problems with discipline and requests that he visit.<sup>17</sup> In 1883, almost five years after Moylan’s last personal inspection, McBride remarked,

<sup>13</sup> Peter Oliver, “James George Moylan,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, XIII (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 743; P.B. Waite, *The Man from Halifax: Sir John Thompson, Prime Minister* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 189.

<sup>14</sup> Inspector of Penitentiaries, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1889, xxx; *Penitentiaries Report*, 1880, 18 (The Inspector’s Annual Report was published in Canada, *Sessional Papers* for the appropriate year. Hereafter, it will be referred to as *Penitentiaries Report*).

<sup>15</sup> DJJust, v. 36, file 1880-390, T.R. McInnes to Minister of Justice, 4 March 1880.

<sup>16</sup> *The Month*, January 1893, 16.

<sup>17</sup> DJJust, v. 55, file 1883-156, E.M.J. Horris to Alexander Campbell, 9 January 1883.

“There are many things I would like to consult with you about and that would be almost impossible to clearly explain to you in writing.”<sup>18</sup> Moylan ignored problems. On one report of conflict between the warden and “certain officers,” he noted: “This is a mistake. The papers were unofficial and do not refer to our difficulty between officers at British Columbia. There is no such difficulty.” He advised cancelling the entry.<sup>19</sup> Playing with files in Ottawa did not solve problems in distant B.C.

Some problems were public knowledge. In 1881, McBride, supported by Mr. Justice Grey, publicly called for an inquiry after an inmate charged that Catholic convicts were better treated than others. A reader of the *Mainland Guardian* called this only a rumour as the warden, “a highly respectable man,” was a Protestant while his deputy, “an excellent officer,” was a Catholic. Nevertheless, in December 1882, the Department of Justice commissioned J.W. Trutch, a former lieutenant-governor and dominion agent in the province, to investigate. Trutch invited anyone with information to testify but the hearings were closed to the public and only inmates and staff appeared. According to the *British Columbian*, the investigation found little basis for the convict’s allegations.<sup>20</sup>

Convicts, however, continued to harp on the theme. Several years later, an unhappy ex-convict, who claimed to be a Catholic, denied that “Catholicks [sic] were better treated than Protestens”[sic] since he had not been allowed to attend the penitentiary school. McBride denied that any “convict is better or worse treated” on account of religion; Father Horris noted the complainant was only nominally Catholic, attended Mass only because he was required to do so, and was dismissed from the school for impertinence.<sup>21</sup>

What attracted public attention was the trial of convict O’Connor for attempted escape. In a sixty-three minute long speech, O’Connor told the jury of many cruelties to inmates. He, for example, had been held in irons for four months in a cell next to three or four “howling mad men” while the warden awaited permission from Ottawa to have him tried for attempted escape. O’Connor complained that he “could scarcely ever get a word with the warden, the only officer who ever had a kind word for the convicts.” McBride, he alleged, “had no authority”; Fitzsimmons, who “was always rough and exacting except to his own pets,” magnified “every trivial offence. . . into something dreadful and punished accordingly,” ran

<sup>18</sup> A. McBride to J.B. Moylan, 2 July 1883, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1884, 118.

<sup>19</sup> DJust, v. 60, file 1884-680, Inspector of Penitentiaries, Ottawa, Memo, 28/29 May 1884.

<sup>20</sup> *Mainland Guardian*, 13 January 1883; *British Columbian*, 13 and 16 December 1882.

<sup>21</sup> DJust, v. 64, file 1886-262, McBride to Moylan, 10 July 1885 and Horris to Moylan, 10 July 1885.

the institution. O'Connor claimed that since he was raised as a Catholic he had to attend Catholic services where Fitzsimmons and the chaplain threatened ex-communication to those who refused Confession. Mr. Justice John Foster McCreight said that the complaints did not justify an attempt to escape; the jury found O'Connor guilty. McCreight added nine months to his sentence.<sup>22</sup>

During the trial, McBride admitted that prisoners who spoke to Trutch in 1882 did not have counsel and that he had not seen Trutch's report. The Grand Jury, concerned about his comment that seven years had elapsed between Moylan's visits, noted that Moylan spent only one day at the penitentiary during a recent visit. Repeating sentiments expressed in 1882, it called such neglect "entirely inconsistent with good government, and exceedingly unfair to the inhabitants of this province." It recommended periodic inspections by the Grand Jury, the appointment of a provincial inspector, and an "immediate investigation" into the accuracy of O'Connor's charges to provide a remedy or clear officials.<sup>23</sup>

On his visit, Moylan had seemed oblivious to problems. He commended Fitzsimmons for being "so zealous, competent and faithful"<sup>24</sup> and the "great success" of the financial administration of the penitentiary.<sup>25</sup> The accountant was W.H. Keary, an Irish-born Roman Catholic, who joined the service in 1884 as storekeeper and accountant. Moylan also praised Keary's "assiduous management" of the school, a sentiment echoed by Rev. Robert Jamieson, the Protestant chaplain.<sup>26</sup>

"Rumours" of "a great many irregularities" persisted. Late in 1888, two former inmates circulated a "fly sheet" with the "vilest slanders and most barefaced falsehoods" against the administration. A few months later, the *British Columbian* urged: "If half the stories" about the penitentiary "are true, an investigation" by a special commission outside of the Penitentiary Service "is necessary." In April, T.R. McInnes, now a senator, told the Senate the "well founded" "rumours" needed investigation.<sup>27</sup> Yet, when Moylan asked the Kennedy Brothers, publishers of the *Columbian*, for evidence, they merely repeated their call for an investigation. Instead of having a

<sup>22</sup> *British Columbian*, 18 and 21 November 1885.

<sup>23</sup> *Mainland Guardian*, 28 June 1882; *Columbian*, 21 November 1885.

<sup>24</sup> Moylan to John Thompson, 25 November 1885, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1885, xx.

<sup>25</sup> Moylan to Thompson, 31 December 1888, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1888, xxv.

<sup>26</sup> Keary's predecessor, W.H. Falding, fulfilled a similar triple role. Moylan to Thompson, 31 December 1888, *Annual Report*, 1888, xxvi. The school operated only during the lunch hour and mainly served Chinese and Indians who studied elementary reading, writing and arithmetic.

<sup>27</sup> *British Columbian*, 8 February 1889; CSD, 24 April 1889, 580.

special commission investigate, Moylan spent August and September 1889 in New Westminster. Through advertisements, approved by the Minister of Justice, McBride invited anyone with a complaint to confer with Moylan. No outsider, except Anglican Bishop A.W. Sillitoe who had long-standing grievances about the provision of religious services to Anglican inmates, appeared. Senator McInnes, to whom a special invitation was issued, was out of town; the Kennedy Brothers considered their duty done by calling for an investigation.

Thus, Moylan confined his inquiry to examining staff members under oath and to interviewing eight convicts (who were only concerned with pardons and their diet) and Bishop Sillitoe. Two staff members referred to reports of Fitzsimmons overstepping his authority. Patrick B. Curran, a guard, told of Fitzsimmons countermanding McBride's order that an insane Chinese convict should attend Catholic service. McBride explained that Fitzsimmons and the chaplain decided who should not attend chapel. Under questioning, Curran admitted that the warden was capable of maintaining "his position and authority" and recanted a story of guards roughly treating a violent, noisy, and filthy inmate. Chaplain Jamieson said that some Catholic convicts who joined the Protestant chapel believed that Fitzsimmons treated them poorly but, given their characters, he had no confidence in their claims. Fitzsimmons admitted having been accused of favouring Catholic prisoners but, in a statement corroborated by McBride, denied that that "ever entered my mind." McBride's annual reports referred to Fitzsimmons in glowing terms.<sup>28</sup>

Bishop Sillitoe, a frequent visitor, thought the warden was "too much influenced by the Deputy Warden." Though admitting that the complainants were among "the worst men" he had ever met, he noted "justly or unjustly" they blamed most of their "hardships" on the relationship between the warden and his deputy.

Some guards reported that Dr. Loftus McInnes, who had recently died, had asked them about the penitentiary management, presumably on request from his brother, the senator. Both McBride and Fitzsimmons blamed the senator's hostility on McBride's rejection as "unfit" of several individuals whom McInnes had proposed for jobs when the penitentiary opened. Rev. Frederick J. Guertin, OMI, the new Catholic chaplain, pointed to McBride's appointment of Dr. W.A.D. Smith rather than Dr. McInnes as surgeon in

<sup>28</sup> For example, McBride to Moylan, 2 July 1886 and Moylan to Thompson, 20 December 1886, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1886, 88 and xii; McBride to Moylan, 1 July 1887, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1887, 84, McBride to Moylan, 2 July 1888, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1888, 108. The other material in the previous paragraphs draws from *Penitentiaries Report*, 1889, *passim*.

1887. Father Guertin thought the remarks of the Senator and of the *British Columbian* were unjustified and that a former guard with a grievance had invented derogatory stories against Fitzsimmons and related them to the senator.

Apart from hinting that Fitzsimmons occasionally overstepped his authority, the staff thought the penitentiary was well run and they knew of no irregularities. Even Thomas McInnes, the steward and the senator's nephew, saw no foundation for the charges. Moylan concluded, "everything goes on smoothly and satisfactorily. If there be any of the abuses and irregularities alleged, the officers must get the credit of not only concealing them to perfection, but also of being in perfect accord in so doing."<sup>29</sup>

Moylan was so satisfied (or so reluctant to make the long journey) that he only returned in October 1892 despite McBride's requests that he do so. At that time he found no evidence of "any laxity of discipline or falling off in the general administration" but advised that given McBride's poor health and for unexplained "other causes," he should be superannuated. McBride immediately informed his friends. Problems arising from McBride's "blundering" with his medical certificates - or perhaps as Senator McInnes implied, the reluctance of doctors to certify him as physically unfit - delayed action and allowed a controversy to develop over his successor.<sup>30</sup>

## Act II: Mismanagement revealed; the orphans benefit

Who would succeed McBride? A contest began between supporters of Fitzsimmons and of Arthur Moresby, McBride's successor as provincial gaoler. Gordon Corbould, the Conservative M.P. for New Westminster,<sup>31</sup> asked Justice Minister John Thompson to do nothing about a replacement before consulting the B.C. Members. Thompson thought Fitzsimmons deserved the promotion and, though local Members were consulted on important new appointments, "we do not ask for a nomination" in the case of promotions. Yet, he added, he would be glad to hear of any reason not to appoint Fitzsimmons. Corbould responded that the appointment would be "unpopular" but he would explain in person and not by letter. Thompson agreed to wait to see the B.C. Members.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Unless otherwise specified, all of the information in the preceding four paragraphs is from Moylan to Thompson 20 December 1889, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1890, xxv-xlviii.

<sup>30</sup> Moylan to C.H. Tupper, 29 April 1895, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1894, xxii; JTP, #20633, Gordon Corbould to Thompson, 26 October 1892; Thomas McInnes, CSD, 8 July 1895, 599; JTP, #21733, Moylan to Thompson, 19 January 1893.

<sup>31</sup> McBride's son, Richard, had articled with Corbould.

<sup>32</sup> JTP, #20673, Corbould to Thompson, 26 October 1892; JTP Letter Book, (hereafter JTPLB) Thompson to Corbould, 7 November 1892; JTP, #20817, Corbould to

Late in the winter of 1893, apparently without consulting Moylan, but probably after conversing with the B.C. Members, Thompson sent G.L. Foster, the Penitentiary Service's accountant, to examine the books and "inform himself in other matters of interest" because of much "disgusting" information and "many rumours" of irregularities including friction notably between Fitzsimmons and Keary.<sup>33</sup>

Foster discovered the "miraculous" disappearance of pork and mutton, of grain (possibly to feed the guards' own poultry), and bread; "extreme irregularities" in the officers' failure to use requisitions for supplies; the employment of guards on work outside the institution; and the use of building materials by the orphanage. Thompson was disappointed by "so much confirmation of the statements afloat as regards this Institution, and . . . so much need of radical change." He called for the dismissal of Guard Patrick Finnigan, who allegedly spied on Foster, and since there seemed to be "dishonesty as well as neglect," he ordered the warden, deputy warden, and officers to "pay up immediately" on what they owed for supplies. Moylan sent Thompson some "receipts" from Fitzsimmons "for money paid to the Accountant, mainly for charitable purposes."<sup>34</sup>

Moylan accused Foster of making public statements in B.C. that tended "to cast a slur upon and belittle my official position." He blamed "malice, bigotry and uncharitableness [sic]" for the gossip that Fitzsimmons "improperly and dishonestly" gave penitentiary property to the orphanage. Any such gifts, Moylan asserted, were made with the warden's consent, proper requisitions and bookkeeping entries, and that Fitzsimmons paid "to the last farthing for every article with which these good ladies may have been accommodated by the prison."<sup>35</sup>

Meanwhile, the supporters of Moresby, a member of the Church of England, campaigned for this "excellent and capable officer" and "poured" "a series of charges" against Fitzsimmons into the Minister of Justice's office. Moylan alleged that Moresby was a "hard drinker" and that Fitzsimmons was as well educated as McBride or Moresby. Moylan, however, was losing credibility; Thompson reminded him that it had been his duty to make regular inspections of the penitentiary.<sup>36</sup> Earlier, he criticized Fitzsimmons

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Thompson, 14 November 1892; JTPLB, Thompson to Davie, 19 January 1893.

<sup>33</sup> JTPLB, Thompson to Moylan, 29 April 1893. (Part of this letter from Paris is indecipherable); JTPLB, Thompson, Memo for Inspector of Penitentiaries, 4 November 1893; Mackenzie Bowell in CSD, 8 July 1895, 604.

<sup>34</sup> JTPLB, Thompson, Memo for Inspector of Penitentiaries, 4 November 1893; JTP, #24233, Moylan to Thompson, 20 December 1893.

<sup>35</sup> JTP, #22592, Moylan to Thompson, 15 May 1893.

<sup>36</sup> JTP, #21718, George A. Walkem to Thompson, 20 December 1892; *Penitentiaries Report*, 1895, xiii; Moylan to C.H. Tupper, 29 April 1895; JTP, #21477, Moylan to

for writing “to all the clergy of his acquaintance to solicit the place for him.” The clergy may have believed that as a Catholic, Thompson would heed their pleas but Thompson’s priority was the good management of the penitentiary. In fact, Fitzsimmons probably only approached the Irish-born Rev. James McGuckin, OMI, former pastor at St. Peter’s Cathedral in New Westminster and now rector of the University of Ottawa, who also referred to Moresby’s “inveterate habit of drinking.”<sup>37</sup>

Moylan admitted being responsible for “clerical interference.” After learning of efforts “to force Moresby into the wardenship” he “did not think it amiss to contact the clergy.” He cited reports from several Oblates of “immoralities” involving Moresby and an Indian woman and quoted a letter from Judge McCreight, a convert to Catholicism, suggesting that Moresby was unfit to be warden.<sup>38</sup> That opinion, said Moylan, was “shared by all respectable and intelligent citizens” of New Westminster and Vancouver, “outside the Orange and Freemasons lodges, to both which, I am informed, Moresby belongs.” In their letters to Thompson, several of the clergy (probably drawing on information provided by Moylan) referred to this conflict between Catholics and the Orange Order and Freemasons. According to Father George Donckele, Roman Catholic Bishop John Nicholas Lemmens of Victoria believed “the bigots of New Westminster” were pressing Thompson on behalf of Moresby and that Corbould had a grudge against Fitzsimmons. Roman Catholic Bishop Alexander Macdonell

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Thompson, 29 December 1892; JTP, #21733, Moylan to Thompson, 19 January 1893; JTPLB, Thompson to Moylan, 5 and 19 September 1893. In his annual report, Moylan accused the surgeon Dr. W.A.D. Smith of meddling by complaining to him and not the warden about serving porridge and the timing of meals. He indirectly chastised McBride for not acceding to Keary’s request to shorten the lunch hour to allow more than twenty minutes a day for schooling. (Moylan to Thompson, 9 October 1893, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1893, ix).

<sup>37</sup> Biographical detail on Rev. Fr. McGuckin is from Jacqueline Gresko, “James Maria McGuckin,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, XIII ((Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 641-642. McGuckin is credited with bringing Mr. Justice McCreight into the Roman Catholic Church.

Thompson to Moylan, 29 April 1893, JTPLB (This is handwritten and partly indecipherable); JTP, #21486, J. McGuckin to Thompson, 3 January 1893.

<sup>38</sup> McCreight was born in Northern Ireland, the son of a Church of Ireland clergyman. He trained as a lawyer and after a sojourn in Australia arrived in Victoria in 1860 where he was active at the Anglican Christ Church Cathedral and in the Masonic order. He became a Catholic in 1883. He was elected as a member for Victoria in the first Legislative Assembly. Lieutenant-Governor J.W. Trutch chose him as the first premier but he resigned late in 1872 after losing a vote of confidence. He was appointed to the provincial Supreme Court in 1880 and served until he left for England in 1897. (Tina Loo, “John Foster McCreight,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, XIV (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 681-2.)

of Alexandria blamed opposition to Fitzsimmons on the fact that he was “an Irish Roman Catholic.”<sup>39</sup>

Moylan, who claimed that Corbould’s main objection was based on religion, attributed Corbould’s loss in an 1889 provincial by-election to the lack of Catholic support and his federal victory in 1891 to Fitzsimmons’ work in getting him the “Catholic vote.” Given the paucity of Catholic voters and Corbould’s winning of almost triple the votes of his Liberal opponent, the claim is not convincing. More plausible is Moylan’s contention that Corbould turned against Fitzsimmons for rejecting a proposed new site for the penitentiary on the south side of the river where Corbould supposedly had large land holdings.<sup>40</sup>

Some letters favouring Fitzsimmons noted his suitability but without enthusiasm. Roman Catholic Bishop Paul Durieu of New Westminster noted his good work in developing the grounds. Not to appoint him, the Bishop argued, “would be a great injustice” and “grievously offend” his many friends. A Jesuit, Lewis Drummond at the college in St. Boniface, Manitoba, who had met Fitzsimmons, described him as having “sober and highly moral” qualities not shared by “the principal Protestant seeker of the office.” More conciliatory was Mr. Justice Theodore Davie, a former premier and convert to Catholicism, who thought that Moresby, the “best police officer” in the provincial service, was “already well provided for,” so the wardenship would not be a promotion and would deprive Fitzsimmons of a “just reward.” Roman Catholic Archbishop Thomas Duhamel of Ottawa simply asserted that Fitzsimmons deserved the promotion.<sup>41</sup>

Moylan continued to lobby for Fitzsimmons, an “exemplary Catholic” and “victim of a found and vile conspiracy.” He averred that a “searching investigation” would reveal “no dishonesty” on his part. He quoted the Oblates as saying that the chief plotter was W.H. Keary who had favoured Fitzsimmons for the wardenship in anticipation of becoming the deputy. When Foster implied that he would take over as warden with Fitzsimmons as his deputy, Keary and three guards, McInnes, Quilty, and Walker and

<sup>39</sup> JTP, #22592, Moylan to Thompson, 15 May 1893; JTP, #21417, Moylan to Thompson, 29 December 1892; JTP, #21468, L.C. P. Fox OMI to Thompson, 2 January 1893; JTP, #21638, G. Donckele to D.W. Gordon, M.P., 16 January 1893; JTP, #21688, George Donckele to D.W. Gordon, M.P., 16 January 1893; JTP, #21702, Alexander Macdonell, Bishop of Alexandria (eastern Ontario) to J.J. Curran (solicitor general), 18 January 1893.

<sup>40</sup> JTP, #21417, Moylan to Thompson, 29 December 1892.

<sup>41</sup> JTP, #21855, Bishop Paul Durieu to Thompson, 7 January 1893; JTP, #21555 Lewis Drummond, SJ to Thompson, 6 January 1893; JTP, #21066, Theodore Davie to Thompson, 10 January 1893; JTP, #21625, Thomas Duhamel to Thompson, 11 January 1893.

ex-guard Wiggins turned against Fitzsimmons. Indeed, in November 1893, the *Columbian* quoted “a prominent Irish Roman Catholic,” likely Keary, as saying that most local Catholics thought Moresby a better man than Fitzsimmons.<sup>42</sup>

Corbould continued to report problems, of half the guards “acting as detectives on the other half,” of Fitzsimmons having convicts spy on guards who were not his friends, and of penitentiary property being misappropriated. Later, he said that McBride accepted Fitzsimmons’ instructions not to confirm the permanent appointment of McPherson, the probationary tailoring instructor, because McPherson refused to “be made a tool of by the Deputy Warden.” Corbould called for an investigation as did Bishop Sillitoe who wanted a “thorough and drastic reorganization” as he wondered how the “condition of things could have lasted so long without some catastrophe.”<sup>43</sup>

The controversy now attracted national interest. The Toronto *Globe* suggested that Thompson had accepted the advice of the hierarchy to appoint Fitzsimmons but cabinet overruled him because the B.C. Members, especially Corbould, had accused Fitzsimmons of using penitentiary supplies for himself, church institutions and friends. “One thing is certain,” said the *Columbian* in commenting on the *Globe* report, “if half the stories that have been told for some years about the B.C. Penitentiary management are true, a great deal too much religion in theory, with about an equal lack in practise, has been mixed up with the conduct of the institution.” It called for a new warden and deputy. Corbould, fearing the Grits would make political capital, urged Thompson to change the management or investigate.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> JTP, #24233, Moylan to Thompson, 20 December 1893. If the story is correct, there was no ethnic or religious conflict: Keary was an Irish Roman Catholic; Quilty, a Canadian Roman Catholic; McInnes, a Canadian-born Methodist; Walker, an English Episcopalian; and Wiggins, an Irish Episcopalian. A short time later, Moylan, citing prison chaplain Father Morgan as his source, claimed that McInnes was guilty of insubordination. The blurry letter on microfilm seems to accuse someone, possibly McInnes, of being drunk while on the penitentiary grounds. (JTP, #24813, Moylan to Thompson, 30 January 1894). In a letter to Thompson, probably written by Keary, Quilty and Blacksmith instructor A. Coutts denied any dissatisfaction but said they had long “been AWARE OF IRREGULARITIES [caps in original] carried on by the Deputy Warden with the full knowledge of the Warden” but thought it “none of their business to report their superior officers.” (The letter, written on 10 February, is quoted in *Colonist*, 9 June 1894); *Columbian*, 11 November 1893.

<sup>43</sup> JTP, #23234, Corbould to Thompson, 23 September 1893; JTP, #23542, Corbould to Thompson, 19 October 1893; JTP, #2541, Corbould to Thompson, 10 March 1894; JTP, #24065, Sillitoe to Thompson, 2 December 1893.

<sup>44</sup> *Columbian*, 8 November 1893. The *Globe* story appeared on 31 October 1893. JTP, #25106, Corbould to Thompson, 10 March 1894. On 30 March 1894, Mulock asked for the return of copies of all charges and investigations made at the Kingston and B.C.

That may have led the government to release Foster's voluminous report. It confirmed many rumours. The story of Mr. Justice McCreight's horse that was "in the penitentiary for many years, not to punish the animal, but that he should get his keep at the public expense" intrigued the press. Another news item observed, "dissension and back-biting, jobbery, and alleged stealing seem to have been the rule." Within the week, Thompson instructed Foster to return to New Westminster and take charge as acting warden while a Royal Commission under Mr. Justice Drake of the Supreme Court of B.C. investigated. At the same time, he relieved McBride and Fitzsimmons of their duties pending the inquiry. Fitzsimmons was not allowed to remove any papers, and Mr. Justice Drake ordered him to leave the premises after he allegedly spoke to guards who were expected to testify. Thompson was unhappy but agreed that the judge's orders must be obeyed. Drake had already rebuked acting chaplain Father William Morgan for attempting to influence Mr. Justice McCreight to say that Fitzsimmons was innocent in the matter of the horse.<sup>45</sup>

Foster found the building "disgracefully dirty" and his work "far from pleasant." He reminded the staff of discipline, warned that the Penitentiaries Act provided that anyone who spied on other officers would be dismissed, and advised them to resign if they could not serve him loyally.<sup>46</sup> His appointment of Keary as acting deputy warden<sup>47</sup> angered Moylan who thought him "not a proper person" because of "serious charges" against him.<sup>48</sup> Thompson agreed that Keary should not have been appointed because "he was so thoroughly involved in the complications of past years" and asked Foster to insure that Keary did not act "aggressively" towards Fitzsimmons as he was reportedly doing.<sup>49</sup>

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Penitentiaries, the evidence, associated correspondence, and any other documents "relating to any alleged irregularities in connection with the management of the institutions since 1891." (Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, (hereafter *HCD*), 30 March 1894, 451).

<sup>45</sup> Toronto *Globe*, 16 May 1894; *Colonist*, 9 June 1894; *HCD*, 24 April 1895, 204-205; JTP, #27034, Moylan, Memo for the Deputy Minister, 28 June 1894; JTP, #26785, Foster to Thompson, 17 July 1894; JTPLB, Thompson to G.L. Foster, 5 July 1894; *Columbian*, 23 June 1894. The letter is printed in *CSD*, 8 July 1895, 591.

<sup>46</sup> JTP, #26707, Foster to Stewart, 19 June 1894; *Columbian*, 27 June 1894.

<sup>47</sup> *Columbian*, 22 May and 5 and 8 June 1894. Foster also reinstated McInnes who had been earlier suspended for being absent without leave. (JTP, #26785, Moylan to the Deputy Minister, 28 June 1894).

<sup>48</sup> JTP, #26785, Moylan, memo for the Deputy Minister, 28 June 1894. Moylan recommended Adam Jackson, an Australian-born Episcopalian as temporary deputy warden if such a position were required.

<sup>49</sup> JTPLB, Thompson to G.L. Foster, 5 July 1894. Foster replied, "With regard to your idea that Mr. Keary has acted in an oppressive manner towards Mr. Fitzsimmons from what I have observed I cannot say that he has acted more so towards Mr. Fitzsimmons than the latter has toward Mr. Keary." (JTP, #27034, Foster to Thompson, 17 July 1894).

Much of Foster's first six weeks in New Westminster was spent attending the Royal Commission into Penitentiary Affairs that was investigating its past management and the charges against the officers. Few attended the public hearings. McCreight testified that he kept his horse at the penitentiary at times from 1886 until the last year but always paid \$10 per month, usually in cash, to Fitzsimmons who, he assumed, put it through the penitentiary books. He once gave money to Fitzsimmons for charitable purposes. Fitzsimmons replied that McCreight "forced" the money on him saying, "you can do what you want" with it and suggested giving the surplus to charity. Fitzsimmons gave \$50 to the orphanage and McCreight later gave him another \$130 for it. After the warden advised that the horse's board was \$8 per month, Fitzsimmons gave him \$80 for ten month's keep.

Evidence of inadequate record keeping abounded. Keary declared that Fitzsimmons did not let him keep records of the pigs, fruits, or vegetables produced on the penitentiary farm and would not use requisitions. Drake criticized him for not having discovered the errors earlier. More damning evidence followed. Chief Keeper Quilty told of Fitzsimmons taking hams and bacon for himself and the warden, of ordering the removal of vegetables and lumber to the orphanage, and of sending convicts to dig drains there. Other witnesses told of goods and services being supplied to the orphanage. McBride declared that except for two "very small" pigs, the transfers to the orphanage were made without his authority or knowledge although he did see the orphanage buggy being repaired and convicts working at the orphanage. Fitzsimmons could not provide documentation because it was "impossible" for him "with my other duties" to keep full records.<sup>50</sup>

When Mother Superior and a companion from the orphanage asked to testify, Mr. Justice Drake said it was unnecessary to know where the penitentiary property had gone. Mother Superior persisted because the press indicated they had received things "which they never had." To the judge's reply that the newspaper had only published the evidence presented, Mother Superior retorted: "Then the witnesses must have perjured themselves" and withdrew.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> The previous two paragraphs draw on *Columbian*, 22, 23, 26, and 28 June 1894.

<sup>51</sup> *Columbian*, 7 July 1894. It was probably then that two Sisters of the Good Shepherd went into the penitentiary. When they prepared to leave with a parcel, the guard refused to let them take it since they did not have a pass for it from the acting warden or his deputy. One sister explained that the parcel contained account books that would prove "the lies, of liars, and perjurors" who "were smearing Mr. Fitzsimmons' life away." After securing a pass from W.J. Carroll, the hospital overseer and a Catholic, she threw the pass at a bucket placed there to collect them but missed. The guard refused to open the gate because she had not put the pass in the bucket. The guard said she then picked

In his defence, Fitzsimmons asserted that the hams and bacon were from his own pigs and the cement from his own supply. He denied any “knowledge of a half ton of vegetables going to the orphanage” but admitted it “might have got 500 lbs each of carrots, beets and onions, and a few head of cabbage” from the penitentiary surplus. He occasionally sent convicts to work at the orphanage but McBride and Keary refused his offer to pay for them. In any case, he argued that the penitentiary had an “obligation” to the sisters for nursing a female convict, washing the altar linen, and supplying altar candles. When Mr. Justice Drake interjected that the penitentiary and the orphanage seemed to be “run together,” Fitzsimmons blamed instructors such as the blacksmith if the work was not paid for.<sup>52</sup>

Through his lawyer McBride called for “a thorough investigation,” and said if anything dishonest had been done, it was without his knowledge. As a witness he admitted that following Moylan’s original instructions to do nothing without consulting Fitzsimmons made him “only the nominal head” of the institution. Several staff members agreed; Fitzsimmons said he was “obliged to interfere sometimes” with the warden’s duties. McBride had not protested about his orders being “constantly ignored” because it “would be of no use” but had warned the deputy that helping the orphanage was beyond his responsibilities. McBride attributed the friction to Fitzsimmons’ loss of interest in his work after his wife died in January 1890; Keary blamed the establishment of the orphanage.<sup>53</sup>

Other allegations against Fitzsimmons included favouritism to some prisoners especially those who converted from Protestantism to Catholicism, while Catholics who did the reverse “were not so well treated.” Suggestions of favouritism to certain guards, often related to his having some spy on others, were not linked to religion. Rather, guards complained that he had up to 52 convicts working outside with only a single guard, censured them in front of convicts, let some convicts have a key, and did not keep the arms in good order. When Mr. Justice Drake addressed steward McInnes: “To sum up, the regulations have been generally ignored.” McInnes replied, “Yes, My Lord.”<sup>54</sup>

After the hearings ended, the *Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser* observed that much of the evidence was of “a corroborative and contradictory

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it up, crushed it, and put it in the bucket. The guard then opened the gate. (JTP, #26594, Robertson to Foster, 6 July 1894).

<sup>52</sup> *Columbian*, 29 June 1894.

<sup>53</sup> *Columbian*, 22, 26 and 28 June 1894.

<sup>54</sup> *Columbian*, 25 June 1894. McInnes apparently ran afoul of Moylan, who wrote to the press that he was a “refugee” in the United States. C.H. Tupper expressed regret that that comment had not been struck out as he had ordered. McInnes declared that his nephew had left the penitentiary of “his own free will.” (*Columbian*, 28 May 1895).

nature.”<sup>55</sup> Drake’s observation of “considerable friction” between senior officials and the deputy warden was an understatement. He reported that responsibility “rests on all the chief officers, except the surgeon, the chaplain, school master and hospital keeper,” and that examples of lax discipline included failing to call the roll of convicts, check the locks, or inspect the arms. Drake severely criticized Fitzsimmons for “repeatedly” rebuking officers in front of convicts. Moreover, Drake reported that Keary admitted concealing some account books although he believed that Keary had not fed his horse with government property as Fitzsimmons implied. Drake’s discoveries were hardly surprising. Otherwise, the short report was a summary of the evidence without any recommendations.<sup>56</sup>

Thompson received Drake’s report in October 1894. In the meantime, British Columbians sought to influence the choice of a new warden. Foster learned that the Members of Parliament favoured Moresby for warden with Keary as deputy. Rumours circulated that Fitzsimmons would become warden but, after receiving Drake’s report, Thompson confidentially informed Corbould that McBride would likely be superannuated and Fitzsimmons and Keary removed. He wanted to appoint Foster and send an accountant from Manitoba. On 24 October 1894 Fitzsimmons was dismissed from the penitentiary service but was told that Thompson hoped “to have an opportunity shortly offering you re-employment.” Moylan believed that Drake treated Fitzsimmons “unfairly” and that Thompson saw in the report “a plot” against Fitzsimmons. McBride and Keary were retired with no intention of re-instatement. The *Columbian* predicted that appointing an easterner would cause “a lot of local opposition” since the local Members favoured Moresby and expected the appointment to be made after Thompson returned from Europe.<sup>57</sup> Thompson, of course, died in England.

### Act III: The “Pirate King” Vindicated

On 21 December, the day that Charles Hibbert Tupper became Minister of Justice, Fitzsimmons applied for the wardenship. He blamed his problems on McBride’s “incompetence.” On 25 March 1895, the cabinet re-instated

<sup>55</sup> *Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser*, 7 July 1894.

<sup>56</sup> *CSD*, 8 July 1895, 588-590.

<sup>57</sup> JTP, #27114, Foster to D.M. Stewart, 20 July 1894; JTP, #27664, Corbould to Thompson, 8 October 1894; JTPLB, Thompson to Corbould, 15 October 1894; *HCD*, 24 April 1895 204-205. The letter is quoted in *CSD*, 8 July 1895, 592-593. Mackenzie Bowell, citing information from the Department of Justice, said the plan was to have Fitzsimmons and the deputy warden to St. Vincent de Paul Penitentiary in Montreal exchange places but the deputy at St. Vincent de Paul would not accept the transfer. (*CSD*, 8 July 1895, 604); quoted by McInnes in *CSD*, 8 July 1895, 596. The original report was laid before Parliament but not printed. *HCD*, 29 April 1895, 308; *Columbian*, 31 October 1894.

Fitzsimmons as deputy warden. Foster informed the staff that “no change will be made in the discipline & management” by Fitzsimmons’ return, but the public uproar was immediate. Disbelieving the initial reports, the *Victoria Daily Times* blamed the influence of Chief Justice Theodore Davie, who had recently retired from the premiership to become chief justice of B.C. So did the *Columbian*, which was incredulous at the “scandalous appointment” of “a man who stands openly convicted by Royal Commission . . . of the grossest wrong doing.” Reporting “almost general” indignation, it thought the “Dominion Government seems bent upon alienating its warmest supporters” in the province. Some local Conservatives planned to leave the party; their Association strongly and unanimously condemned the appointment and asked that it be rescinded. Tupper’s reply that Fitzsimmons was reinstated because of doubts of the fairness of his hearing did not satisfy the Association that vowed to remain firm in its demand that he be dismissed.<sup>58</sup>

The press still speculated on the reasons for the reinstatement with political partisanship having some influence on its ideas. The *Province*, then published in Victoria by the Liberal, Hewitt Bostock, urged Tupper to explain it satisfactorily or become known as the “Minister of Injustice.” In a rare local reference to religion, it remarked, “religion strongly colours this episode all through.” It alleged that Davie took to Ottawa a petition from “a large number” of B.C. Roman Catholics and had the support of the Canadian hierarchy. Many Roman Catholics denied having seen such a document. Davie took no responsibility for the reinstatement and said Tupper was merely fulfilling Thompson’s wishes. The Liberal *Vancouver World* agreed. The *Columbian* called the claim, “a gross libel on the memory of an upright statesman.” Similarly, the Conservative *Vancouver News-Advertiser*, in praising Thompson’s integrity, thought he must have had good reason to want to reinstate Fitzsimmons, an argument with which *The Month* was in complete agreement. The Conservative *Victoria Colonist* suggested that Douglas Stewart, the new Inspector of Penitentiaries, examined the evidence and determined that Fitzsimmons was not guilty of “personal dishonesty.” The *Colonist* admonished: “Those who were so busy circulating reports about religious partiality and political favouritism might have known that charges of this kind are not made capriciously, neither is any man condemned without being allowed the opportunity to defend himself.” To that, the Liberal *Times*, averring that the Royal Commission “was an open trial,” called the

<sup>58</sup> Fitzsimmons to Tupper, quoted in CSD, 8 July 1895, 593; DJust, v. 273, Warden’s Order Book, 2 and 4 April 1895; *Victoria Daily Times*, 5 April 1895; *British Columbian*, 2 April 1895. *Columbian*, 4 and 6 April and 25 May 1895.

*Colonist*'s explanation "nonsense," while the *Province* claimed its "apology" only made the matter worse.<sup>59</sup>

Although the *Columbian* claimed to be attacking the government not Fitzsimmons personally, it referred to his "gross irregularities and malfeasance." Fitzsimmons demanded an apology and retraction; when that was not forthcoming he sued the Kennedy Brothers, its proprietors, for libel and \$10,000 in damages. While the suit was pending, the government, expecting it to determine his guilt or innocence, refused to dismiss him.<sup>60</sup>

That did not assuage opinion in New Westminster where the Grand Jury called Fitzsimmons' reinstatement "an insult to the self-respecting portion of the community." In receiving this message, Chief Justice Davie reminded the jury of the "fundamental principle of justice" that a man should not be condemned without being heard and that the forthcoming libel case would reveal the truth of the charges. Senator McInnes, upset because B.C.'s Members of Parliament had been ignored, complained that Davie had "the patronage at his disposal" and accused him of "usurping privileges which did not belong to him" in asking "the Department of Justice to throw into the waste basket" the evidence from the commission and accept "statements, nineteen-twentieths of which are false, made by Fitzsimmons himself. . . What a travesty of Justice!" As more evidence became available, the *Columbian*, asserting that the Commission provided ample evidence for Fitzsimmons' dismissal, proclaimed the scandal "is growing worse and worse," predicted it would "stink in the nostrils of the people of the whole Dominion," and suggested that the Minister of Justice "merits impeachment for his outrageous betrayal of the public interests."<sup>61</sup>

Drake's report was not laid before Parliament until May 1895. It was not printed, so Senator McInnes read it, with commentary, into the Senate Debates early in July. He wanted to know of plans to dismiss Fitzsimmons and investigate what he called Moylan's misleading of the Department of Justice about the state of affairs at the penitentiary. He alleged that Fitzsimmons opposed relocating the penitentiary since it "would not have

<sup>59</sup> *Province* (Victoria), 6 and 13 April 1895; *Columbian*, 22 April 1895; quoted in *Victoria Daily Times*, 13 April 1895; *Columbian*, 13 April 1895; *Vancouver Daily News-Advertiser*, 26 May 1895; *The Month*, June 1895, 94; *Colonist*, 17 April 1895; *Times*, 17 and 19 April 1895; *Province*, 22 April 1895.

<sup>60</sup> *Columbian*, 5 April and 8, 11 and 30 May 1895. Chief Justice Davie agreed to a change of venue, probably to Vancouver, but the trial could not be scheduled until some time after mid-November. By then Fitzsimmons had left the province and he probably withdrew the suit. *CSD*, 8 July 1895, 610.

<sup>61</sup> *Columbian*, 17, 18, and 23 May 1895. McInnes added that Davie's appointment as chief justice was unpopular and unsuitable since he was known for his "vindictiveness, unscrupulousness and 'gall.'" (*CSD*, 8 July 1895, 601-602).

the same facilities for pilfering from the institutions for charitable purposes.” McInnes charged that the Report revealed “nothing less than a conspiracy . . . between Inspector Moylan and Fitzsimmons to defraud the government” and to let Fitzsimmons usurp the warden’s authority to become warden himself.<sup>62</sup>

Prime Minister Bowell replied that Fitzsimmons was reappointed because Keary and “many other officers” had made “a concerted effort” to make him “responsible for all irregularities,” but Drake had not let Fitzsimmons’ counsel ascertain the nature of meetings at Keary’s home. Moreover, Fitzsimmons was denied access to records required to answer the charges against him; had had to change lawyers twice; and the charges had not been “absolutely proven.” As for McCreight’s horse, while Fitzsimmons should have deposited the money to the Receiver General, it was not his duty to keep the records. There was no evidence of Fitzsimmons, “a devout” Catholic, taking anything for himself though he erred by taking money from Judge McCreight “and disposing of it as the judge intimated he should” by giving it to the sisters of the orphanage “in return for their taking care of sick prisoners.” The judge, Bowell added parenthetically, “is also a Roman Catholic.” Bowell did not approve of the “reciprocal services between the penitentiary and the orphanage,” but the government had lost nothing; the warden had authorized the transfer of “two small pigs;” Fitzsimmons had offered to pay for the convicts’ work on the orphanage drains, the lumber was rotten, and the coal was replaced in a few days. Bowell blamed the blacksmith and carpenter instructors and the accountant for not recording work done for the orphanage. Thus, Bowell, like Thompson, was “fully convinced” that Fitzsimmons was not dishonest and the irregularities “were not done wantonly nor through negligence.” As for Davie, Bowell noted that like anyone, he had a right to recommend reinstating any official he thought had “been improperly dismissed” but Davie had not discussed with him anything relating to the penitentiary or its staff.<sup>63</sup>

The *Columbian* saw Bowell’s explanation that Keary and McBride would not be reappointed because of their “unsatisfactory records” as a compliment since Fitzsimmons was reappointed because of his “satisfactory record!” Bowell explained that Keary was dismissed for concealing records during Foster’s investigation because “they were in ‘such a bad state’” that “he was ashamed of them.” Soon thereafter, however, the government acceded to local opinion and appointed Moresby and James Harvey as

<sup>62</sup> CSD, 8 July 1895, 585 and 594. The previous three paragraphs are from CSD, 8 July 1895, *passim*.

<sup>63</sup> CSD, 8 July 1895, 604-607.

warden and accountant respectively and assigned Fitzsimmons to Manitoba as deputy warden.<sup>64</sup>

### Act IV: Finale

Nationally, this case study reflects the complaint of Douglas Stewart, Moylan's successor as inspector, that all penitentiaries regarded themselves not as federal institutions "but as a local appropriation for the exclusive benefits of the community."<sup>65</sup> Local opposition to Fitzsimmons was, at least in part, a reflection of resentment of outsiders holding desirable positions. While local politicians pushed their candidates for wardens, patronage in the form of jobs for lesser staff members was in the hands of the warden or here, of the deputy. That likely explains why Catholics were over-represented on the staff. In the end, local sentiment trumped outside pressure.<sup>66</sup>

British Columbia, of course, was very far from Ottawa as shown by Moylan's reluctance to visit, though frequent visits may not have changed matters. Moylan could not see how his friend Fitzsimmons could do any wrong.<sup>67</sup> To Moylan religion was important as shown by the fact that under him the published records of the penitentiary staff list religion and ethnicity along with age, position, and salary. Moreover, he believed the Catholic clergy had political clout. He must have found it difficult to realize that Fitzsimmons' chief enemy was another Irish Catholic, W.H. Keary.

When the clergy intervened for Fitzsimmons, British Columbia got caught up in national issues. The Catholic hierarchy in English Canada had an active lobbying and gossiping grapevine. Their entreaties, however, did not get the wardenship for Fitzsimmons. Moreover, once evidence revealed by Foster's report and the Royal Commission cast a shadow over him, correspondence from them is absent though the reason may be a belief that the death of John Thompson deprived them of a Catholic friend in high office. Thompson, however, appears to have been more concerned with good management of the penitentiary than with granting favours to fellow Catholics. It was the Bowell government that reinstated Fitzsimmons possibly

<sup>64</sup> *Columbian*, 11 June 1895; CSD, 8 July 1895, 611; DJust, v. 274, Warden's Order Book, 11 July 1895.

<sup>65</sup> Douglas Stewart to Oliver Mowat, 31 December 1896, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1896, 13.

<sup>66</sup> Catholics formed 38% of the staff in 1894 but only 14% of the city's population. Catholics were also over-represented among the inmates. As of 30 June 1891, there were 45 Roman Catholic convicts; 20 Church of England; 11 Presbyterian; 7 Methodist, 6 others and 30 with No religion, probably Chinese convicts. Inspector of Penitentiaries, *Penitentiaries Report*, 1891, 125.

<sup>67</sup> When Moylan returned to Ottawa after a visit in October 1892, Fitzsimmons accompanied him. *The Month*, November 1892, 239.

because it was trying to placate the clergy as it was in the contemporaneous Manitoba Schools Question.

British Columbia has traditionally been the least religious of the provinces. The tale of the “Pirates” suggests that British Columbians were very aware of religion but religious differences were not that important. The local press rhetoric against the “Pirates” only occasionally alluded to religion and did not directly attack Catholics. In addition, despite being a minority, Catholics such as Davie held high office. Moylan and the clergy who relied on his information saw anti-Catholicism where it hardly existed. Ironically, religion was more important in a penal institution than in the province as a whole!

### Coda

Once Moresby took over as warden, he reorganized the staff and promoted five of them to new positions. Four were Protestants; the only Catholic, W.J. Carroll, added the job of schoolmaster to his duty as hospital overseer. Moresby’s career as warden was brief; he died of pneumonia on 15 November 1896. Fitzsimmons died soon after being transferred to Manitoba. McBride and Keary had longer and happier lives. Despite emerging as a weakling, McBride also appeared as the victim of Moylan’s prejudices and neglect and remained a respected citizen of New Westminster until his death in 1909. His second son, Richard, ran unsuccessfully as a Conservative candidate in the 1896 federal election but was elected to the provincial legislature in 1898 and in 1903 became premier. Keary, whom McInnes defended as an “innocent man . . . guilty of fewer offences than the warden or Fitzsimmons,”<sup>68</sup> was an alderman while at the penitentiary and was elected as mayor in 1902, a position he held for seven years. He was also prominent in local Catholic circles as president of the Young Men’s Institute (a forerunner of the Knights of Columbus) and soloist in the church choir. In sum, the reputations of local figures who were retired or dismissed from the service did not suffer.

<sup>68</sup> DJust, v. 254, New Westminster Penitentiary, Account Book, 6 October 1895; DJust, v. 273, E.L. Newcombe to Acting Warden, 6 February 1895 in Warden’s Order Book, 1895; CSD, 8 July 1895, 610.



# “To Enlarge Our Hearts and to Widen Our Horizon”: Archbishop Neil McNeil and the Origins of Social Catholicism in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, 1912-1934<sup>1</sup>

Peter E. BALTUTIS

Within the religious history of English-speaking Canada, discussion of Catholic social action usually does not begin until the 1930s with Catholic responses to the Great Depression.<sup>2</sup> While the unparalleled economic crisis of this period elicited great interest in the principles of Catholic social teaching and led to considerable Catholic social experimentation at the grass roots level, the stage for social Catholicism had actually been set decades earlier. In 1891 Pope Leo XIII promulgated the encyclical *Rerum novarum*, which inspired a deeper and broader commitment by the Catholic Church to the social questions raised by the Industrial Revolution.<sup>3</sup> Seeking to spread

<sup>1</sup> The author wishes to thank Mark G. McGowan, Terence J. Fay, and Brian P. Clarke for their supervision of this project; the anonymous reviewers of *Historical Studies* for their insightful comments and critiques; Marc Lerman and the Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto for granting access to the Archbishop McNeil Papers; and the Faculty of Theology at the University of St. Michael's College for funding this project. For a more complete presentation of this research, see Peter Ernest Baltutis, “‘To Enlarge Our Hearts and To Widen Our Horizon’: Archbishop Neil McNeil and Social Catholicism in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, 1912-1934” (M.A. thesis, University of St. Michael's College, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Two illustrative examples of this periodization can be found in the authoritative studies: Terence J. Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 198-220; and Brian P. Clarke, “English-Speaking Canada from 1854,” in *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, (eds.) Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996), 352-354.

<sup>3</sup> It is for this reason—its impact on the wider Church as well as its subsequent commemoration by later popes—that scholars designate *Rerum novarum* as the initial text of modern Catholic social teaching. See Kenneth R. Himes, “Introduction,” in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, (ed.) Kenneth R. Himes (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 3. However, this dating

pontifical social teaching on Canadian shores, Catholics in Quebec organized several economic justice initiatives in the first three decades of the twentieth century. These included the founding of the *École sociale populaire* in 1911, the annual *Semaines Sociales du Canada* conferences from 1920-1962, the Quebec-based Canadian Catholic Confederation of Labour (CCCL) organized in 1921, and a widespread network of *caisses populaires*.<sup>4</sup> While scholars have investigated the response of Quebec's Catholics toward social problems,<sup>5</sup> the early history of Catholic social action by the English-speaking Catholic Church has yet to receive much scholarly attention. To help fill this lacuna, this article documents the origins of social Catholicism in one of Anglo-Canada's largest and most important Catholic dioceses.

During Neil McNeil's tenure as the Archbishop of Toronto, from 1912 until his death in 1934, he introduced a new understanding of Catholicism that was much broader in scope than his fellow Anglo-Canadians were accustomed to practicing. Prior to 1912, Ontarians (as well as the rest of Canadians outside of Quebec) understood Catholicism almost exclusively in relation to one's personal morality. Educated in Rome, McNeil was exposed to the plurality of Catholic social movements that were being established across Europe (which heavily informed the writing of *Rerum novarum*). These new movements advanced Christian ethics beyond individuals simply living in society to Catholics having a moral imperative to build a more just and humane society. In carrying this powerful message back to Anglo-Canada, the episcopate of Neil McNeil serves as an important link between theoretical European/Papal social teaching and its practical implementation in English-speaking Canada. While several scholarly works do touch upon other aspects of McNeil's life and career in the church, this research is the only detailed study to focus exclusively on McNeil's contribution to the development of social Catholicism in Canada.<sup>6</sup>

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is misleading if it gives the impression that prior to 1891 the papacy ignored social topics. Leo himself issued a number of papal encyclicals on political matters that predate *Rerum novarum*. See Michael J. Schuck, "Early Modern Roman Catholic Social Thought, 1740-1890," in Himes, *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 99-126.

<sup>4</sup> Edward F. Sheridan, (ed.), *Do Justice: The Social Teaching of the Canadian Catholic Bishops, 1945-1986* (Toronto: The Jesuit Centre for Social Faith and Justice, 1987), 32-33.

<sup>5</sup> Oscar Cole Arnal, "From Reaction to Radicalism: The Changing Face of Quebec's Catholic Church toward the Working Class (1920-1990)," *Historical Papers: Canadian Society of Church History* (1991): 33-46.

<sup>6</sup> The only biography of McNeil is George Boyle, *Pioneer in Purple: The Life and Work of Archbishop Neil McNeil* (Montreal: Palm Publishers 1951). McNeil plays a supporting role in Jeanne Ruth Merifield Beck, "Henry Somerville and the Development of Catholic Social Thought in Canada: Somerville's Role in the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1915-1943" (Ph.D. diss., McMaster University, 1977) and Mark G. McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal

Born on 23 November 1851 in Hillsboro, Nova Scotia (Cape Breton), McNeil was the eldest of eleven children.<sup>7</sup> Upon graduation from St. Francis Xavier College in Antigonish (1869-1873), McNeil discerned a vocation to the diocesan priesthood and was sent to complete his studies at the Propaganda College in Rome. During his five years of priestly study in Europe (1874-1879), during which time he earned doctorates in Philosophy and Theology, McNeil was intellectually and spiritually formed by the influential Catholic social movement.<sup>8</sup>

The Catholic social movement was initiated by small groups of clergy and laity in Europe during the nineteenth century out of concern for the economic and social deterioration of the working classes caused by the increased pace of industrialization. As these loosely-organized communities struggled to minister to the new poor arising from the Industrial Revolution, they gradually developed a new interpretation of the traditional Christian virtues of charity and justice.<sup>9</sup> The most basic Christian ethical question is

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& Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999). McNeil also makes cameo appearances in several specialized studies. On Catholic settlement, see Mark G. McGowan, "Religious Duties and Patriotic Endeavours": The Catholic Church Extension Society, French Canada and the Prairie West, 1908-1916," *CCHA Historical Studies*, 51 (1984): 107-119. During World War I, see Mark G. McGowan, "To Share in the Burdens of Empire": Toronto's Catholics and the Great War, 1914-1918," in *Catholics at the "Gathering Place": Historical Essays on the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1841-1991*, (eds.) Mark George McGowan and Brian P. Clarke (Toronto: Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 1993), 177-207. In regard to Catholic immigrants, see Linda Frances Wicks, "There Must be No Drawing Back": The Catholic Church's Efforts on Behalf of Non-English Speaking Immigrants in Toronto, 1889-1939," (M.A. thesis, Ontario Institute of Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, 1998). For the overall contribution of the diocese of Antigonish to Canadian Catholicism (in which McNeil plays a key role), see Mark G. McGowan, "The Maritimes Region and the Building of a Canadian Church: The Case of the Diocese of Antigonish after Confederation," *CCHA Historical Studies*, 70 (2004): 48-70.

<sup>7</sup> The biographical details of McNeil's life are recorded in his lengthy obituaries, found in *The Catholic Register and Canadian Extension*, 24 May 1934 and 31 May 1934, as well as in *The Toronto Star*, 26 May 1934. Additional biographical information is found in The Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto [hereafter referred to as ARCAT], Archbishop Neil McNeil Papers, MN AA01.02, biography of "Most Rev. Neil McNeil, D.D." written by Henry Somerville (unpublished and undated).

<sup>8</sup> One finds comparatively little information about McNeil's early life, either in Canada or of his studies in Europe. Historian Jeanne Beck speculates that it was during this period that McNeil was exposed to social Catholicism. Since the earliest evidence of McNeil's interest in social issues that I have been able to locate was immediately after his return from Rome, I agree with this conclusion. See Jeanne R. Beck, "Contrasting Approaches to Catholic Social Action During the Depression: Henry Somerville, the Educator, and Catherine de Hueck, the Activist," in McGowan and Clarke, *Catholics at the "Gathering Place,"* 213.

<sup>9</sup> The history of the gradual awakening of the Catholic social conscience has been studied by numerous scholars. One of the best studies of this development is Paul Misner,

“how ought human beings, gifted and graced by God in Christ, live their lives as individuals and in society?”<sup>10</sup> Previously, the Catholic Church answered this question by teaching that ethics applied to the individual and the avoidance of specific sins. Emphasis was limited to an individual’s personal salvation, rather than actions towards others.<sup>11</sup> While Christianity did have a concern with the material poor, traditional Catholic charity sought to change society through personal spiritual renewal.<sup>12</sup> It was limited to private, individual acts of almsgiving that responded to the immediate needs of the poor, such as providing food, shelter and clothing. Since these actions were directed at the effects of social problems, they could only offer temporary relief to its victims.

In contrast, social Catholicism sought social reform through an overhaul of economic systems. Instead of acting as individuals, organized groups wanted to undertake collective action to combat the root causes of poverty.<sup>13</sup> Social Catholicism sought to address the long-term needs of the working class by changing institutions and resolving structural injustices. By valuing the dignity of the human person ahead of economic profit, social Catholicism sharply criticized the social and economic effects of the Industrial Revolution. In short, social Catholicism forged a new link between the mission of the Catholic Church and the economic, political, and social order of the world. The Catholic social movement received formal magisterial approval when Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) issued the encyclical *Rerum novarum* (“On the Condition of Labour”) on 15 May 1891.<sup>14</sup> Written from the position that the Church needed to be involved in the great social issues of the day, *Rerum novarum* defended the right to private property, argued for a just wage for

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*Social Catholicism in Europe: From the Onset of Industrialization to the First World War* (New York: Crossroad, 1991).

<sup>10</sup> Charles D. Skok, “Social Teaching of the Church,” in *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia, Revised and Expanded Edition*, (eds.) Michael Glazier and Monika K. Hellwig (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2004), 785-87.

<sup>11</sup> While it is important to distinguish between traditional and social Catholicism, one cannot neglect the fact that there were corporate dimensions to traditional Catholicism as well. Roman Catholics did believe that they constituted a larger community. That is why they prayed to the saints, prayed for one another, and believed that charity contributed to the redemption of the rich and poor.

<sup>12</sup> Monika K. Hellwig, “Charity,” in *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia*, 152-54; Richard P. McBrien, *Catholicism: Study Edition* (Minneapolis, MN: Winston Press, 1981), 929-30.

<sup>13</sup> Thomas Bokenkotter, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church, Revised and Expanded Edition* (New York: Image Books 2005), 334-35.

<sup>14</sup> Official English translation in David J. O’Brien and Thomas A. Shannon, (eds.), *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), 14-39.

workers, and affirmed the right of labour to organize and strike.<sup>15</sup> That is not to say that the Catholic Church was unconcerned with social issues prior to 1891, but it was not until this encyclical that the magisterium articulated in a systematic manner a theology of social Catholicism. Thus, for the purpose of this article, social Catholicism is broadly defined as the collective Catholic responses to the new conditions of society caused by the Industrial Revolution, especially the effects of industrialization on working people and the poor.<sup>16</sup> Primarily concerned with the dignity of the human person created in the image of God, social Catholicism offers a new interpretation of the individual's relationship to society as a whole.

After his ordination in Rome on 12 April 1879, McNeil spent a year in Marseilles pursuing studies in French, astronomy and higher mathematics. Returning to Nova Scotia Father McNeill was appointed to St. Francis Xavier to serve as a professor (1880-84) and later as rector (1884-91). Stationed in the industrializing region of Cape Breton, the idealistic young priest made some initial attempts to apply the principles of social Catholicism to his Canadian surroundings. In 1881 McNeil founded and edited *The Aurora*, a weekly newspaper, and he later edited *The Casket*, a widely read diocesan newspaper in eastern Nova Scotia.<sup>17</sup> As managing editor of these popular Catholic mediums, he used the papers to publish pieces on Catholic concepts of labour justice. Specifically, McNeil spoke out as an ardent defender of poor fishermen against the exploitation of local merchants. He published a series of strongly-worded letters that claimed that Cape Breton fishermen were "in the grip of selfish and unscrupulous traders, whose sole aim is to enrich themselves, regardless of all consequences to the public."<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, under McNeil, *The Aurora* promoted the right of miners to organize a labour union, almost a full decade before *Rerum novarum* permitted Catholics to do so.<sup>19</sup>

As editor of *The Casket* in 1891, McNeil refused to publish some of Bishop John Cameron's articles on the grounds that they were too political

<sup>15</sup> Thomas A. Shannon, "Rerum novarum," in Himes, *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 127-150.

<sup>16</sup> Misner, *Social Catholicism in Europe*, 3.

<sup>17</sup> Founded in 1881, *The Aurora* was published once a week and had over 2,500 subscribers. The paper, which offered religious instruction, information and news, had the approval of Bishop John Cameron of Antigonish (1877-1910). Boyle, *Pioneer in Purple*, 21-34.

<sup>18</sup> *The Aurora*, letter dated 2 February 1882. Quoted in Boyle, *Pioneer in Purple*, 29-30.

<sup>19</sup> There are several gaps in the Archbishop McNeil Papers, especially during his early career. Unfortunately, there is no written record of McNeil's response to *Rerum novarum* when it was first published in 1891. Boyle, *Pioneer in Purple*, 33.

for a religious newspaper.<sup>20</sup> Upset by the perceived insubordination, Bishop Cameron reassigned McNeil to the remote parishes of West Arichat and D'Ecousse. McNeil served as a pastor there until 1895, when he was named Vicar Apostolic of the west coast of Newfoundland. This territory was established as the Diocese of St. George's in 1904 and McNeil became its first bishop. His interest in social questions did not disappear, but most of his energy was being devoted to building churches and developing the sacramental life of his diocese, which had few Catholic priests.<sup>21</sup> Despite the challenges of ministering in a vast area that lacked a developed infrastructure, McNeil continued his journalistic-based activism by purchasing *The Western Star* in 1908 and making the paper's major editorial theme center upon Catholic social teaching.<sup>22</sup>

After fifteen years in Newfoundland, McNeil was appointed Archbishop of Vancouver, British Columbia in 1910. McNeil inherited a city that was experiencing a period of unprecedented growth. According to the census of 1901, the population of the city of Vancouver was 29,155; by 1911 it was 123,902.<sup>23</sup> For the first time in his career, McNeil was stationed in an urban industrial area. In this post for only two years, Archbishop McNeil took a great interest in the social problems that accompanied the prosperity of unregulated capitalism.<sup>24</sup> His solution was for Catholic workers to not only join unions, but to become union leaders:

Against the greed of irresponsible wealth the workmen combine in trade unions, and they do well to thus combine...Our Catholic workmen should be encouraged to take an active interest in their respective unions. Often they pay their dues and allow others to officer and manage the unions without their cooperation or opposition when opposition is called for. If they took a more active part in the election of union officers they could help to keep their unions from becoming appendages to a Socialist political party.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> R.A. MacLean, *Bishop John Cameron: Piety and Politics* (Antigonish, NS: The Casket, 1991), 117-18.

<sup>21</sup> Few writings survived from McNeil's time in Newfoundland. In the words of his life-long friend, Bishop Alexander MacDonald of Victoria, "Certainly in those days no missionary in any part of the world knew more intimately than he what was poverty and privation." Quoted in ARCAT, file MN AA01.02, Somerville, 3.

<sup>22</sup> After Bishop McNeil left Newfoundland in 1910 the paper was sold again. Boyle, *Pioneer in Purple*, 93-106.

<sup>23</sup> Cited in ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN AA01.02, Somerville, 9.

<sup>24</sup> Vincent J. McNally, *The Lord's Distant Vineyard: A History of the Oblates and the Catholic Community in British Columbia* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2000), 269-275.

<sup>25</sup> Quoted in Jean Hulliger, *L'enseignement social des évêques canadiens de 1891 à 1950* (Montréal: Fides, 1958), 136.

McNeil summarized his understanding of labour relations in an address to the Congregational Brotherhood of Vancouver on 14 November 1912, which was covered by *The Catholic Register*:

[McNeil] claimed that above all contracts were the provisos that a man must have a living, a human wage, to keep himself and family in a human manner, and no man had the right to take advantage of the necessities of another to force him to work for a lesser wage than one which would keep him as a man should be kept. Just as the man who charged excessive interest was described as a usurer; so was the man who forced another to work for less than the standard wage... ‘The remedy for unrest,’ concluded His Grace, ‘was to be found in greater sympathy and co-operation between masters and men’... The whole system of religious duty and brotherhood was two-fold. [McNeil] would like to see it applied to everyday working life. If a capitalist asked him what he must do to be saved, he would reply: ‘Pay your men current wages, give your men an equitable share of the profits, and give them also the care and fellowship you owe them as fellow-men and Christians.’<sup>26</sup>

In addition to a living wage, the Archbishop believed that business leaders and employers also had a moral obligation to provide proper compensation and a safe environment for their workers.

While McNeil’s early ministries demonstrated his keen interest in Catholic social issues, it would not be until his lengthy assignment to urban industrial Toronto, from 1912 until 1934, that he would be able to develop and implement a systematic plan of social Catholicism. Catholic social reformer Henry Somerville wrote that the key to understanding McNeil’s vision for social Catholicism is contained in his installation address.<sup>27</sup> Given on 22 December 1912, the new Archbishop of Toronto used this sermon to outline his vision for his episcopate:

[The Catholic Church] calls upon us to enlarge our hearts and to widen our horizon...If we are wanting in Catholic charity we can make it seem that we had no part in the upbuilding of this great nation, as if we were innately selfish, looking after local and small issues. If we are apostolic in our faith and practice, we can Christianize and settle conflicts between capital and labour and such problems. The power of Christian charity is great enough.<sup>28</sup>

McNeil carefully chose the phrase “enlarging our hearts” and “widening our horizon” to encapsulate his vision for a new paradigm of how the clergy, religious and laity of the Archdiocese of Toronto were to understand and live

<sup>26</sup> *The Catholic Register and Canadian Extension*, 14 November 1912.

<sup>27</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN AA01.01, Henry Somerville, “Most Rev. Neil McNeil, D.D.” (unpublished and undated), 14.

<sup>28</sup> *Catholic Register and Canadian Extension*, 26 December 1912.

out their faith through social Catholicism. In no surviving document does Archbishop McNeil ever fully articulate his vision for social Catholicism. Yet, in reviewing his articles, manuscripts, pastoral circulars, private correspondence, open letters, and public lectures, his broad vision of the social implications of Catholicism (not just for Toronto, but for all of Canada) becomes apparent.

The value of McNeil's contribution to social Catholicism lies not in creating new areas of theological reflection. Rather, the genius of McNeil was his ability to apply the seminal concepts embedded in European Catholic social teaching to the practical context of industrial Canada. The quick pace of industrialization and urbanization in Toronto created a new series of social problems: large-scale immigration, lack of adequate housing, low wages, poor working conditions, unemployment, widespread poverty, and increasing rates of crime. Traditional Catholic charity, as characterized by McNeil, was "concerned almost solely with the care and relief of those in actual want."<sup>29</sup> While these works were important, McNeil's vision of social Catholicism called for more. "In our day it is not merely unfortunate individuals and families that need aid, society itself calls for betterment."<sup>30</sup> In McNeil's words, social Catholicism:

comprehends not only the care of those in actual want and distress, but the prevention of causes of want and distress, and the promotion of rehabilitations, physically, morally, and vocationally, of those who come within the range of charitable activities...[social Catholicism] finds its best expression in promoting those measures that prevent unemployment or insure against such periods; in safeguarding against and building up resistance to occasions of accident and illness; in reinforcing by religious and moral power the resistance to vice and family breakdown. It deals with the stability of society by such means as: thrift; social insurance against accidents, sickness, unemployment, old age; employment bureaus; living wage; institutions for safeguarding savings; and loaning money on charitable collateral.<sup>31</sup>

According to McNeil, social Catholicism meant that Catholics were to be concerned not only with the injustices suffered against themselves, but also with the injustices happening to others.

The importance of McNeil's initiatives in social Catholicism extended far beyond the borders of the archdiocese. A survey of the most prominent bishops in English-speaking Canada during this period reveals that little

<sup>29</sup> ARCAT, Catholic Charities Papers, OC 06.CO02, article entitled "Scope of Social Science" written by Archbishop McNeil, undated.

<sup>30</sup> Archbishop Neil McNeil, "Charity Sunday," in *The Catholic Register and Canadian Extension*, 27 November 1913.

<sup>31</sup> ARCAT, Catholic Charities Papers, OC 06.CO02, "Scope of Social Science."

was being done to introduce Catholic social teaching into parishes outside of McNeil's efforts. The most likely bishops to have introduced social activism would have been: Bishops John Cameron (1886-1910)<sup>32</sup> or James Morrison (1912-1950)<sup>33</sup> of Antigonish; Bishop Thomas Dowling of Hamilton (1889-1924);<sup>34</sup> Bishop Michael Fallon of London (1909-1931);<sup>35</sup> Bishop John T. McNally of Calgary (1913-1924), Hamilton (1924-1937), and Halifax (1937-1952);<sup>36</sup> or Archbishops John Walsh (1889-1898), Denis O'Connor (1899-1908), or Fergus P. McEvay (1908-1911) of Toronto.<sup>37</sup> Yet, there is little evidence of Catholic social action during any of their episcopacies. Of all these leading bishops, only McNeil was trying to implement social Catholicism in his diocese.<sup>38</sup> McNeil's theological and ethical vision can be divided into three broad areas: education, social welfare, and legislative reform.

<sup>32</sup> R.A. MacLean, "Cameron, John (1827-1910)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 13 (1900-1910), <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40725&query=john%20AND%20cameron>, accessed 26 February 2008.

<sup>33</sup> The well-known Antigonish Movement was the initiative of Fr. Moses Coady and Fr. Jimmy Tompkins out of St. Francis Xavier University. See Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics*, 199-205. However, new research has attempted to rehabilitate the role of Bishop Morrison in the movement, despite his very pronounced philosophical differences with Tompkins. See Peter Ludlow, "Fostering Social Awakening 'along safe and sane lines': Archbishop James Morrison and the Antigonish Movement," *CCHA Historical Studies*, 72 (2006): 29-53.

<sup>34</sup> Gerald J. Stortz, "Thomas Joseph Dowling: The First 'Canadian' Bishop of Hamilton, 1889-1924," *CCHA Historical Studies*, 54 (1987): 93-107.

<sup>35</sup> Michael Power, "The Mitred Warrior: A Critical Reassessment of Bishop Michael Francis Fallon, 1867-1931," *Catholic Insight* 8, no. 3 (April 2000): 18-26.

<sup>36</sup> Robert Nicholas Bérard, "A Cardinal for English Canada: The Intrigues of Bishop John T. McNally, 1930-1937," *CCHA Historical Studies*, 63 (1997): 81-100.

<sup>37</sup> Michael Power, "Walsh, John," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 12 (1891-1900), <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40608&query=john%20AND%20walsh>, accessed 26 February 2008; Michael Power and Mark G. McGowan, "O'Connor, Denis," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 14, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41747&query=Denis%20AND%20O%20E2%80%99Connor>, accessed 26 February 2008; and Mark G. McGowan, "McEvay, Fergus Patrick," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 14 (1911-1920), <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41704&query=Denis%20AND%20O%20E2%80%99Connor>, accessed 26 February 2008.

<sup>38</sup> Nowhere in the existing material is there any indication as to why McNeil was so drawn to social Catholicism and/or why his brother bishops were not (many of whom also studied in Europe in the late nineteenth century, were the same relative age as McNeil, and were also assigned to industrializing dioceses). One is left to conclude that the ministry of each individual bishop was a response to the perceived needs of their diocese at a particular time. Thus, for McNeil, social Catholicism was an appropriate solution to urban industrial problems of Toronto, such as large-scale immigration, unemployment, labour unrest, poverty, and crime. Whereas in other dioceses, other issues (such as relations between French-speaking and English-speaking Catholics, as was the situation for Bishop Fallon in London) were perceived as being of greater importance.

McNeil knew that the most effective way to introduce change into the archdiocese was through a methodical program of education in Catholic social thought for clergy, who were mediators of the faith to their congregations. McNeil wanted the priests of his diocese to be trained in the ideals of social Catholicism, as he was. To introduce this new interpretation of the Gospel imperative, McNeil recruited Henry Somerville, a young Catholic social activist from England, to teach courses at the newly-opened St. Augustine's Seminary on Catholic social thought.<sup>39</sup> Somerville's task was to form a new generation of socially-conscious clergy for English-speaking Canada. Arriving in 1915, Somerville taught student priests at the seminary for three years. His courses focused on a thorough examination of *Rerum novarum*, as well as adapting its directives to the political and economic conditions in Canada.<sup>40</sup> While strongly supported by McNeil, these courses were not compulsory for seminarians.<sup>41</sup> Since no records exist for class enrolment in Somerville's courses, the impact of his message on the seminarians is difficult to measure. Yet, during his period, Somerville was often asked to address the entire student body. During his brief tenure at the seminary, St. Augustine's graduated 68 priests for English-Canada and parts of the United States (not including the estimated 58 additional students who were just beginning studies, but would not graduate until after Somerville's departure).<sup>42</sup> Thus, one can conclude that although not all seminarians took his courses, a substantial number of clergy and religious would have at least been aware of his message.

Of equal importance to McNeil was providing the laity with similar instruction in Catholic social doctrine. At McNeil's request, Somerville organized laymen's study groups in several parishes to examine social Catholicism. While records indicate that overall membership in these study groups was sparse, a much more successful avenue for spreading the message of social Catholicism to the laity was through the Catholic press.<sup>43</sup> With a weekly readership of over 13,000, *The Catholic Register and Canadian Extension* was considered one of the most influential Catholic weeklies in

<sup>39</sup> For the most current assessment of Henry Somerville, see Joseph Sinasac, *Fateful Passages: The Life of Henry Somerville, Catholic Journalist* (Ottawa: Novalis, 2003). For a more scholarly account, see Beck, "Henry Somerville and the Development of Catholic Social Thought in Canada."

<sup>40</sup> Sinasac, *Fateful Passages*, 43.

<sup>41</sup> Beck, "Henry Somerville and the Development of Catholic Social Thought in Canada," 150.

<sup>42</sup> Information gathered from Karen Marshall Booth, *The First Seventy-Five Years of St. Augustine's Seminary of Toronto, 1913-1988* (Toronto: St. Augustine's Seminary Alumni Association, 1988), 41-42.

<sup>43</sup> Jeanne Beck, "Contrasting Approaches to Social Action: Henry Somerville, the Educator, and Catherine de Hueck, the Activist," in McGowan and Clarke, *Catholics at the "Gathering Place,"* 218.

Canada.<sup>44</sup> Aware of the importance that this medium played in the Catholic community, McNeil transformed *The Catholic Register* into a vehicle for promoting social Catholicism. In 1915, he recruited his old friend from Nova Scotia and former editor of *The Casket*, Joseph A. Wall, to serve as editor.

McNeil also invited Henry Somerville to write a weekly column that would appear on the front page of the new-look Catholic paper. Premiering on December 23, 1915, “Life and Labour: A Forum for Catholic Workers” was a wide-ranging discussion of current events, examining and analyzing modern economic and political theory in a prose style accessible to the average lay Catholic.<sup>45</sup> Somerville’s central message was that the Catholic Church was equally concerned with social justice for the working class as it was about personal morality.<sup>46</sup> Applied to Canadian industrial society, Somerville argued this meant supporting an adequate wage, property rights, family allowances, government-subsidized fixed low-interest housing loans, and government-sponsored capital building projects to relieve unemployment.

In the words of Jeanne Beck, Somerville’s greatest contribution to the Canadian Church was that he “popularized [social Catholicism] through a newspaper whose influence extended beyond the Archdiocese of Toronto to include Catholics across English-speaking Canada.”<sup>47</sup> From 1915-1918 and 1933-1953, Somerville demonstrated how the diocesan press could be used effectively to introduce Catholics to the Church’s new thrusts in social theory and action. His widely-read columns planted ideas that would influence future generations of Catholic clergy and laity.<sup>48</sup> If Somerville was the articulate spokesman of social Catholicism, McNeil was the architect. Topics for the “Life and Labour” columns often came from long discussions between McNeil and Somerville, usually while walking the streets of Toronto.<sup>49</sup> The Englishman later described this period working with McNeil as “the best educational experience of my life,” and praised the Archbishop as “the greatest teacher I ever had.”<sup>50</sup> Yet the relationship was not completely one-

<sup>44</sup> By 1919 the paper’s circulation was 13,000, a figure that did not include the numerous copies that were purchased weekly at the doors of Toronto’s Catholic churches. In fact, records indicate that by the end of World War I in some parishes as many as one in every three families subscribed. McGowan, *The Waning of the Green*, 193, 194.

<sup>45</sup> Henry Somerville, “Life and Labour: A Forum for Catholic Workers,” in *The Catholic Register*, 30 December 1915.

<sup>46</sup> Beck, “Contrasting Approaches to Social Action,” 216.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 228.

<sup>48</sup> Sinasac, *Fateful Passages*, 148; Beck, “Contrasting Approaches to Social Action,” 226.

<sup>49</sup> Sinasac, *Fateful Passages*, 47.

<sup>50</sup> Henry Somerville, “Address to the Holy Name Society,” in *The Catholic Register and Canadian Extension*, 20 December 1947.

sided. As a credit to his informed and often prophetic insights, Somerville became the Archbishop's chief advisor on social and economic matters.<sup>51</sup> Together, these men shared a common vision of developing Catholics who were well-educated in Catholic social thought; clergy who would preach on issues of social Catholicism and laity who would assume positions in government and industrial management and promote social justice.

McNeil's second broad area of implementing social Catholicism was to design, implement and maintain a sophisticated network of Catholic organizations that effectively served the social welfare needs of his archdiocese's rapidly expanding Catholic population. When McNeil first arrived in Toronto, he conducted an extensive survey of the Archdiocese's Catholic charities.<sup>52</sup> He encountered similar conditions in all the Catholic benevolent organizations: dedicated religious or lay volunteers overwhelmed by their work because the needs of the community far exceeded the scarce resources of each individual ministry. Furthermore, these relief agencies operated independently of one another and did not keep the chancery informed of their efforts.<sup>53</sup> While these Catholic agencies were doing good work, McNeil believed that they could be doing much better. As McNeil later reflected in one of his pastoral circulars, when he came to Toronto "there was a serious charity problem awaiting solution."<sup>54</sup> For McNeil, the only way to solve this problem was to overhaul the existing welfare system and apply the principles of social Catholicism. This overhaul entailed four initiatives.

The first initiative was to centralize charitable relief so that it would be more helpful to the poor. Catholic immigrants to Toronto in the early twentieth century encountered miserly wages, deplorable working conditions, and high unemployment. Urban-life deteriorated as overcrowding and poor sanitation led to poor living conditions, outbreaks of disease, high rates of crime, and severe strains on family life. These problems created by urban industrialization required a fundamentally new approach to Catholic social welfare. McNeil explained, "I came from Vancouver with the conviction that in our large cities Bishops had to devise new methods for the administration

<sup>51</sup> Jeanne M. Beck, "Henry Somerville and Social Reform: His Contribution to Canadian Catholic Social Thought," *CCHA Study Sessions*, 42 (1975), 101.

<sup>52</sup> Beginning in 1850, the Catholic Church in Toronto constructed a separate system of Catholic social institutions to minister to the material and spiritual needs of an increasingly large immigrant population. For a chronicling of Catholic social welfare in the Archdiocese of Toronto prior to 1912, see Baltutis, "To Enlarge Our Hearts and to Widen Our Horizon," 12-34.

<sup>53</sup> Marion W. Bell, "The History of the Catholic Welfare Bureau," (M.S.W. thesis, University of Toronto, 1949), 22-23.

<sup>54</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, PC09.10, pastoral circular from McNeil, 22 November 1921.

of charity, because new conditions created new problems—that we had to blend skill with pity and social science with charity.”<sup>55</sup> Importantly, this new method of administration did not attempt to replace the existing charitable institutions of Toronto. “We have the advantage of unrivalled traditions in past self-sacrificing charity, and of numerous institutions and organizations.”<sup>56</sup> The challenge for McNeil, however, was to make the archdiocese’s benevolent organizations more efficient.

In September 1913, McNeil organized the individual Catholic agencies into one centralized Catholic Charities Office. This new office was “to coordinate the various agencies, to prevent overlapping, to stimulate activity, and to study new needs.”<sup>57</sup> This organization was needed, McNeil felt, “not only to find and investigate conditions which called for attention, but also to enlist the help of numerous willing hands to alleviate distress and safeguard the rights of children of our faith.”<sup>58</sup> McNeil was not alone in creating such a centralized organization. Catholic archdioceses throughout the United States, such as Boston, Chicago, New York, and Pittsburgh, also brought independent charities under the control of their archbishop.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, the Protestants in the city of Toronto formed the Neighbourhood Workers Association in 1914 to centralize their agencies. Originally created as the Catholic Charities Office (1913-1922), this organization became the Catholic Welfare Bureau (1922-1927) and later the Federation of Catholic Charities (1927-1943). While the scope of the office has changed over the years, centralization has been successful in ensuring that agencies were properly funded, were accountable for effective services, and that the level of care provided was uniform across the archdiocese. Evidence to the wisdom of this initiative is that the centralized office of Catholic Charities has been in continuous operation in the Archdiocese of Toronto since 1913.<sup>60</sup>

McNeil’s second initiative was to utilize advances in social work to create a more sophisticated approach to addressing social welfare issues. McNeil argued that, “The Catholic Church cannot afford to ignore any science which men have developed especially when that science touches

<sup>55</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN AR01.24, “Charity and Trained Workers,” 1934.

<sup>56</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN AR01.07, “Federation of Catholic Charities in Toronto, 1913.”

<sup>57</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN AR01.07, “Federation of Catholic Charities in Toronto, 1913.”

<sup>58</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN AR01.24, “Charity and Trained Workers,” 1934.

<sup>59</sup> Paula Maurutto, *Governing Charities: Church and State in Toronto’s Catholic Archdiocese, 1850-1950* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2004), 40-41.

<sup>60</sup> Jean Vale, *An Informal History of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1913-1988: The First Seventy-Five Years* (Toronto: Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1988).

her vital interests...It would have been foolish on our part to ignore the science used by trained nurses, for instance, and at least equally foolish to ignore the science of trained social workers."<sup>61</sup> Pre-1913, the charitable organizations were managed by religious orders and volunteers from the St. Vincent de Paul Society, very few of whom had any specialized training. In 1921 Archbishop Neil McNeil commissioned Dr. John Lapp from the National Catholic Welfare Council of the United States to conduct a survey of all Catholic welfare activities in Toronto and to suggest improvements of services.<sup>62</sup> This method of independent social work experts gathering information on charitable organizations for the purpose of improved efficiency was popularized during the early 1900s. This technique had been used by several Catholic dioceses in the United States and was also popular among Protestant social services.<sup>63</sup>

The findings of Dr. Lapp and his researchers were sharply critical of the methods in which Catholic charities investigated cases of need and responded to these problems. Moreover, McNeil's brainchild, the Catholic Charities Office, was denounced on numerous fronts:

The office of the Catholic Charities is badly managed. The usual office records are not available or are incomplete. No statistics are available. The case work is poor both in technique and spirit. Investigations are inadequate with data unverified. There are no plans made for the families and no real constructive re-habilitation work done. There is no after care work for families or dependent children. Co-operation between the office and other agencies, Catholic, Non-Catholic and Public, is unorganized. This is due not only to insufficiency of personnel and funds, but also to the lack of training and experience of present personnel. To be efficient, this office should be completely re-organized.<sup>64</sup>

The survey concluded with the recommendation that Catholic social welfare activities in the Archdiocese be restructured as soon as possible. Using Lapp's highly critical report as a catalyst for change, a humbled Archbishop McNeil worked quickly to implement its recommendations, which entailed rooting out antiquated practices and promoting new methods of social work. After 1921, the Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto hired only professionally trained social workers, applied the most current methods of case work, and restructured its charitable infrastructure to reflect innovations in the field

<sup>61</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN AR01.24, "Charity and Trained Workers," 1934.

<sup>62</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN WL04.21(e), "Plan and Scope of the Social Welfare Study of the Archdiocese of Toronto," April 5, 1922.

<sup>63</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN PC10.15 (B), circular letter written by McNeil, undated but prior to 1921. See also Maurutto, *Governing Charities*, 58.

<sup>64</sup> "Report on Catholic Charities," in ARCAT, Catholic Charities Papers, file OC 06 SU04, Dr. John Lapp, "Social Welfare Survey of the Archdiocese of Toronto," 1922, 14-15.

of social work.<sup>65</sup> This professionalization of the Catholic social network directly translated into better service to Toronto's poor:

We have learned that the distribution [of money] is far more effective and does more good when done through trained workers...We have learned that the work of distribution among needy families requires equal efficiency acquired by a course of training in a school of social service or by experience under competent direction...Without the trained workers the distribution would be haphazard, wasteful, and tending to pauperize. With the trained workers the assisted family is often led to become again self-supporting, and means of help in addition to the resources of our Bureau are often found.<sup>66</sup>

Furthermore, it should be noted that of the five priests who headed the centralized Catholic Charities between 1913 and 1960, four had been educated at American schools of social service. Only the first superintendent, Father Patrick J. Bench, had not received such training.

McNeil's third initiative was to empower the Catholic laity to take active roles in changing the social order. As the visible head of the Catholic community in Toronto, McNeil encouraged Catholic workingmen to organize themselves into labour unions, to seek more equitable hiring policies, a living wage that was proportionate to their productivity, medical benefits, and regulation of working conditions. Furthermore, McNeil encouraged the laity to participate in the reinvigorated Catholic social network. His dream was that "Catholic laity be organized to co-operate with the clergy in the work of the Church and especially in the work of solving the social problems which afflict the nations of the Christian world."<sup>67</sup>

For McNeil, it was a basic division of labour. While the religious orders provided social services which responded to the immediate needs of Catholics, he understood the role of the laity as being proactive leaders who pushed for social change by addressing structural injustices.

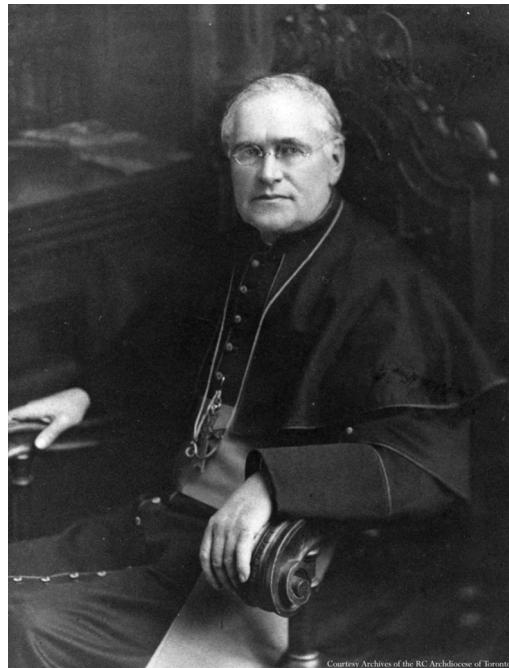
McNeil challenged the laity to "bestir themselves in all works of charity, not merely remedial work, such as our Sisters have long been doing in charitable institutions, but also preventative work, such as securing a living wage for workmen or uniting in a movement to place better housing within reach of the poor."<sup>68</sup> During his years as Archbishop, new lay-operated organizations were introduced, such as the Catholic Big Brothers (1918),

<sup>65</sup> Maurutto, *Governing Charities*, 45.

<sup>66</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN WL04.111, letter by Archbishop McNeil entitled "Our Charities," 1930.

<sup>67</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN AR01.51, "Catholic Action," 1934.

<sup>68</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN PC15.25, Suggestions for Sermon, 2 October 1927.



Courtesy Archives of the RC Archdiocese of Toronto

Archbishop Neil McNeil  
Source: Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto

the Catholic Big Sisters (1919), and the Knights of Columbus Boys' Club and Camp (1929). McNeil intended these to be proactive interventions; they used the positive role model of Catholic laity to inspire troubled young persons who were at risk of becoming juvenile criminals. While it is difficult to judge the success of these initiatives, the number of clients that these agencies ministered to is impressive. In 1930, the Big Brothers supervised 216 at-risk boys, the Big Sisters advised 225 at-risk girls, and 659 inner-city children attended the Catholic-operated Island Grove Camp.<sup>69</sup>

McNeil's fourth initiative in Catholic social welfare was to promote Catholics working with non-Catholic and secular institutions. Since the inception of Toronto's Catholic relief programs in 1850, these programs were operated by Catholics and ministered exclusively to Catholics. For McNeil, however, social Catholicism worked in partnership with Canada's Protestant denominations. Beginning in 1913, the Catholic Charities Office attended meetings of the Protestant Neighbourhood Workers' Association

<sup>69</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN WL04.111, "The Charities Your Money Helps to Support," 1930.

to share information about religious relief work. Also, many Catholic Charities ministered to non-Catholics. For example, 25 percent of the population of the House of Providence was non-Catholic.<sup>70</sup> The keystone to McNeil's efforts to bolster relations with the Protestants of Toronto was joining the Catholic Church to the city-wide joint fund-raising campaign known as the Federation for Community Service in 1919. Not only did this affiliation fill Catholic coffers to unprecedented levels, but it also fostered a sense of toleration among the various Christian denominations. During this *rapprochement*, major Protestant newspapers made few inflammatory comments on Protestant-Catholic relations (a welcome reprieve from the animosity that marred the later half of the nineteenth century).<sup>71</sup>

While he strongly supported federation with non-Catholic agencies, McNeil never advocated full assimilation. This balance would prove difficult as proselytism and social welfare outreach in Toronto remained intimately linked. At times, despite McNeil's best efforts, politics and financial issues led to hostilities in Catholic-Protestant charity relationships. After a successful first campaign in 1919-1920, the participation of Catholic charities in the Federation for Community Service was publicly attacked by several Protestant members who claimed that the proportion of funds allocated to the Catholic agencies was disproportionate to the amount that Catholics actually contributed. In response to these charges, even McNeil conceded that “[Catholics] fall far short of having contributed enough to make the total Catholic contribution come anywhere near to the total amount received by Catholic Institutions.”<sup>72</sup> In 1927, when several Protestant contributors threatened to withhold their sizable donations if they were to be shared with Catholic institutions, the Catholic Welfare Bureau was advised that it would not be included in the annual campaign for funds of the Federation for Community Service.

With Protestant-Catholic tensions running high, the Archbishop instructed the following to be read at all Masses within the Archdiocese:

<sup>70</sup> The House of Providence was a shelter that ministered to the poor, elderly, ill, widows and prostitutes. ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN WL04.111, “The Charities Your Money Helps to Support,” 1930.

<sup>71</sup> John S. Moir, “Toronto’s Protestants and Their Perceptions of Their Roman Catholic Neighbours,” in McGowan and Clarke, *Catholics at the “Gathering Place,”* 322.

<sup>72</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN PC11.16 (B), parish circular written by McNeil, 19 October 1923. Marion Bell concluded that Catholics were giving only 11 percent of the total amount collected, yet the Catholic charitable organizations needed 25 percent of the amount to meet their budget requirements. See Bell, “The History of the Catholic Welfare Bureau,” 67.

When our Lord wished to present a model case of charity in action, He selected two men of different religious denominations. The man in need was a Jew. On the road between Jerusalem and Jericho, he fell among robbers and was left destitute and sorely wounded. The man who relieved his distress was a Samaritan. In Catholic literature he is always called the Good Samaritan. The Samaritans were not idolaters; but they rejected the greater part of the Old Testament and formed a separate denomination. The story of the Good Samaritan teaches that Christian charity knows no distinction of creed when it is a matter of relieving distress. The [Catholic operated] House of Providence will continue to receive non-Catholics, and non-Catholic institutions will continue ready to extend a helping hand to any of ours.<sup>73</sup>

McNeil believed that, despite their troubled history, Canada's Catholics and Protestants could co-exist in peace. He proclaimed to Toronto's Catholic population, "it is a sin to make fellowship and friendliness among the members depend on any similarity in race, nationality, social standing, or other national grouping of men...it is not enough to avoid hating those whom we regard as enemies. As Christians we are bound to seek their welfare."<sup>74</sup> While full partnership between the denominations was years away, McNeil was instrumental in redefining the perception that the Catholic community had of Toronto's Protestant population. In promoting Catholic-Protestant cooperation, McNeil served as an important bridge between Ultramontane Catholicism of the nineteenth century and cooperative Catholicism of the present age.

The third broad area of McNeil's theological and ethical vision was to publicly lobby the government to enact legislative reforms that corrected the capitalist system. Specifically, McNeil called for legislation that guaranteed a living wage for industrial workers and established regulations on working conditions.<sup>75</sup> McNeil was also a champion of labour unions, as evidenced by his opening remarks at the 45<sup>th</sup> annual convention of International Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers Union:

I regard the trade unions of the two countries [the United States and Canada] as important institutions of social control; institutions that we all need...but to-day I cannot believe that there are any serious thinking men in the country who do not regard trade unions as necessary, not only for their own members, but for the social and industrial peace of the country...It is so understood, gentlemen, that those who have the power

<sup>73</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, PC15.17, pastoral circular from McNeil to all parishes, 29 September 1927.

<sup>74</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, PC24.43, pastoral circular on "Mutual Charity," 1934.

<sup>75</sup> "Sympathize with Labour: Archbishop McNeil on the Workingman and his Employer," in *The Globe*, 10 February 1913.

of capital, should also have a sense of responsibility and goodness that go with power always.<sup>76</sup>

It should be noted that unlike his colleagues in Quebec, McNeil argued that Catholics should join secular labour unions rather than establishing their own.<sup>77</sup> The Catholic hierarchy of Quebec was alarmed at the growth of non-denominational labour unions (specifically the American Federation of Labor), which it considered socialist. Instead, they created a Catholic trade union—the Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour—where Catholic workers would receive religious instruction (highlighting Catholic social teaching) and be protected against political radicalism.<sup>78</sup> Fearing that exclusively Catholic labour unions would only isolate their members from the rest of the nation, McNeil believed that Catholics should act with Protestants to form a more powerful voice to influence legislation.

The bulk of the Archbishop's efforts were dedicated to working with multi-denominational and secular networks that lobbied the government to protect the poor and oppressed. While McNeil worked on numerous projects during his twenty-two years in Toronto, the following three examples are indicative of the type of work in which he was engaged. McNeil served as vice-president of the Toronto Playground Association, a secular organization dedicated to saving "children from undue labour and women from unreasonable hours of toil."<sup>79</sup> This group lobbied the Ontario Legislature to "prohibit the employment of girls under 14 years of age in shops" and to fix "a standard eight-hour day for all women employees."<sup>80</sup> In addition, the Archbishop was part of a special deputation representing the city hospitals to Hon. W. J. Hanna, the Provincial Secretary. This task force recommended that the province of Ontario should provide the Toronto hospitals with an additional annual grant of \$5,000 for outpatient work.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, McNeil was a member of the Toronto Board of Control's social survey commission to investigate the city's welfare programs and to suggest means of improvement.<sup>82</sup> This work eventually led to his appointment to the Canadian Conference on Public Welfare and the Canadian Social Service Council.

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<sup>76</sup> "Archbishop to Bricklayers," in *The Catholic Register and Canadian Extension*, 20 January 1916.

<sup>77</sup> ARCAT, McNeil Papers, MN AS19.03 and MN AS19.11, bundle of McNeil's correspondence with various priests, variety of dates in the 1920s.

<sup>78</sup> Gregory Baum, *The Church in Quebec* (Ottawa: Novalis, 1991), 31.

<sup>79</sup> "Protect Children From Too Much Work," in *The Globe*, 27 March 1913.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> "Hospitals Want Grant for Out-Patient Work," in *The Globe*, 20 January 1915.

<sup>82</sup> ARCAT, MN TA01.103 and "Motor Bus Company Will Get No Franchise," in *The Globe*, 24 October 1913.

These ecumenical efforts were welcomed by the city's citizens. A little more than a year into his episcopacy, an editorial in Toronto's secular daily, *The Globe*, reported, "it is a pleasure to see Archbishop McNeil take a conspicuous place in the ranks of social reformers in Toronto."<sup>83</sup> This voice of appreciation was not alone. When McNeil died on May 25, 1934 at the age of 83 after complications from a heart attack the entire city was saddened. The tributes that came in from all corners of the city revealed both the extent of McNeil's vast network of contacts and the great amount of work he did to promote unity amongst all Torontonians. Right Rev. Dr. T. Albert Moore, Moderator of the United Church of Canada, eulogized:

His Grace Archbishop Neil McNeil was held in the high esteem of the people of Canada, irrespective of creed or nationality...the Archbishop was ever mindful of the general good of all citizens and united in cordial cooperation in many movements which churchmen of other faiths wrought side by side for the improvement of the life conditions for the people... he was worthy of the highest tributes of respect and the confidence and affection of the people of all faiths and forms of worship.<sup>84</sup>

Perhaps the most flattering words came from a non-Christian source. Rabbi M. Eisendrath labelled McNeil a prophet for "the cause of righteousness and justice...he spoke always for the weary and depressed, for the underprivileged and the heavy laden, seeking for the least of his brethren the more abundant life."<sup>85</sup> McNeil's efforts were not lost on the Catholic community. At his Requiem Mass, over 15,000 of his followers crowded into St. Michael's Cathedral and the surrounding streets to pay their final respects to their beloved shepherd.<sup>86</sup>

The pioneering efforts of Neil McNeil to lay the foundations of social Catholicism in Toronto left a rich legacy for the Canadian Catholic community. Archbishop McNeil championed the creation of Catherine Donnelly's Sisters of Service in 1922, which carried the message of Catholic social action from the streets of Toronto to the shores of Atlantic Canada, across the prairies, and to the Rocky Mountains of British Columbia.<sup>87</sup> McNeil also helped create the Friendship House movement organized by Catherine de Hueck.<sup>88</sup> Beginning in 1933, members of this community

<sup>83</sup> *The Globe*, 26 February 1914.

<sup>84</sup> "Archbishop McNeil is Taken by Death," in *The Globe*, 26 May 1934.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* The actual quotation reads "for the least of his brether." I believe that the word "brether" should read "brethren" and have corrected the quotation accordingly.

<sup>86</sup> "Thousands Mourn Archbishop McNeil at Stately Service," in *The Globe*, 31 May 1934.

<sup>87</sup> Jeanne R. Beck, *To Do and To Endure: The Life of Catherine Donnelly, Sister of Service* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997).

<sup>88</sup> Works on Catherine de Hueck Doherty: Jeanne R. Beck, "Contrasting Approaches to Social Action: Henry Somerville, the Educator, and Catherine de Hueck, the Activist,"

took vows of voluntary poverty and offered: English-language classes, an employment agency for immigrants, a soup kitchen, a clothing distribution centre, a shelter for single men, after-school recreation for children, and instruction in Catholic social action.<sup>89</sup> This radical experiment in Catholic social action was repeated in Hamilton and Ottawa. In 1947, Catherine and her husband Eddie Doherty created a self-contained Christian community in Combermere, Ontario—known as Madonna House—which still continues to flourish.

McNeil was also a strong supporter of the Basilian Fathers and their initiatives in social Catholicism.<sup>90</sup> McNeil encouraged the creation of the Basilian-supported Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, from which professors Jacques Maritain and Etienne Gilson spread a philosophy of Christian social responsibility that heavily influenced a generation of North American Catholic students and faculty.<sup>91</sup> In addition, several Basilians credited McNeil as one of the inspirations for their back-to-the-land Depression experiments during the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>92</sup> Establishing itself as a base for promoting Catholic social action in Toronto, the Basilian-operated St. Michael's College worked in partnership with St. Patrick's College in Ottawa, Assumption University in Windsor, and the University of Sudbury during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s to initiate housing co-operatives, credit unions, study clubs, rural settlements and college programmes of social study.<sup>93</sup>

After World War II, not only had social Catholicism taken hold in Ontario, but it was spreading across the nation. When the Canadian Catholic Conference (later to become the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops) was officially formed in 1948, they created a Social Action Department.<sup>94</sup>

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in *Catholics at the "Gathering Place,"* 213-32; Catherine de Hueck Doherty, *Fragments of My Life* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1979); Lorene Hanley Duquin, *They Called Her the Baroness: The Life of Catherine de Hueck Doherty* (New York: Alba House, 1995).

<sup>89</sup> Brian Francis Hogan, "Salted With Fire: Studies in Catholic Social Thought And Action in Ontario, 1931-1961," (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1986), 94-106.

<sup>90</sup> Edmund J. McCorkell, CSB, "Archbishop's Work for Higher Education," in *The Catholic Register*, 31 May 1934.

<sup>91</sup> Brian F. Hogan, "Ivory Tower and Grass Roots: The Intellectual Life and Social Action in the Congregation of St. Basil, Archdiocese of Toronto, 1930-1960," in McGowan and Clarke, *Catholics at the "Gathering Place,"* 258-59.

<sup>92</sup> Hogan, "Salted with Fire," 46-87.

<sup>93</sup> Brian F. Hogan, "The Institute of Social Action and Social Catholicism in Canada in the 1950s," *CCHA Historical Studies*, 54 (1987), 125-144.

<sup>94</sup> The CCC was founded in 1943, but officially recognized by the Holy See in 1948. Bernard M. Daly, *Remembering for Tomorrow: A History of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1943-1993* (Ottawa: Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1995), 19-33.

From 1953-1964, the English section of this department organized the Catholic Social Life Conferences (CSLC), the English-language equivalent of the *Semaines sociales*, which had been operating in Quebec since 1920.<sup>95</sup> One of the many fruits of this national forum for social Catholicism was the development of Social Action Sunday in the English-speaking dioceses of Canada in 1956. The next generation of Catholic activists who would come after the Second Vatican Council expanded on McNeil's groundwork to place the Church in solidarity with the poor and oppressed on an international level.<sup>96</sup>

In conclusion, from 1912-1934 Archbishop Neil McNeil of Toronto introduced a new paradigm of Catholicism that revolutionized how Canadian Catholics were to understand and live their faith. His vision is best summarized by a single line from his installation address: “[The Catholic Church] calls upon us to enlarge our hearts and to widen our horizon.” Known as social Catholicism, this progressive understanding of Catholic morality forged a link between the mission of the Catholic Church and the economic, political, and social order of the world. While these ideas had been around since the latter part of the nineteenth-century in Europe, McNeil was the first Canadian Bishop in English-Canada to apply the abstract ideals of Catholic social teaching to the practical context of industrial Canada. This shift in paradigm was revolutionary in its implications. Catholic social thought was being taught to diocesan priests in the seminary and the re-tooled diocesan newspaper empowered the laity to play a proactive role in Catholic social action. In addition, the internal structures and operations of the institutional church were altered to more effectively address the needs of Toronto’s poor. The overworked individual Catholic charities of the city were given centralized coordination to be more efficient and the scope of their ministries was expanded to implement the latest developments in the field of social work. Furthermore, Catholics were encouraged to cooperate with Protestant and secular benevolent institutions. By the time of McNeil’s death, on 25 May 1934, social Catholicism had become deeply ingrained in the mission of the Catholic Church in Toronto.

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<sup>95</sup> Hogan, “Salted with Fire,” 240-46.

<sup>96</sup> Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics*, 304-306.

# Beginning to Restructure the Institutional Church: Canadian Social Catholics and the CCF, 1931-1944

Robert H. DENNIS

The economic crisis of the 1930s brought the moral and economic foundation of capitalism into question. To express these concerns, liberal Protestants organized through religiously-based groups such as the Fellowship for a Christian Social Order (FCSO), joined secularly-rooted groups akin to the League for Social Reconstruction (LSR), and politicized through new parties such as the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF). Leaders like J.S. Woodsworth, T.C. Douglas, and S.H. Knowles revived the spirit of reform fostered by the Social Gospel, which helped inspire the creation of the CCF in 1932. Coupled with this religious influence, the CCF united agrarian radicals, organized labourers, and urban intellectuals into a nation-wide movement featuring a strong western base. Following the Calgary conference in 1932, the party's initial comprehensive statement of principles was expounded a year later in the "Regina Manifesto."<sup>1</sup> These early pronouncements were markedly radical, aiming, notably, to eliminate capitalism. However, despite these early ambitions, the programme of the CCF came to embrace a social democratic vision, which sought to reform capitalism through democratic institutions and market structures. Through this pursuit, argues historian Walter Young, the party endeavoured to

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<sup>1</sup> For an early treatment of the "Regina Manifesto," see Walter D. Young, *The Anatomy of a Party: The National CCF, 1932-1961* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 38-67.

enshrine Protestant principles within the country's parliamentary framework.<sup>2</sup> Many liberal Protestants articulated an alternative to capitalism and liberal order through membership in the CCF, as well as groups exemplified by the FCSO and LSR, in response to the conditions of the Depression.<sup>3</sup>

Although this connection between liberal Protestantism and the CCF has been stressed in much of the historiography, less attention has been given to the Roman Catholic Church's relationship with the party.<sup>4</sup> Soon after the CCF's formation, the institutional Church resisted this new, self-defined, socialist party, which was rooted in a Protestant form of Christian radicalism and framed in the social evolutionary language of Karl Marx and Herbert Spencer. Since prominent Archbishops in Quebec issued episcopal directives against participating in and voting for the party during the 1930s, the question here is how the Church opened to the CCF and offered limited acceptance by the mid-1940s. Emphasized within this literature is how a sustained dialogue between Murray Ballantyne, editor of the *Beacon*, the English-language weekly newspaper in the Archdiocese of Montreal, and Henry Somerville, editor of the *Catholic Register*, the weekly publication in the Archdiocese of Toronto, tried to convince the hierarchy to remove these restrictions. Both journalists believed that the CCF's response to the crisis in the economic, social, and political order was compatible with their understanding of Catholic social thought. Even amidst the vestiges of sectarianism in Catholic-Protestant relations elsewhere in the country, both men felt that Catholics ought to be free to offer support for a political party. In their estimations, the party's vision was not only acceptable under Church teachings, but, more importantly, represented a genuine Christian response to the Depression.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>3</sup> Ian McKay, *Rebels, Reds, Radicals: Rethinking Canada's Left History* (Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 2005), 42-43.

<sup>4</sup> This literature includes: Gregory Baum, *Catholics and Canadian Socialism: Political Thought in the Thirties and Forties* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Co., 1980); Jeanne R. Beck, "Henry Somerville and the Development of Catholic Social Thought in Canada: Somerville's Role in the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1915-1943," (Ph.D. Diss., McMaster University, 1977), 363-424; Murray G. Ballantyne, "The Catholic Church and the CCF," *CCHA Report* 30 (1963): 33-45; Bernard M. Daly, "A Priest's Tale: the Evolution of the Thinking of Eugene Cullinane CSB," *CCHA Historical Studies* 65 (1999): 9-27; Terence J. Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 215-220; Brian Hogan, "Salted with Fire: Studies in Catholic Social Thought and Action in Ontario, 1931-1961," (Ph.D. Diss., University of Toronto, 1987); George Hoffman, "Saskatchewan Catholics and the Coming of a New Politics, 1930-1934," in Richard Allen (ed.), *Religion and Society in the Prairie West* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1974); Sr. Teresita Kambeitz, "Relations Between the Catholic Church and the CCF in Saskatchewan, 1930-1950," *CCHA Study Sessions* 46 (1979): 49-69; Paul Laverdure, *Sunday in Canada: the Rise and Fall of the Lord's Day* (Yorkton, Saskatchewan: Gravelbooks, 2004).

This article reassesses the developments offered within this historiographical interpretation in order to grapple with their broader implications for the development of the Roman Catholic Church in Canada. During the Depression-era, much of Roman Catholic social and political thought was being reframed within a neo-Thomist tradition that influenced the development of social Catholicism in Canada. Inspired by the thought of French philosophers Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier, personalism is a belief in the absolute value of the human person, an affirmation of individual spirituality as part of unity in the mystical body of Christ, and the exaltation of private conscience. Social Catholicism rooted in personalism, then, focused on lay activism, personal commitment, and community, instead of clericalism, conformity, and institutionalism.<sup>5</sup> A new dimension is added to the prevailing historiography by looking at how social Catholic engagement with the party was a dialogical process: dialogue between social Catholics and the party was one force helping to pacify the radical platform of the CCF. Since the platform of the party reflected the aspirations of many social Catholics, they in turn challenged how the institutional Church engaged economic and political questions particularly with respect to instructing the laity. This article focuses primarily on the latter aspect of this dynamic: accommodation between the Church and the CCF was largely the product of social Catholicism influencing episcopal decisions and was part of the broader forces of secularization and Canadianization beginning to restructure the institutional Church.

Examined here are three stages that explore why the Quebec Archbishops placed, the English-Canadian Archbishops resisted, and, finally, both removed strictures against the CCF between 1931 and 1944. First, anathemas issued by the Quebec hierarchy against the CCF were opposed by social Catholics searching for new answers to the economic and social crisis of the Depression; second, a more cautious response by members of the English-Canadian hierarchy rendered these Archbishops reluctant to infringe upon the political liberty of their faithful; and finally, despite a conflict in these approaches, acceptance of the CCF came at the behest of influential social Catholics and consultation between national hierarchies. By negotiating conciliation between the hierarchy and the CCF, social Catholics operated in conjunction with broader processes of secularization and Canadianization affecting the institutional Church. Secularization is a complex and multifaceted development, but one of its central dynamics is organized religion's loss of monopoly in intellectual and social life. Ceding the right to civic decisions, in this case support for a political party, from the locus of clerical control to the decision-making

<sup>5</sup> Daniel Cere, review of *The Catholic Origins of Quebec's Quiet Revolution 1931–1970*, by Michael Gauvreau, in the *Catholic Register*, 30 April 2006, 8.

capacity of individual lay Catholics was one attempt by the institutional Church to adapt to this condition.<sup>6</sup> Differentiation in this specific sense hastened Canadianization.<sup>7</sup> This process pushed Canadian prelates to act more collegially, rather than speak to issues of national significance on a local level, as the institutional Church incorporated English- and French-Canadian hierarchies into a national episcopal body.<sup>8</sup>

The institutional Church's position on the early programme of the CCF is widely known, following the Quebec hierarchy's decision to study the party's vision contained in the "Calgary Declaration." On 9 March 1933, thirteen clergymen met under the direction of the *École Sociale Populaire* to discuss the party's programme. Father Georges-Henri Lévesque, later known for his role in setting up the Faculty of Social Sciences at Laval University, was selected to write the Church's position.<sup>9</sup> Lévesque framed his report vis-à-vis *Quadragesimo Anno*, promulgated by Pope Pius XI in 1931, which argued that socialism was only acceptable if it included private property rights and rejected materialist conceptions of society and class struggle.<sup>10</sup> The party was condemned as socialistic on all these counts; some of the thirteen members making this evaluation even believed the party was Communistic. The report concluded that these three points prohibited Catholic participation, but if they were modified, this position was subject to change.<sup>11</sup> The party itself was in the early stages of its genesis, and many of the issues raised would be clarified the following year when it issued the

<sup>6</sup> Though debate over the secularization thesis has been fierce in Canadian religious historiography, historian David Marshall, writing on the role of Protestant clergy in the secularization of Presbyterian, Methodist, and, after 1925, United Churches, outlines some of the key facets of secularization. They include: religious and supernatural explanations about the world replaced with natural and scientific ones, the laicisation of social institutions like schools, religious values and clerical control superseded by concerns about good citizenship, modernization of belief systems and worship practices, and a decline in Church involvement. See David B. Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850–1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 7.

<sup>7</sup> Historian Terence Fay deals extensively with Canadianization as a central theme of the institutional Church's development in Canada. See Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics*, 153–324.

<sup>8</sup> Formed in 1943, the Canadian Catholic Conference (CCC) was renamed the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) in 1977. See Bernard M. Daly, *Remembering for Tomorrow: A History of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1943–1993* (Ottawa: Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1995).

<sup>9</sup> Michael D. Behiels, "Father Georges-Henri Lévesque and the Introduction of Social Sciences at Laval, 1938–1955," in Paul Axelrod and John Reid (eds.), *Youth, University, and Canadian Society: Essays in the Social History of Higher Education* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 325.

<sup>10</sup> Pope Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, 1931, article 113.

<sup>11</sup> Baum, *Catholics and Canadian Socialism*, 101.

“Regina Manifesto.” Lévesque was more moderate than the scathing critique envisioned by other members of the thirteen, and he came to appreciate later the deep moral and spiritual dimension of the party inculcated by the Social Gospel movement.<sup>12</sup>

To understand the early relationship between the Quebec hierarchy and the CCF, one needs to delve deeper into how this response was rooted in the Vatican’s intellectual reaction to the crisis of industrial capitalism. For the hierarchy in Quebec, responses to the Depression, generally, were informed by conservative readings of Catholic social thought enshrined in papal Encyclicals. Endeavouring to remedy the impasse of this global crisis, *Quadragesimo Anno* argued strenuously to protect private property rights, but rather than rooting this position in liberal values, it advocated a corporatist form of social relations. Corporatism viewed society as an organism, rather than as a collection of atomized individuals, and posited an alternative to social orders predicated on either individualism or collectivism. This vision aimed to organize society into a series of corporations, representing different elements of society, in order to reduce class conflict.<sup>13</sup> These groups, ideally instructed by Catholic social doctrine, would organize society hierarchically and harmoniously and govern for the common good.<sup>14</sup> While corporatism was often adopted by fascist regimes, notably Italy under Benito Mussolini and Spain under General Francisco Franco, it could develop along either authoritarian or popular lines. Under the *Union Nationale* government of Maurice Duplessis, however, the province of Quebec took on characteristics of clerical fascism, rather than the democratic and cooperative society envisioned by French-Canadian intellectuals like Henri Bourassa, Quebec Member of Parliament and influential French-Canadian intellectual.<sup>15</sup> Given its influence on governance in Quebec, corporatism caused prominent early members of the CCF, namely Eugene Forsey and Frank Scott, to conflate Catholicism, fascism, and French-Canadian nationalism.<sup>16</sup>

Whether or not the CCF programme advanced a conception of socialism prohibited by *Quadragesimo Anno* has been well treated in the historiography by Gregory Baum.<sup>17</sup> He argues at length that only the issue of class-conflict failed to reconcile with Church doctrine. The conclusions of the Lévesque

<sup>12</sup> Behiels, “Father Georges-Henri Lévesque and the Introduction of Social Sciences at Laval, 1938–1955,” 325.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 144–145.

<sup>14</sup> Sean Mills, “When Democratic Socialists Discovered Democracy: the League for Social Reconstruction Confronts the ‘Quebec Problem,’” *Canadian Historical Review*, 86, no. 1 (March 2005): 65.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>17</sup> Baum, *Catholics and Canadian Socialism*, 99–118.

Report, therefore, reflected errors in its methodology. Most of the evidence Lévesque used to support his findings was drawn from speeches in the House of Commons made by opponents of J.S. Woodsworth and the vision that he set forth.<sup>18</sup> Here one sees the divide between the historic conditions, which enabled this western protest party to form, and the insular place of the Church in the province of Quebec. For social Catholics, it was noted that the party was defensible in terms of the encyclical. Dissenting from the institutional Church, Bourassa argued:

When you make use of the Pope's Encyclical to denounce the CCF, why do you not read that part of it which denounces the system that has been built up, maintained, and protected by the two great historic parties since Confederation? If you do, you will find the Pope's Encyclical as much against our social and economic system as is against communism and socialism.<sup>19</sup>

*Quadragesimo Anno*, in short, was subject to a conservative reading in the Lévesque Report, which, in this moment, provided a foil to the aspirations of social Catholics.

The rationale of the Lévesque Report drew the Church more fully within the penumbra of the liberal state. Against a Canadian state project devoted to entrenching liberal values and expanding liberal assumptions about society and humanity,<sup>20</sup> the CCF had framed its own alternative worldview in response to the crisis of the Depression.<sup>21</sup> The “Regina Manifesto” blended Christian, Fabian, and Marxist socialism to set forth a vision for reform upon “abolishing the corrupt social order.”<sup>22</sup> As a protest movement, the CCF endeavoured to oppose the capitalist relations inherent to liberal order by generating socialist principles for the country. The ills of society were rooted in private control of the means of production, and the party sought to replace the market economy with a centralized, planned system predicated on natural resource development.<sup>23</sup> Although there was a great dissonance between Canadian liberalism and the corporatist model advanced by the Church, they found broad agreement on the need to protect

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

<sup>19</sup> Cited in Ballantyne, “The Catholic Church and the CCF,” 33.

<sup>20</sup> Since liberal leadership governed the Canadian state, its objective was to defend, consolidate, and extend this process, which Ian McKay has theorized as a framework of liberal order. It was both expansive, extending liberal rule from sea to sea, but also intensive as people internalized these assumptions as, in Gramscian terms, “common sense.” See Ian McKay, “The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History,” *Canadian Historical Review* 81, 3 (2000): 617–645.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 629.

<sup>22</sup> Young, *The Anatomy of a Party*, 45.

<sup>23</sup> Leo Zakuta, *A Protest Movement Becalmed: A Study of Change in the CCF* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 35–57.

private property rights, which was a foundational tenet to both social orders. The early radicalism of the CCF platform, if brought to fruition, would both challenge the established church-state relationship in the province of Quebec and eradicate a key natural right posited by the Church. These two considerations, rooted in different models of social reform, offer a prism to understand why members of the Quebec hierarchy opposed the CCF (and in turn why many of the party's key Montreal-based intellectuals felt animosity towards the Church) during the 1930s.

The Lévesque Report took on particular importance, however, because it offered a frame of reference to further condemnations: on 16 May 1933, the Quebec hierarchy issued an episcopal directive in the form of a joint pastoral letter to the province. It dealt ostensibly with Communism, but its commentary was a *de facto* castigation of the CCF. The document's second article condemned all forms of socialism and collectivism because these systems misunderstood the role of liberty and private initiative in the organization of socio-economic affairs. Individuals would be dependent on the state; property and capital production would become completely subsumed under it. The document also stated that the abuses of capitalism were regrettable, but this system was more desirable than ones that lacked respect for the moral order—implying a close connection between the atheistic nature of communism in Soviet practice and socialism in general. Though papal thought rejected ideologies with materialist conceptions of society, objections to socialism were also based on a confluence of domestic concerns: namely it aimed to disrupt the political and social order and infringed on the rights of the province in the federal state.<sup>24</sup> Because the Roman Catholic Church successfully created a public space for French-Canadian identity to flourish, French-Canadian nationalism was closely associated with Catholicism and protected by the language and education rights conferred to the province through Confederation.<sup>25</sup> As a party with strong roots in western Canada, despite its host of Quebec-based intellectuals, the CCF gave insufficient attention to the place of the *Québécois* in the Canadian landscape. The Quebec episcopacy, therefore, had much incentive to oppose a socialist formation that potentially challenged Church doctrine and, as importantly, its arrangement within the established political order.

<sup>24</sup> Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto [ARCAT], Archbishop Neil McNeil Papers, *Déclaration de l'Episcopat de la Province de Québec – Le Communisme*, 16 May 1933, MN TA01.114a.

<sup>25</sup> Roberto Perin, "Elaborating a Public Culture: the Catholic Church in Nineteenth-Century Quebec," in Marguerite Van Die (ed.), *Religion and Public Life in Canada: Historical and Comparative Perspectives* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 90.

Discontented with social and economic conditions of the Depression, social Catholics received the early programme of the CCF more favourably than their institutional counterparts. This position was expressed most clearly through media under lay direction—most notably in the Archdiocese of Montreal, the *Beacon*, the English-language weekly newspaper. Murray G. Ballantyne, a convert to Catholicism and son of Progressive Conservative Senator C.C. Ballantyne, edited it. Ballantyne was a close friend of Frank Scott—who later chaired the CCF party—and had a relationship with some of the key participants in Quebec’s Quiet Revolution including Pierre Casgrain, Gérard Dion, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Not surprisingly, then, he developed close ties to the LSR and CCF during the 1930s. At Ballantyne’s discretion, the *Beacon* reprinted the “Regina Manifesto” and ran an editorial in support of it. The editorial argued that it did not agree with each prescription: however, since private property rights remained unchallenged, the CCF programme represented the best alternative put forth to lead Canada out of its economic crisis. It supported a planned economy, though the article warned against the peril of too much state ownership.<sup>26</sup> The opinion advanced by the *Beacon* clearly contradicted the pronouncements of the official Church in Quebec and showed great empathy for the aims of the new party.

The *Beacon*’s position angered the Coadjutor Archbishop of Montreal, Georges Gauthier (1921–1940), which prompted a flurry of activity. In response, Archbishop Gauthier gave a sermon in September 1933, warning against the new party and the socialism it sought to impose on Canadian society. Though not mentioning the CCF specifically, the Quebec episcopacy proceeded to issue a statement that stated socialism was not a proper remedy for the current impasse.<sup>27</sup> The clergy promptly followed the lead of the hierarchy. Father Louis Chagnon, S.J. gave a lecture on 15 November 1933 in Montreal, concluding that the CCF’s programme did not warrant the support of Catholic voters. This talk was reprinted in the *Beacon*. Father Chagnon had been one of the thirteen clerics who deliberated a year earlier and had contributed to the report written by Georges-Henri Lévesque. The lecture reiterated the findings of the early document and revealed a forthcoming Catholic programme for reform based closely on the social Encyclicals: particularly *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*.<sup>28</sup> Finally, on 16 February 1934, Gauthier issued a pastoral letter confirming his position that Catholic social doctrine and the CCF were incommensurable. In addition to drawing on the doctrine of the international Church, it also rejected the CCF programme based on liberal values: the status of private property rights

<sup>26</sup> Baum, *Catholics and Canadian Socialism*, 120–121.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 121–122.

<sup>28</sup> Rare Books & Special Collections, McGill University, Murray G. Ballantyne Papers, Lecture by Rev. Fr. Louis Chagnon S.J., 15 November 1933, MS 470/1.

were drawn into question, but it also stated the individual must precede the state, which meant individuals had natural rights of which the state could not dispossess them. The CCF, the pastoral letter concluded, failed to recognize this fundamental premise in its conception of the social order and thus the Church prohibited Catholics from adhering to its aims.<sup>29</sup> Though these statements were not official pronouncements of the universal Church—rather they were local directives applying to specific bishoprics or the provincial episcopacy—they had the popular effect of discouraging CCF inroads into Quebec and created the perception of a ubiquitous Catholic position.

Opposition to this position came from a variety of lay Catholics, particularly the English-speaking minority within the Quebec Church. A group of Catholic party members, Murray Ballantyne among them, expressed their displeasure with the position of the Quebec Church in a memorandum entitled, “Catholics in the CCF.” As a challenge to capitalism, they advocated “new economic forms,” “new economic and social structures,” and stated that the CCF programme represented the minimum conditions for a truly “Christian social order.” This language was similar to the vernacular of organized Protestant attempts at social reform, which included the Movement for a Christian Social Order based at the Carleton Street United Church in Toronto, and its progeny, the Fellowship for a Christian Social Order.<sup>30</sup> Exemplifying a social Catholic perspective, the memorandum, drawing directly on the thought of French philosopher Jacques Maritain, concluded that Catholics must participate in broader Christian movements and influence the direction of the party.<sup>31</sup> The authors of the memorandum wanted to add a Catholic voice to these Protestant movements, because they empathized with the vigorous Christian critique levelled against the capitalist system by these groups. These social Catholics wished to disassociate the Church from political movements of the right-wing. This evidence reflected discontent with the institutional Church’s attempts at social reform by recognizing its perilous connection to fascist regimes particularly as they replaced democratically elected ones. Joseph Wall, a Catholic, CCF party member, and General Organizer for the Brotherhood of Railway Employees, voiced concern over Archbishop Gauthier’s position directly to high-ranking officials in the Church. He wrote numerous letters to Archbishop Gauthier, Monsignor Andrea Cassulo, Apostolic Delegate of Canada, and copied most of them to Father W.X. Bryan, S.J. at Loyola College, Montreal. Monsignor

<sup>29</sup> Monsignor Georges Gauthier, Archbishop of Montreal, pastoral letter no. 60, 11 February 1934. Discussed in Jean Hulliger, *L’enseignement social des évêques Canadiens de 1891 à 1950: thèse présentée à la Faculté de Théologie de l’Université d’Ottawa* (Montreal: Bibliothèque Économique et Sociale, 1957), 194–195.

<sup>30</sup> John Webster Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*, 141–142.

<sup>31</sup> ARCAT, Neil McNeil Papers, Document entitled, “Memorandum—Catholics in the CCF,” 1933, MN AE14.05.

Cassulo replied that he did not have any jurisdiction in the matter and referred Wall to Archbishop Gauthier.<sup>32</sup> The Archbishop replied to Wall rather tersely: he referred to him the pastoral letters, and stated that Catholics in his position knew well where their duty lay.<sup>33</sup> The external opposition to the programme of the CCF by the institutional Church was met with defiance from social Catholics who saw general accord between the aims of the CCF and the reform potential of their faith.

Although the Quebec hierarchy provided the earliest and most public reaction to the CCF, an alternative was evident in the English-Canadian Church. Archbishop Neil McNeil (1912–1934), journalist Henry Somerville, and Archbishop James C. McGuigan (1934–1971) in the Archdiocese of Toronto showed a much closer link between social and institutional Catholicism than evident in Quebec. Due, in part, to the influence of social Catholicism—or perhaps, more precisely, the personalist philosophy that motivated it—these prelates were hesitant to infringe upon an individual's political liberty and thus hesitated to direct Catholics not to support a new party. Likewise, there was reluctance to use civil institutions to oppose the party based on religious conviction. This cautious response was not tantamount to an endorsement of the CCF or its programme, but it did show evidence of a substantial theological divide between the Quebec and English-Canadian hierarchies.

The close relationship between social and institutional Catholicism, evident in the Archdiocese of Toronto, would not have been possible without Archbishop Neil McNeil's desire to foster a more engaged Catholic polity on social questions.<sup>34</sup> McNeil had been a progressive voice within the Church since the early years of his priestly formation. As a seminarian, he was inspired by the Catholic Social Movement, which Henry Somerville defined as the continuous actions of Catholics, in union with the Church, to establish social relations based on Catholic understandings of well-being.<sup>35</sup> The Catholic Social Movement was an important voice that influenced Pope Leo XIII to issue *Rerum Novarum*.<sup>36</sup> Not surprisingly then, in contrast to the

<sup>32</sup> Rare Books & Special Collections, McGill University, Murray G. Ballantyne Papers, Joseph Wall to Archbishop Georges Gauthier, 28 February 1934, MS 470/4.

<sup>33</sup> Rare Books & Special Collections, McGill University, Murray G. Ballantyne Papers, Archbishop Georges Gauthier to Joseph Wall, 3 March 1934, MS 470/4.

<sup>34</sup> For a recent treatment of Archbishop McNeil's social outlook, see Peter Baltutis, "Archbishop Neil McNeil and Social Catholicism in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, 1912–1934," (M.A. Thesis, University of St. Michael's College, 2006).

<sup>35</sup> Henry Somerville, *The Catholic Social Movement* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne Ltd., 1933), 1.

<sup>36</sup> Jeanne R. Beck, "Contrasting Approaches to Catholic Social Action during the Depression: Henry Somerville the Educator and Catherine de Hueck the Activist," in Mark McGowan and Brian P. Clarke (eds.), *Catholics at the "Gathering Place": Historical*

Quebec hierarchy's conservative interpretation of papal thought, Archbishop McNeil advocated progressive readings of social encyclicals. Upon assuming the Toronto See in 1912, he found a Catholic polity that rarely engaged with political questions, had little knowledge of Catholic social doctrine, and only comprised twelve-percent of the city's population.<sup>37</sup> All of these factors motivated Archbishop McNeil to create adult education initiatives based on a progressive sense of Church doctrine: in 1915, he invited Catholic journalist and Christian socialist Henry Somerville to come from England to work on an educational programme for the clergy and laity, as well as edit the Archdiocese's newspaper, the *Catholic Register*, in an effort to achieve these goals.

The institutional Church, then, helped foster social Catholicism in English Canada, and, after Somerville accepted the Archbishop's offer, it was increasingly influenced by the way social Catholics indigenized Church doctrine. As economic conditions shifted during the Depression, this process became particularly acute. When questions about the nature of the CCF were raised in Quebec, Somerville committed to analyzing its programme, rather than rejecting it based on a presumption of socialist doctrine. He found the conception of socialism advanced by the CCF did not conflict with Church doctrine.<sup>38</sup> Somerville had faced similar questions in Britain about the varying nature of socialism and feared an impetuous condemnation by members of the English-Canadian hierarchy would alienate working-class Catholics who identified with aspirations of the new party.<sup>39</sup> In light of Depression-era conditions in Canada, alarm over the moral foundation of the capitalist system led some social Catholics to draw this system into question and urged the institutional Church to do the same.<sup>40</sup> Though many of the objectives of the CCF were consistent with views articulated in Somerville's own writing, he did not see the party as a means to achieve these aspirations in the same way that Ballantyne did. Rather, Somerville did not want support for the new party to be considered within the domain of faith and morality

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*Essays on the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1841–1991* (Toronto: Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 1991), 213.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 214.

<sup>38</sup> Henry Somerville, "Life and Labour, Catholics and the CCF," the *Catholic Register*, 4 January 1934. Cited in Beck, "Henry Somerville and the Development of Catholic Social Thought in Canada," 390–392.

<sup>39</sup> Joseph Sinasac, *Fateful Passages: the Life of Henry Somerville, Catholic Journalist* (Toronto: Novalis, 2004), 90.

<sup>40</sup> In McNeil's possession, written by an unidentified author, was a report on the new party that stated it was not opposed to Catholic principles, and "the spirit that seems to prompt the party is democratic, in the good sense of the word, and also liberal..." Though the programme of the party could be "an instrument of disorder," it concluded, the party resolves to oppose "capitalistic individualism." See ARCAT, Neil McNeil Papers, "The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation," 1933, MN AE14.04.

to help the institutional Church establish its place within a newly emerging social and political landscape in Canada.<sup>41</sup>

The CCF was approached cautiously, if optimistically, in Toronto, and this position was echoed by Archbishop James C. McGuigan during his tenure as the Archbishop of Regina. In a pastoral letter dated 2 February 1934, McGuigan stressed that the Church was not hesitant to oppose advocates of a new social order who violated essential Christian precepts that grounded the world order.<sup>42</sup> Though this language is subject to interpretation, McGuigan's actions in the months following suggest the leaders of the CCF in Saskatchewan did not fall under its warning. After Father Athol Murray, an educator at Notre Dame College in Wilcox, Saskatchewan, expelled two students for becoming members of the Young People's CCF study group, McGuigan wrote Murray and cautioned against such actions. This position, communicated to Murray, was arrived at after McGuigan assured the provincial CCF leader, M.J. Coldwell, that the Church would not oppose an individual's political affiliation in McGuigan's jurisdiction.<sup>43</sup> A motivating factor for McGuigan was the pervasiveness of an anti-Catholic Right in Saskatchewan, which was reflected in the relationship between the Ku Klux Klan and the Conservative Party in the 1929 provincial election.<sup>44</sup> In response to inquiries made by the Apostolic Delegate, Andrea Cassulo, about this incident, Archbishop McGuigan contended his actions were intended to remove the Church from the political arena and reiterated his position that the Church's only objective in this regard was to teach Catholic social doctrine.<sup>45</sup> This conciliatory approach to the CCF enabled the Church to become more receptive in the years following, as McGuigan went on to

<sup>41</sup> Historian Jeanne Beck stresses that Henry Somerville was more familiar with the subtleties of canon law than most lay Catholics. Though he was unhappy that many Catholics thought they could not support the CCF based on the public denunciation of the Quebec hierarchy, he did not want to highlight that these restrictions only applied to their Sees. Such a statement would challenge Archbishop Gauthier publicly and, more crucially, it would highlight disunity in the Canadian Church. See Beck, "Henry Somerville and the Development of Catholic Social Thought in Canada," 399.

<sup>42</sup> Archbishop James C. McGuigan, Archbishop of Regina, *Joint Pastoral Letter on the Christian World*, no. 51, 2 February 1934. Discussed in Jean Hulliger, *L'enseignement social des évêques Canadiens de 1891 à 1950* (Montreal: Bibliothèque Économique et Sociale Fides, 1957), 193.

<sup>43</sup> Kambeitz, "Relations Between the Catholic Church and the CCF in Saskatchewan, 1930-1950," 58; Peter McGuigan, "The CCF and the Canadian Catholic Church," *Catholic Insight* (January 2004): 36-41.

<sup>44</sup> Hoffman, "Saskatchewan Catholics and the Coming of a New Politics, 1930-1934," 66-67.

<sup>45</sup> Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Regina, James C. McGuigan Papers, Archbishop James C. McGuigan to Apostolic Delegate Andrea Cassulo, 15 June 1934.

become the Cardinal Archbishop of Toronto, and Coldwell assumed the federal leadership of the CCF.

Informed by a desire not to infringe upon an individual's political freedom, members of the English-Canadian hierarchy retained a position of neutrality during the 1930s. After McGuigan assumed his position as Archbishop of Toronto, he faced questions from parishioners of the Archdiocese about whether or not Toronto Catholics could vote for the CCF in the 1935 election.<sup>46</sup> To a written inquiry he replied: "The Catholic Church has made no official pronouncement for or against any political party in Canada. Freedom and liberty to vote according to one's conscience is given to all."<sup>47</sup> This position, however, not only resisted interfering with political liberty at the ballot box, but it refrained from direct clerical intervention in civil governance. On 16 December 1938, McGuigan received a letter from H.R. Fleming, Member of Parliament for Humboldt, Saskatchewan. The CCF had been using McGuigan's earlier conversation with Coldwell to counter public statements to the Canadian Club and the Montreal Junior Board of Trade, made by Cardinal Jean-Marie-Rodrigue Villeneuve (1931–1947), Archbishop of Quebec City, against the party.<sup>48</sup> Fleming, a Liberal Party member, indicated that, as a Roman Catholic, he would oppose the CCF based on Cardinal Villeneuve's judgements, and would take up matters in Ottawa as McGuigan wished.<sup>49</sup> Intending to keep the Church removed from the political sphere, McGuigan responded, "...it would be better for our Catholics not to drag this question into the public."<sup>50</sup> The English-Canadian Church actively disengaged the liberal state in this instance, as McGuigan sought distance from its affairs and supported individual political liberties.

The Vatican noticed the conflict between this position, and the one articulated more publicly by the Quebec hierarchy, particularly in light of the CCF's public identity as a socialist party. Aware of the disparity in these positions, Monsignor Ildebrando Antoniutti, the new Apostolic Delegate, inquired whether or not the CCF programme had been studied, and if it

<sup>46</sup> ARCAT, James C. McGuigan Papers, W.L. Gendron to Archbishop James C. McGuigan, 8 October 1935, MG PO04.01a.

<sup>47</sup> ARCAT, James C. McGuigan Papers, Archbishop James C. McGuigan to W.L. Gendron, 14 October 1935, MG PO04.01b.

<sup>48</sup> Beck, "Henry Somerville and the Development of Catholic Social Thought in Canada," footnote 67, 397–398.

<sup>49</sup> ARCAT, James C. McGuigan Papers, H.R. Fleming, Member of Parliament for Humboldt, to Archbishop James McGuigan, 16 December 1938, MG PO04.03a.

<sup>50</sup> ARCAT, James C. McGuigan Papers, Archbishop James McGuigan to H.R. Fleming, Member of Parliament for Humboldt, 22 December 1938, MG PO04.03b.

posed a threat to Catholic objectives.<sup>51</sup> McGuigan's reply demonstrated the impact of social Catholicism on his own thinking and, perhaps, even empathy for CCF. He wrote:

Considering, however, the evils of the existing social order and the possibility of great and even radical changes, some of them desirable and in accordance with true social justice... we do not think that Catholics should be hastily condemned for joining the CCF nor should they be absolutely forbidden to do so, until a more exact analysis of their social teachings is made.<sup>52</sup>

The Apostolic Delegate followed-up these correspondences with another letter on the matter a year later, sending Archbishop McGuigan a copy of the Lévesque Report. He suggested the report could be disseminated widely within the Archdiocese of Toronto, if Archbishop McGuigan saw fit.<sup>53</sup> This was a suggestion that the cleric apparently disregarded. Perhaps in light of the Church's experience in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), Monsignor Antoniutti clearly gave more weight to the position of the Quebec Church, which favoured anathema over neutrality, than the English-Canadian one.

After the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation's initial formation in the early 1930s, it became increasingly moderate by the end of the Second World War.<sup>54</sup> The programme of the CCF was being pacified independently of the Roman Catholic Church's influence of course. This was exemplified by the great debate over the party's decision to distance itself from the Communist Party of Canada.<sup>55</sup> Political radicalism in liberal democracies tends to become more moderate in order to create a broader base of support and thus increase a party's chance of election.<sup>56</sup> The CCF was willing to make important concessions to gain favour with Roman Catholics and the Church's hierarchy: a member of the provincial CCF in Saskatchewan revealed that after the Catholic vote had helped the party win a by-election, attacks by

<sup>51</sup> ARCAT, James C. McGuigan Papers, Monsignor Ildebrando Antoniutti, Apostolic Delegate, to Archbishop James C. McGuigan, 9 December 1938, MG DS40.34.

<sup>52</sup> ARCAT, James C. McGuigan Papers, Archbishop James C. McGuigan to Ildebrando Antoniutti, Apostolic Delegate, 17 December 1938, MG DS40.35a.

<sup>53</sup> ARCAT, James C. McGuigan Papers, Ildebrando Antoniutti, Apostolic Delegate, to Archbishop James C. McGuigan, 21 November 1939, MG DS41.62.

<sup>54</sup> The "protest movement becalmed" literature, discussed by Alan Whitehorn, historicizes the CCF in this way. See Alan Whitehorn, *Canadian Socialism: Essays on the CCF-NDP* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994), 18–34.

<sup>55</sup> For a discussion of how the CCF was pressured by the Roman Catholic Church on the right and the Communist party on the left, see Ivan Avakumovic, *Socialism in Canada: A Study of the CCF-NDP in Federal and Provincial Politics* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, Ltd., 1978), 124–125.

<sup>56</sup> A Gramscian approach to liberal order sees this process as the heart of "passive revolution:" disorganizing the left, appropriating its organic intellectuals, and altering its aspirations to fit with new liberal conceptions like the welfare state.

the federal party on the “Padlock Act” in Quebec were toned down in order to garner greater support from Catholic farmers in the provincial election in 1938.<sup>57</sup> A small group of social Catholics attempted to hasten this process of negotiation and accommodation: after the decade-long conflict between the position of the Quebec and English-Canadian hierarchies on the CCF, social Catholics exerted enough influence on the episcopacy to remove existing prohibitions against the CCF. Support for this process remained conditional from the hierarchy in Quebec, while English-Canadian bishops more readily embraced it. Consultation between national hierarchies, regardless of these inclinations, was novel and innovative and signalled an important step towards the Canadianization of the institutional Church.

After correspondence with Henry Somerville and Egbert Munzer, another advisor to Cardinal McGuigan, Murray Ballantyne learned that a committee to study the CCF in light of Church doctrine was proposed in Toronto. On 26 October 1942, he wrote Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau of Montreal (1940–1950), successor to the deceased Georges Gauthier, that such a committee should originate in Quebec, since the Quebec hierarchy had condemned the party. Charbonneau was a stark contrast to earlier Archbishops of Montreal—the first Franco-Ontarian to hold this position, and best known as a key figure in the Quiet Revolution for siding against the Duplessis government in the Asbestos Strike. Ballantyne hoped the Archbishop would be receptive to this idea. The letter to Charbonneau began with a preamble about how the Church tried to protect labour rights. It made many of the same points as a letter that he received from Frank Scott on how the CCF represented the working-class in Canada.<sup>58</sup> Ballantyne revealed that he had conducted informal discussions with Scott about how the CCF programme reconciled with Church doctrine. Ballantyne posited three conclusions: first, the party’s practical proposals were acceptable to Catholics, even more than the traditional parties, perhaps because they focused on issues of social and economic justice; second, the philosophy was “materialist” and “humanitarian,” which was consistent with the other parties and, finally, the criticisms in Archbishop Gauthier’s Pastoral Letter were no longer valid, in part, perhaps, because the party had increasingly adopted liberal values during the previous decade. Ballantyne wrote, “Few, if any, of the CCF leaders are philosophers. Their assumptions are implicit not explicit: they are, I believe, susceptible of modification … We do not

<sup>57</sup> This legislation, widely supported by the Quebec hierarchy in an attempt to stop the spread of Communism, gave the police the authority to padlock any building suspected of housing subversive activity for a period of one year. See Avakumovic, *Socialism in Canada*, 111.

<sup>58</sup> Rare Books & Special Collections, McGill University, Murray G. Ballantyne Papers, Frank R. Scott to Murray Ballantyne, 23 October 1942, MS 470/21.

need to fear the Party, that is to say, unless we drive it away from us and into opposition to us.”<sup>59</sup> The party had successfully distanced itself from the Communist Party, he argued, and Catholics had a historic opportunity to influence policy.

Archbishop Charbonneau approved the formation of a committee, and Ballantyne served as its only anglophone member. The committee quickly formulated its conclusions, positing that the CCF was incompatible with French-Canadian life, and suggesting the CCF programme may interfere with the aspirations of future political parties, such as the *Bloc Populaire*, which the other committee members had endorsed.<sup>60</sup> The conclusions of the committee, which had quietly been reached during a second session when Ballantyne was absent, were only aimed at French Canada. Its Secretary confided to Ballantyne: “... English-speaking Catholics should join the CCF because it was the least of the three evils [Liberal Party, Progressive Conservative Party, and the CCF] and because they could exert influence within the Party and keep it from going to extremes.”<sup>61</sup> In a letter written the following year to Archbishop Charbonneau, which he called the minority report of the committee, Ballantyne stated: “Thinking that was the aim of the Montreal committee, I opened “*pourparlers*” with Coldwell ... My purpose was to explore the possibility of a declaration of principle on the part of the CCF, which would be both a guarantee and an occasion for a change of policy on the part of the Church.”<sup>62</sup> Ballantyne clearly had different objectives than the other committee members—he wanted to reform the programme of the CCF, modifying it in ways acceptable to the Church, through dialogue with the party.

During December 1942 when corresponding with Coldwell, Ballantyne forwarded the CCF party leader a list of issues raised by Cardinal Villeneuve, which set forth conditions for making political parties acceptable to the Church. He added, “I realize that not all the seven and ten points will be acceptable to the party, and that the phrasing of others may well have to be adapted.”<sup>63</sup> Ballantyne suggested, further, that the CCF should advocate for a Bill of Rights, which would help the party gain support from both “Catholics”

<sup>59</sup> Rare Books & Special Collections, McGill University, Murray G. Ballantyne Papers, Murray Ballantyne to Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau, 26 October 1942, MS 470/28.

<sup>60</sup> Ballantyne, “The Catholic Church and the CCF,” 39.

<sup>61</sup> ARCAT, James McGuigan Papers, Murray G. Ballantyne to Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau, Archdiocese of Montreal, 18 September 1943, MG PO04.05c.

<sup>62</sup> ARCAT, James McGuigan Papers, Murray G. Ballantyne to Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau, Archdiocese of Montreal, 20 September 1943, MG PO04.05b.

<sup>63</sup> Rare Books & Special Collections, McGill University, Murray G. Ballantyne Papers, Murray Ballantyne to M.J Coldwell, 16 December 1942, MS 470/21.

and the “French.”<sup>64</sup> Coldwell agreed, writing, “... these rights upon which Confederation depends should be written into the Statutes of Canada ... so that there may be no misunderstanding.” While the letter did not elaborate on the nature of these rights, a subsequent letter to Frank Scott, dated 16 September 1943, stated that protections for minorities, property, and, most crucially, education be included.<sup>65</sup> A move towards protecting these rights reflected developments within other socialist groups, as the League for Social Reconstruction redefined the democratic nature of its socialist programme by promoting liberal rights in response to clerical-fascism in the province of Quebec.<sup>66</sup> The collective rights identified by Scott were not “liberal” in the classical sense, but they did show how social Catholics simultaneously attempted to restructure the CCF agenda, while pushing the institutional Church to establish more amicable, secular relations with mainstream political parties. After this exchange of letters, talk of a Bill of Rights became more evident in speeches made by Coldwell. Ballantyne, moreover, revealed to Georges-Henri Lévesque (who was quietly sympathetic to the party by this time) that Coldwell had accepted Cardinal Villeneuve’s points with “hesitation” or “reservation.”<sup>67</sup>

When Murray Ballantyne again addressed the matter of the CCF to Archbishop Charbonneau on 18 September 1943, he raised three substantive criticisms of the committee’s work. First, he responded to the argument about the “preservation of the French Canadian way of life” set forth by the other committee members. Although he conceded the close connection between Catholicism and Quebec, this objection did not belong within the domain of faith and morals. Ballantyne argued, “But it is one thing to say that something is wrong for an individual, and another to say that it is wrong in itself.”<sup>68</sup> Second, drawing on the work of Jacques Maritain, he suggested that the future would bring pluralist states rather than “Catholic countries.” On the grounds of “apostolic responsibility,” then, arguments against cooperation with non-Catholics must be rejected. Bridges ought to be built with all people of good will instead of attaching the Church to a particular political apparatus. This point demanded the institutional Church secularize its ties to civil governments and clearly critiqued the Church’s tendency to

<sup>64</sup> Rare Books & Special Collections, McGill University, Murray G. Ballantyne Papers, Murray Ballantyne to M.J. Coldwell, 18 December 1942, MS 470/21.

<sup>65</sup> Rare Books & Special Collections, McGill University, Murray G. Ballantyne Papers, Murray Ballantyne to Frank R. Scott, 16 September 1943, MS 470/22.

<sup>66</sup> Mills, “When Democratic Socialists Discovered Democracy,” 53–81.

<sup>67</sup> Rare Books & Special Collections, McGill University, Murray G. Ballantyne Papers, Murray Ballantyne to Fr. Georges-Henri Lévesque, 8 February 1943, MS 470/22.

<sup>68</sup> ARCAT, James C. McGuigan Papers, Murray G. Ballantyne to Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau, Archdiocese of Montreal, 18 September 1943, MG PO04.05c.

build connections with fascist regimes. It also reflected Ballantyne's own political inclinations since the key focus of the Canadian left in this moment was to oppose fascist movements, which also corresponded to the desire to disestablish ties to the Duplessis government.<sup>69</sup> Finally, in terms of "political justice," Ballantyne argued the CCF should be treated like the other political parties. Contradicting the pastoral directive of Archbishop Gauthier a decade earlier, Ballantyne concluded by prescribing that the CCF should be declared "indifferent" from the perspective of faith and morals.<sup>70</sup> Persuasive in his argument, Archbishop Charbonneau asked Ballantyne to set up a meeting, with Frank Scott and M.J. Coldwell, to discuss the party's platform, and how, or if, it was consistent with Church teachings.<sup>71</sup> Archbishop Charbonneau was satisfied with the party, and he agreed to discuss a resolution indicating that the previous condemnations no longer applied—and thus harmonized his position with the English-Canadian hierarchy towards the CCF—at a Plenary Meeting of Bishops held on 13 October 1943.<sup>72</sup>

As the Bishops prepared to meet, Cardinal McGuigan was counselled to look favourably upon the new party. This position had less of a direct impact on the CCF, and there is little evidence of direct contact with the party. However, a decision to remove institutional impediments would allow Catholics to vote for and to join the party in good conscience. Receiving advice from a trusted confident, Cardinal McGuigan was advised the Church should abandon its formal relationship with states and work through all political parties not opposed to faith and morals.<sup>73</sup> This meeting redefined the way Bishops would direct their faithful, particularly as these actions pertained to political rights and civic duties. The second resolution on the agenda, agreed upon by the Bishops, was "That official condemnation of federal political parties be made by one Bishop only after consultation with other Bishops." Not surprisingly, then, the third item resolved to declare voting for the CCF a matter indifferent to faith.<sup>74</sup> Archbishop McGuigan adopted these positions willingly, particularly since the Quebec Bishops chose to support them. A bi-national subcommittee comprised of Archbishops Charbonneau, McGuigan, and Francis Patrick Carroll of Calgary (1935–1968) issued a

<sup>69</sup> "Surely," Murray Ballantyne wrote, "after the record elsewhere, we do not want to form a "Catholic" political party, or to become identified with the political forces of the 'Right.'" See *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> Ballantyne, "The Catholic Church and the CCF," 43.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> ARCAT, James C. McGuigan Papers, E.L. Munzer to Archbishop James C. McGuigan, 22 September 1943, MG SO45.35a.

<sup>74</sup> Beck, "Henry Somerville and the Development of Catholic Social Thought in Canada," 411–412.

statement on this decision.<sup>75</sup> The Bishops chose not to mention the party by name, but the statement articulated to Canadian Catholics that they were free to support any party not advocating principles contrary to Roman Catholic faith and morals. While major, traditional Canadian political parties fell under the rubric, this category now comfortably included the CCF—which itself had increasingly moved to the mainstream of Canadian politics.

This meeting was an important moment within the secularization and Canadianization of the Church. Given how the CCF had modified its programme, McGuigan was pleased that the Quebec Bishops removed their objections to the party. In personal correspondence, he confided that strengthening the CCF was part of a strategy to keep it away from radicalism. Essentially, by helping the party broaden its base of support, radical factions still evident in the party would be neutralized.<sup>76</sup> Because the party's radical element tended to be the most anti-clerical, this objective was aimed at fostering positive relationships with all political parties. A fully secular church-state relationship might be able to disregard anti-clericalism, but this stance at least represented a new way to foster diffuse Catholic participation throughout the political process with less direction from the institutional Church. Shortly after the Archbishops released their "Statement on Party Affiliation of Catholics," however, Archbishop McGuigan received a letter from the Apostolic Delegate that aimed to counter a rumour that "the CCF was approved by the Holy See."<sup>77</sup> Clearly the Canadian episcopacy was developing an independent, increasingly bi-national, identity, as this body responded to Canadian economic, social, and political issues. This restructuring, quickened by social Catholics, was part of a metamorphosis begun earlier in the twentieth-century. Although Canadian Bishops had met since the nineteenth century, they recognized the need for a formal episcopal body given the Church's evolution in Canada by the 1940s—in part to establish coherency on pressing issues such as the acceptability of the CCF under Church doctrine.<sup>78</sup> Canadian Bishops formed the Canadian Catholic Conference in 1943; it featured six different commissions including one devoted to political-religious and political-social questions.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>75</sup> "Bishops of Canada Ask for Social Economic Reforms: Statement on Party Affiliation of Catholics," *Catholic Register*, 30 October 1943.

<sup>76</sup> ARCAT, James C. McGuigan Papers, James C. McGuigan to Lieutenant F.J. Carson, 10 November 1943, MG PO04.08b.

<sup>77</sup> ARCAT, James C. McGuigan Papers, Monsignor Ildebrando Antoniutti, Apostolic Delegate, to Archbishop James C. McGuigan, 27 November 1943, MG DS45.56.

<sup>78</sup> Plenary sessions for Canadian Bishops to discuss mutual problems had been organized since the nineteenth-century, however, the only responsibility placed on individual Bishops was faithfulness to Canon Law. See Fay, *A History of Canadian Catholics*, 267.

<sup>79</sup> Daly, *Remembering for Tomorrow*, 20–21.

Following the Bishops' declaration, Murray Ballantyne and Henry Somerville wrote accompanying editorials in their respective newspapers clearly identified as applying to the CCF. Other newspapers, among them Winnipeg's *Northwest Review* and London's *Catholic Record*, issued statements saying these editorial interpretations were unofficial. As a result, Ballantyne wanted further confirmation from the Bishops that the interpretation put forth by him and Somerville was indeed "official." Both Somerville and McGuigan thought this step went too far: it could create disunity in the Church, and the available statements sufficiently established the Church's position. Ballantyne published an article on the Church and the CCF in an American publication, *Commonweal*, on 4 April 1944, and it was reprinted in the *Catholic Register* on 15 April 1944.<sup>80</sup> By this point, however, the institutional Church removed opposition to the CCF. News of Catholics nominated for the party in the next provincial election was being advertised in the *Catholic Register*, which would have been less likely had the party still been subject to anathemas in Quebec.<sup>81</sup> In the year to follow, Bishop Carroll summarized the secularization of the Canadian Church's role in politics, writing: "In English-speaking provinces, at least, any attempt to join the two [politics and religion], would be resented and not tolerated by our Catholic people."<sup>82</sup>

The Church's encounter with the CCF reveals several interesting tensions bearing on the theme of restructuring. During this period, Canadian social Catholics were largely influenced by two intellectual currents. In one instance, the great social Encyclicals of the institutional Church encouraged Catholics to be more cognizant of social and economic issues, which members of the Canadian hierarchy supported through educational endeavours. At the same time, an influential strain of Catholic social thought within a neo-Thomistic framework sprung from the laity. Philosophers, such as Jacques Maritain and Emmanuel Mounier, were, in Gramscian terms, inorganic intellectuals for Canadian social Catholics. This group, in turn, indigenized an emerging philosophy of personalism, producing much faith-based, grassroots action during a time of dire economic depression. Globally, this intellectual and religious ferment was one step on a path that led the Church to Vatican II in the proceeding generation. Domestically, the blend of these two currents produced disparate results: English-Canadian Catholics aimed to use their faith in a manner that challenged the systemic inequalities of the prevailing social order and likely wanted their Church leaders to be more engaged with issues on this front. Meanwhile, they also

<sup>80</sup> Ballantyne, "The Catholic Church and the CCF," 33–45.

<sup>81</sup> *Catholic Register*, Saturday 18 March 1944, 8.

<sup>82</sup> Archives of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Calgary, Bishop Francis Carroll Papers, Bishop Francis Carroll to G.M. Whicher, 23 March 1945, 27.847.

wanted clerical leaders to be disengaged on the issue of party affiliation, participation, and support as lay Catholics sought political solutions to social and economic problems. This attempt to differentiate the sacred from the secular was crystallized by the Church's relationship with the CCF during the 1930s and 1940s, causing the public role of institutional Catholicism to shift within the Canadian landscape.



## “An Imperialist Irishman”: Bishop Michael Fallon, the Diocese of London and the Great War<sup>1</sup>

Adrian CIANI

If it can be said that Canada came of age as a nation through its heroic and decisive participation in the First World War, it could also be said that Canadian Catholics proved their loyalty to the nation and the Empire during the conflict, and engrained themselves ever more firmly into the nation’s social fabric. Indeed, Catholic participation in the Great War contributed to a significant decrease in sectarian tensions in the postwar period, particularly in English Canada. While much has been written on Catholic participation in the war, however, curiously little has been said about the diocese of London and its controversial bishop, Michael Francis Fallon.<sup>2</sup> Like many English-speaking Roman Catholic churchmen, Fallon was an active supporter of the war effort, regarding it as an opportunity for Catholics to establish a public identity as patriotic and loyal Canadians. His support for the war effort must also, however, be viewed through the lens of his tripartite loyalties, to the British Empire, to Ireland and to Irish Catholics, and to the Roman Catholic faith. In addition, Fallon’s opposition to bilingual education in Ontario, a debate that raged throughout the war years, placed him at odds with francophone Catholics in both Ontario and Quebec.

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Robert Ventresca, Jonathan Vance and Brock Millman, as well as the anonymous reviewers, for their comments and suggestions on previous versions of this paper. I would also like to thank Debra Majer, of the Diocese of London Archives, for her invaluable assistance.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Robin Burns, “The Montreal Irish and the Great War,” Canadian Catholic Historical Association (CCHA) *Historical Studies*, 52 (1985): 67-81; Duff Crerar, “Bellicose Priests: The Wars of the Canadian Catholic Chaplains, 1914-1919,” CCHA *Historical Studies*, 58 (1991): 21-39; Mark G. McGowan, “Sharing the Burden of Empire: Toronto’s Catholics and the Great War, 1914-1918,” in Mark G. McGowan and Brian P. Clarke, (eds.) *Catholics at the Gathering Place: Historical Essays on the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1841-1991* (Toronto, 1993), 177-212.

His advocacy of unilingual instruction in Ontario schools complicated his efforts to rally support for the imperial war effort, and served to widen the linguistic and cultural rift between francophone and anglophone Catholics in Ontario and beyond. Fallon's response to the war in the context of these competing influences illustrates how his support of Canada's participation in the Great War, while leading Irish Catholics to a closer relationship with the nation's Protestant majority, also served to alienate francophone Catholics, exacerbating an intra-denominational and cultural schism that endured for decades.

Born at Kingston on 17 May 1867, he was the eldest of Domenic Fallon and Bridget Egan's eight children.<sup>3</sup> Following his graduation from Kingston Collegiate Institute in 1883, Fallon attended Queen's University for one academic year, transferring to the University of Ottawa in the fall of 1884. It was at Ottawa that he flourished as a student, becoming involved in university drama and debating clubs, as well as serving as the first editor of the student newspaper, *The Owl*. His natural athleticism led to his selection to the university's nationally known rugby team. It was also at Ottawa that Fallon developed his extraordinary talent for oratory, a skill which allowed his stature both in Ontario and Canada to grow in the next decades, and which led to his unique reputation, in the eyes of both supporters and detractors, as the mouthpiece of English-speaking Catholics in Canada. His studies had prepared him for a career in journalism, business or academe, but the young Fallon opted for an ecclesiastical life, entering the seminary in Ottawa in 1889, where he studied theology for three years. Though he had plans on the diocesan priesthood, he made the decision to join the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1892, and was sent to their novitiate at Saint-Gerlach in Holland. His stint in northern Europe, however, was cut short by fears of tuberculosis, and Fallon promptly requested a transfer to the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, where he was awarded a doctorate in divinity in 1894. In June of the same year, he was ordained a priest. At only twenty-seven years of age, Fallon was set to embark upon a career which would see him become a significant and volatile figure in Catholic and secular affairs both in Ontario and nationally.

Fallon was bishop of London from 1909 until his death in 1931.<sup>4</sup> His appointment to the diocese was not welcomed by many of the French-speaking Catholics of southwestern Ontario, who were aware of the bishop's

<sup>3</sup> My brief examination of Fallon's early development is indebted to Michael Power's article, "The Mitred Warrior: A Critical Reassessment of Bishop Michael Francis Fallon, 1867-1931," *Catholic Insight*, 3, vol. 8 (April 2000): 18-26.

<sup>4</sup> On the details of Fallon's appointment to the diocese of London see Pasquale Fiorino, "The Nomination of Michael Fallon as Bishop of London," *CCHA Historical Studies*, 62 (1996): 33-46.



Michael Francis Fallon -1887  
Source: Archives of the Diocese of London

opposition to bilingual instruction at the University of Ottawa. A professor of English and Vice-Rector at Ottawa between 1894 and 1901, Fallon led a resistance to the University's reversion to bilingual instruction in 1900-1901, in abeyance since 1874. While the struggle at Ottawa was essentially between anglophone and francophone Oblates, with the latter winning the day, the experience braced Fallon for future confrontations on bilingual education. As a result of the controversy, he was banished to the Oblate-run Holy Angels parish in Buffalo in the summer of 1901, the same year that the University of Ottawa reverted to bilingual instruction. Embittered by the experience, Fallon later claimed that his removal from Ottawa was the result of a plot.<sup>5</sup> Between 1901 and 1908 Fallon, from Buffalo, continued his agitation against bilingual instruction at the University of Ottawa. Though he consistently defended his advocacy of unilingual instruction for purely pedagogical

<sup>5</sup> Robert Choquette, "Linguistic and Ethnic Factors in French-Irish Catholic Relations in Ontario," CCHA, *Study Sessions*, 39, (1972): 38.

reasons, it naturally offended his francophone co-religionists, and created an air of distrust and animosity that would climax in the war years.

In 1904, Fallon was appointed the first Provincial of the American Oblate Province, a position that took him on preaching tours to many different parts of the Canadian West. It was during these travels that Fallon heard a myriad of complaints against French leadership of local churches, where a small number of francophone churchmen administered to primarily anglophone congregations. Fallon held that the “intransigence and arrogance” of French churchmen in the western provinces was detrimental to the process of nation-building, particularly during a period when scores of eastern European immigrants, “ill-versed in the ideals of British and Canadian citizenship,” were streaming into the prairie provinces.<sup>6</sup> Rather than contributing to the process of “Canadianizing” new immigrants, Fallon opined, French Catholic leaders continued to subordinate religion to nationalism, placing narrow ethno-linguistic concerns above those of faith and nation.<sup>7</sup> He posited that religion, among a number of francophone churchmen, had been made the “handmaid and bond-servant” of French-Canadian nationalism, a situation that had produced particularly detrimental results in the western dioceses.<sup>8</sup> Fallon scarcely concealed the notion that this “narrow nationalism,” advocated by a significant segment of French-Catholic churchmen, would one day pose a threat to the unity of the nation itself.<sup>9</sup>

In a 1905 letter to Raphael Merry del Val, the Vatican’s Cardinal Secretary of State, Fallon requested that Rome appoint English-speaking bishops to the vacant sees of central and western Canada, citing the unsuitability of francophone churchmen to effectively lead anglophone parishioners.<sup>10</sup> While Fallon’s request raised a number of legitimate concerns, he also made an odd array of accusations against French-speaking Catholics in Canada, including a predisposition to drunkenness, petty crime, and laziness.<sup>11</sup> Upon learning of his posting to London in 1909, Fallon again wrote to Merry del Val, requesting the Vatican’s assistance in curtailing

<sup>6</sup> Archives of the Catholic Diocese of London (hereafter ADL), Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 7, “Some Aspects of the Race Question in Canada” (undated).

<sup>7</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 3, Fallon to Pellegrino Stagni, 26 May 1913.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 2, Fallon to Merry del Val, 17 June 1905.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* Commenting on rates of crime in Ottawa, Fallon apprised del Val that, “Here, nearly eighty percent of the police cases are those of French Canadians, and the offenses, though not grave, tend to swell the criminal statistics of the province, which always show a majority of Catholic convicts.” He further commented that “nearly all the social disorders of French Canadians are traceable to the use of spirituous liquors,” and that the education of French youth “was much at variance with the English idea of encouraging a healthy youth and manhood.”

the “meddlesome” influence of French churchmen in the diocese and the province.<sup>12</sup> Though his letter to Rome was never made public, his perceived reputation as a francophobe, particularly among French-speaking Catholics, was well entrenched by the time of his appointment to the diocese of London. In short, his persistent opposition to bilingual and French-language education, combined with his perceived biases against francophone Catholics, militated against his ability to maintain ethnic and linguistic harmony in the diocese from 1910 onwards.<sup>13</sup>

Combined with his opposition to bilingual education, Fallon possessed both a deep-seated loyalty to the British Empire and a desire to facilitate the advancement of Irish Catholics both in Canada and abroad. His papers reveal a persistent effort to lobby for the placement of Irish Catholics to prominent academic, ecclesiastical and governmental positions. His correspondence with American president Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, in which Fallon encouraged the appointment of Catholics to vacant positions in the Senate and Cabinet, was indicative of his enthusiasm for promoting the interests of Irish Catholics at home and abroad.<sup>14</sup> Fallon was also an avid supporter of Irish Home Rule, and opined that Ireland’s tense relationship with England might be turned through constitutional means into an autonomous and dignified partnership, united in loyalty to a common Crown. The solution of Dominion status, as in the case of Canada, seemed to Fallon the ideal answer to Ireland’s ancient problems. He believed the legitimacy of the Irish nation to be undeniable, proclaimed by both history and geography. “Ireland was a nation with a national self-consciousness and memory at the beginning of the Christian era,” cited Fallon, “even before the Roman had established his colony in Britain.”<sup>15</sup> Dominion Home Rule, he declared, would benefit both Ireland and Britain, fulfilling the historical destiny of the Irish people, and providing Britain the support of another loyal Dominion in times of need. Fallon envisioned an autonomous Ireland that was firmly ensconced in the British Empire, prepared to defend the security and integrity of the Empire if ever it were threatened. Both before and during the war, he remained

<sup>12</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 2, Fallon to Merry de Val, 19 March 1910.

<sup>13</sup> On Fallon’s persistent opposition to bilingual education in Ontario between 1910 and 1918, see Jack Cecillon, “Turbulent Times in the Diocese of London: Bishop Fallon and the French-Language Controversy, 1910-18,” *Ontario History*, 4, vol. 87 (1995): 369-95.

<sup>14</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 5, Roosevelt to Fallon, 28 November 1906. Though Fallon pressed Roosevelt for more Catholic representation in Cabinet, the president responded diplomatically and noncommittally, explaining graciously to Fallon that his selections were based on merit, and not creed. Regardless, the fact that Fallon’s suggestion merited a two page response from the American president was a testament to the churchman’s persistence and lobbying skill.

<sup>15</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 6, “The Irish Question: The General Principles of its Solution.”

optimistic that Dominion status could be achieved for Ireland, but only if British policymakers acted prudently. “If England should prefer to rule Ireland by coercion, and through religious bigotry refuse Home Rule,” he observed in 1918, “Sinn Fein will continue to develop. Sanity on England’s part, however, will result in political sanity in Ireland.”<sup>16</sup>

Unlike many Irish nationalists, however, Fallon consistently underlined his support for Irish Home Rule with a strong belief in the values of the British Empire. He believed that the political unit that best approximated the Christian ideal was the Empire. In comparing systems of international relations, of political government, and of moral idealism, Fallon concluded that the British Empire, with its institutions of Crown, Parliament, and Common Law, and a respect for traditional Christianity, was the best hope for the moral and material progress of the international community.<sup>17</sup> Fallon’s firm faith in the imperial idea was reflected in a sermon delivered at Gatineau in 1897, in the presence of the Governor-General, the Earl of Aberdeen, and numerous distinguished clergy and laity from the national capital. In praising the Empire, he prophetically anticipated the challenges it might face in the years ahead:

...I bear willing and joyful testimony to my strong conviction that deep down in the heart of the British people, there is a profoundly reverent and religious sentiment, that the national conscience would quickly and unmistakably condemn the slightest attempt to eliminate God from the councils of the Empire. And in this sense, beloved brethren, I regard the British Empire as the last and greatest human barrier against the spread of vicious and dangerous doctrines concerning social order and international polity; as the most powerful influence to lead men upwards and onwards in the path of human progress, and in the development for future ages of the untold possibilities hidden in the great mysterious darkness of the speechless days that shall be.<sup>18</sup>

As early as 1897, Fallon had identified those whom he considered to be the advocates of “vicious and dangerous doctrines concerning social order and international polity.” His year studying in Aachen awoke him to the serious devotion of many Germans to the dreams of Pan-Germanism and possibly, in time, world domination. He constantly had heard “Der Tag” as the fervent toast of these students from the German Empire. In addition to

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> John K.A. Ferrel, “Michael Francis Fallon, Bishop of London, 1909-1931: The Man and His Controversies,” CCHA *Study Sessions*, 53 (1968): 78-9. See also T.R. Elliott, “An Imperialist Irishman,” *MacLean’s Magazine*, 19, vol. 17, (October 1929): 86-7.

<sup>18</sup> Farrell, “Bishop Michael Fallon: The Man and His Controversies,” 79. The sermon was delivered at a mass celebrating the gift of a bell, from the Earl of Aberdeen, to the Roman Catholic Church of Gatineau Point, in recognition of Catholic parishioners saving the Governor-General’s wife, the Countess of Aberdeen, from drowning.

their military toast, they did not hesitate to reveal to Fallon the expansionist ambitions of their country. Fallon, with an amused astuteness, cheerfully allowed his German colleagues to persist in their assumption that every Irishman was anti-British and, therefore, pro-German.<sup>19</sup>

Fallon's fears of German aggression did not abate over time. In May 1911, the bishop delivered a sermon to the Seventh Regiment Fusiliers at St. Peter's Cathedral in London. Though he exhorted his audience to pray for peace, he warned the young soldiers to be prepared for war. In another prophetic statement, Fallon warned the Fusiliers of the dark days ahead:

If you gentlemen think you are just playing at soldiers, I beg you to give the matter a little more consideration. Whether it will be Germany or Japan first, I do not know, for I am no prophet, but you will fight one of them before you are many years older.<sup>20</sup>

Though Fallon claimed to prefer peace, he did not preclude the necessity of going to war to defend the British Empire and the Christian ideal. In the same sermon, he elaborated:

I love peace; so must every man who holds for righteousness, but I also say to you that in all the history of the human race, presided over as it has been by the providence of God, days have come when war became a necessity... Work for peace; indeed it is our duty to pray for peace. To look save with horror upon the possibility of going to war would be savagery; and yet to allow the honour of our country or the virtue of our homes or the lives of our wives and daughters or the honour of God to disappear because we dreaded the onset of war, would prove that we had within us not the hearts of men, that we were carried away by some inhuman, by some dishonourable motive.<sup>21</sup>

Though the sermon possessed an air of unreality in quaint London, it nonetheless created a sensation. Sir Sam Hughes sent to Fallon for a copy of the manuscript, had it reproduced, and had copies sent to all officers of the Canadian Militia.<sup>22</sup> It was the beginning of a closer working relationship between Fallon and Hughes that would solidify during the war, as Fallon heeded Hughes' call for more Catholic chaplains in Europe.

In another address of 1911, Fallon again reflected on international affairs. In a speech to the Canadian Club of London (Ontario), and in the

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 3, "Sermon to the Soldiers by Bishop Fallon", 14 May 1911.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Farrell, "Bishop Michael Fallon: The Man and His Controversies," 80.

presence of Mackenzie King, Sir George Gibbons, and Clifford Sifton,<sup>23</sup> the bishop emphasized that it was imperative to support the British Empire, by resort to arms if necessary:

I am an imperialist. And it is in no restricted, national sense, either. There is freedom where the old flag flies, and it is the only nation that to the fullest degree knows the meaning of civil and religious liberty.<sup>24</sup>

He went on to remind his audience that the German Imperial Army had a peacetime strength of 750,000 men and that, in time of war, that same army could command 5,000,000 men. The Austro-Hungarian Empire could muster 4,000,000 soldiers, and with Italy assisting, the Triple Alliance could throw 10,000,000 soldiers into a military campaign. Lest his audience have any skepticism about Fallon's view on these developments, the bishop stated bluntly, "It is my deliberate conviction that Germany intends to take command of the world's affairs."<sup>25</sup> To Fallon, the only hope in such a situation was the firm resolve of the British Empire to meet the challenges of German militarism, on the battlefields of Europe should the need arise. Only through such courage could the peoples of the Empire continue "the blessed gift of spreading to the world human liberty, the brotherhood of man, the blessings of prosperity and religious liberty." Should a power like Germany bring the British to their knees, however, Fallon predicted dire results. "More misery, more sorrow, more suffering would result by the destruction of British credit than has resulted in any way since Napoleon held the world in the hollow of his hand."<sup>26</sup> As 1914 approached, Fallon, as fervently as the Canadian military hierarchy, warned his parishioners of the perils of German militarism, and conditioned the young men of the diocese to prepare to defend the British Empire on the battlefield.

Between Fallon's speeches of 1911 and the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, the issue of bilingual education in Ontario once again reached a boiling point. In June 1912 the Conservative government of James Whitney, granted a fresh majority by the Ontario electorate the previous December, introduced changes to French-language education through cabinet.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Gibbons, an influential London-area businessman with strong Liberal Party ties, was appointed a delegate to the International Waterways Commission by Wilfrid Laurier in 1905. Sifton, an Ontario-born Liberal MP, was Laurier's Minister of the Interior from 1896 to 1905, where he instituted an ambitious immigration policy designed to populate and settle the prairie West. In 1911, King contested the Ontario riding of Waterloo North for the Liberals, which he lost in the federal election in November.

<sup>24</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 3. Fallon delivered the speech, titled, ironically enough, "International Peace," on 5 January 1911.

<sup>25</sup> Farrell, "Bishop Michael Fallon: The Man and His Controversies," 80.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.

<sup>27</sup> Whitney's Conservatives captured 82 seats to the Liberal's 22 in the December 1911 provincial election.

Regulation 17 established new standards for the bilingual schools of the province, restricting the use of French as the medium of instruction and communication to the first two years of school. The regulation made some provisions for teaching French as a subject, but only to those students whose parents specifically requested it.<sup>28</sup> Many Franco-Ontarians had long suspected Whitney of pandering to anti-Catholic and anti-French elements in his caucus, such as George Howard Ferguson, and the passing of Regulation 17 only strengthened this sentiment.<sup>29</sup> French-speaking Catholics in the diocese of London, however, believed with equal fervour that Fallon was behind the new laws, and plans to boycott the newly appointed school inspectors had some initial success. Frustrated with the response of local officials, some francophone parishioners denounced Fallon to Rome, where calls for his dismissal were received by Vatican officials. Anger had also crested over Fallon's overtly political appointment of churchmen in the diocese. In the fall of 1913 Fallon, with his patience wearing thin, organized a diocesan tribunal to prosecute the signatories of the Roman petition. Several clergy retracted, several were suspended, and one, Father Napoleon Saint-Cyr of Stony Point, was expelled from the diocese. Though Fallon had managed to score a certain victory against his detractors, the episode left the relationship between anglophone and francophone parishioners in a tattered state as the Great War approached. Making matters worse, Fallon clearly appeared to side explicitly with his English-speaking flock.

When war erupted in August of 1914, bishops in most Canadian dioceses, including London, endorsed the Imperial war effort as necessary for civilization and Christianity.<sup>30</sup> On 31 August, Fallon outlined his support for the war effort at a meeting of the London and Middlesex Patriotic Fund. In endorsing the Imperial war effort, he again alluded to his experiences in Germany as a student:

This war comes as no surprise to me. Twenty-two years ago I went to school in Germany, and even then the young men of the nation were filled with the war fury. They were determined that the British Empire should go down, and ever since that time I have not failed to warn the people of Canada and the Empire. That peril, of which I have long spoken, is upon us, it is going to be terrific, but Great Britain has unsheathed the sword, and thrown the scabbard away. It either means victory or the disappearance of the British Empire with its liberty and tradition. In this peril there is

<sup>28</sup> Cecillon, "Turbulent Times in the Diocese of London," 375. See also Robert Choquette, *Language and Religion: A History of English-French Conflict in Ontario* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1975), 167.

<sup>29</sup> Ferguson served as Ontario premier from 1923 to 1930.

<sup>30</sup> Mark McGowan, "Harvesting the 'Red Vineyard': Catholic Religious Culture in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919," *CCHA Historical Studies*, 64 (1998): 49.

no line of cleavage between us. We are one, because we know Britain's cause is just.<sup>31</sup>

Fallon also commented approvingly on Ireland's pledge of support for the war effort, once again making an implicit link between himself and his English-speaking (primarily Irish) parishioners. The bishop's speech was printed in the *Catholic Record* of London, which had been closely aligned to Laurier and the Liberal Party.<sup>32</sup> Though its coverage of the war was initially restrained, it quickly moved to endorse the war effort, no doubt prodded by Fallon's explicit support of the war. Between 1914 and 1918, the bishop's columns and editorials for the *Catholic Record* consistently and enthusiastically encouraged support for the allies both at home and in Europe.

Throughout the war, Fallon was an active supporter of the drive to recruit Catholic chaplains for overseas service. In September 1914, Sam Hughes appointed thirty-three of the eager clergymen at Valcartier to chaplaincy service overseas, and appointed R.H. Steacy, rector of Ottawa's Westboro Anglican parish, as Honorary Major and senior chaplain if the contingent.<sup>33</sup> Hughes paid little attention to whether or not his newly minted padres had much military or pastoral experience, nor did there seem any need for the Militia Department or church officials to set up detailed command arrangements, as both expected the war to end by Christmas.<sup>34</sup> Six of the thirty-three chaplain's departing for Europe were Roman Catholic. They left with the blessing of a hierarchy temporarily united by the outbreak of war. Trouble began, however, soon after the contingent reached Salisbury Plain. The chaplains were informed that the British Army allotted only two Catholic chaplains to a division. Demanding to know how two priests were supposed to shepherd a flock scattered among a formation of almost twenty-thousand men, Canadian priests and Catholics in the War Office, and even Cardinal Bourne of Westminster (the senior Catholic ecclesiastic of the British forces) appealed urgently to the Army Council.<sup>35</sup> Following a smattering of complaints from Canadian soldiers, who claimed not to have seen a Catholic chaplain since arriving at the front, the War Office relented, and doubled the allotment of priests to a division. Ottawa, however, was unwilling to ship Catholic chaplains not already attached to an overseas battalion, and were thus unable to fill all the chaplain vacancies in their front-line formations. Complicating the matter was Quebec, where domestic conflicts over language and education produced resistance to the recruitment

<sup>31</sup> *The Catholic Record*, 12 September 1914.

<sup>32</sup> Mark McGowan, "Sharing the Burden of Empire...," 180-1.

<sup>33</sup> Crerar, "Bellicose Priests: The Wars of the Canadian Catholic Chaplains," 22.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

of chaplains. While C.J. Doherty, Borden's Catholic Minister of Justice, had managed to secure the hierarchy's support, French-speaking clergy remained unwilling to support the chaplaincy drive.<sup>36</sup> By early 1915, it was evident that a more concentrated effort would be required, particularly among the English-speaking hierarchy, to secure more Catholic chaplains for service in Europe.

Fallon, along with Bishop Georges Gauthier and Archbishop Neil McNeil, assumed an active role in recruiting Roman Catholic chaplains.<sup>37</sup> They encouraged churchmen to demonstrate their loyalty both to Canada and the British Empire. Fallon and McNeil took an active lead in the recruitment process, and Fallon, in March 1915, advocated the conscription of Roman Catholic chaplains if necessary. Throughout late 1914 and 1915, Fallon exhorted the religious of his diocese to serve their flock overseas, as it became increasingly evident that the war would not end quickly. The recruitment of Catholics became more successful by the summer of 1915, when the press, both religious and secular, was better organized and able to stir up a public outcry over German atrocities on the high seas and in Belgium. Fallon's numerous appeals for aid to Belgian Catholics often coincided with a call to potential chaplains and soldiers to enlist for overseas service.<sup>38</sup> The use of poisonous gas on Canadian troops in April 1915, in the Ypres salient, also boosted recruiting of both Catholic soldiers and chaplains. Fallon's leading role in recruiting Catholic chaplains was formalized in October when, at a meeting of Ontario's archbishops and bishops, he was nominated to represent the Catholic hierarchy to the Canadian government regarding the provision of chaplains.<sup>39</sup> From this point onwards, Hughes' requests for Catholic chaplains in Europe were channeled through the bishop of

<sup>36</sup> In Quebec, many laymen denounced the hierarchy's continued endorsement of the war, which led to a resistance by the clergy, already alienated by the bishop's refusal to intervene in the Ontario educational language controversy. This state of affairs, combined with the low number of Quebec enlistments before the advent of conscription, led to lackluster chaplaincy recruitment and little active intervention in the affairs of French-Canadian chaplains. See René Durocher, "Henri Bourassa, Les Évêques et la Guerre de 1914-1919," *Canadian Historical Association Papers*, (1971): 254-69. Moreover, the official neutrality of the Vatican, a policy initiated by the newly elected Benedict XV, provided additional incentive for clergy and parishioners in Quebec to shun the war effort.

<sup>37</sup> Gauthier was appointed titular bishop of Philippopolis in 1912, and served as coadjutor archbishop of Montreal from 1923 to 1939. In September 1939 he was appointed archbishop of Montreal, a position he held until his death in August 1940. McNeil was archbishop of Toronto from 1912 until his death in May 1934.

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, *The Catholic Register*, 18 March 1915.

<sup>39</sup> Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto (hereafter ARCAT) Archbishop McNeil Papers, FW CS01, Doherty to McNeil, 27 October 1915.

London.<sup>40</sup> Archbishop Pellegrino Stagni, the Apostolic Delegate in Ottawa, praised Fallon for taking leadership of the recruitment effort. In thanking the bishop, Stagni stated that he “had often recognized the necessity of one being specifically charged with the direction or oversight of this important matter. What is everybody’s business very often becomes nobody’s business.”<sup>41</sup> In the same letter, however, Stagni informed Fallon that the soldiers in France were “crying out for chaplains,” and urged the bishop to do all he could to supply more recruits.

The demand for Catholic chaplains continued to grow throughout 1915 and 1916, as the recruitment of Catholics for the war effort steadily increased. Though Fallon worked diligently to inform his coreligionists of the need for chaplains, volunteers were consistently in short supply. Complicating the matter for Fallon was the fact that his authority to recruit chaplains, though recognized by the Department of Militia, was not recognized by the Catholic hierarchy outside of Ontario, depriving Fallon of the authority to effectively recruit chaplains in Quebec and the Maritimes. The Quebec hierarchy was generally noncommittal, largely a result of the controversy over bilingual education in Ontario, which had resurfaced as a point of contention. At a meeting of Ontario’s bishops and archbishops in October 1916, Fallon implored his colleagues to secure chaplains for duty in Europe.<sup>42</sup> In the same month Stagni, on behalf of Fallon, wrote to E.J. McCarthy, Archbishop of Halifax, asking him to inform the Maritime bishops of the urgent need for English-speaking chaplains. He reminded the archbishop that “it is admitted on all hands that the parishes at home should suffer for lack of priests, rather than our Catholic soldiers at the front who are in such constant and grave danger. A sacrifice, therefore, must be made, the burden of which must be equally borne by all the dioceses.”<sup>43</sup> Fallon’s appeal in October did manage to secure several more chaplains for service in Europe. His regular correspondence with Hughes, Doherty, and the Catholic hierarchy for the remainder of the war testified to his dedication to the chaplaincy service, which included the sending of his own brother, Father Charles Fallon, to France in June 1917.<sup>44</sup> In addition, Fallon unwaveringly praised the work

<sup>40</sup> Hughes’ use of Fallon as a personal liaison on the issue of chaplain recruitment is typical of the way he operated, and is indicative of his fondness for cronyism. For a survey of Hughes career, see Ronald Graham Haycock’s *Sam Hughes: The Public Career of a Controversial Canadian* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986).

<sup>41</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 5, Stagni to Fallon, 25 November 1915.

<sup>42</sup> ARCAT, Archbishop McNeil Papers, FW CS01.20, Fallon to McNeil, 15 October 1916. At this meeting, McNeil assured Fallon that several priests would be released from his diocese for overseas service.

<sup>43</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 5, Stagni to McCarthy, 4 October 1916.

<sup>44</sup> ARCAT, Archbishop McNeil Papers, FW CS01.30, Fallon to McNeil, 6 June 1917.

of the chaplains in the pages of the *Catholic Record*, and also used the paper as a recruiting tool.<sup>45</sup> Though demand consistently exceeded supply, particularly as Catholics enlisted in larger numbers after 1915, Fallon's enthusiasm for the chaplaincy service was unflagging. He culminated his work for the chaplaincy with a visit to the Canadian front in the late summer of 1918, where he said mass, heard confessions, and was generally praised by troops and chaplains, both Protestant and Catholic, for his support of the Canadian effort in Europe.<sup>46</sup>

Complicating Fallon's efforts to rally support for the war effort was the anger of Franco-Ontarian Catholics, which had festered since the introduction of Regulation 17 in 1912. French-speaking Catholics in the diocese of London were particularly dissatisfied with Fallon, whose opposition to bilingual education was well known. That opposition, purportedly for pedagogical reasons, had been splashed across the front page of Toronto's *Globe and Mail* in 1910, and many continued to suspect that Fallon was behind Regulation 17.<sup>47</sup> The debate over Regulation 17 had been burning for over two years by the time war erupted in Europe, and remained in the public eye as the *Association Canadienne-français d'éducation de l'Ontario* (ACFEO), led by Napoleon Belcourt, fought to restore the right to French-language instruction in the province.<sup>48</sup> Belcourt launched a court challenge against the proposed law in the late fall of 1914. The law was upheld, however, prompting the Quebec government to adopt a legislative resolution on 13 January 1915 unanimously deplored the controversy, and asserting that the legislators of Ontario were lacking in their understanding

<sup>45</sup> See, for example, *The Catholic Record*, 1 September 1917. In the spring of 1916, Fallon initiated a campaign to recruit chaplains from the Knights of Columbus and the Ancient Order of Hibernians of Ontario, sending out 12,000 letters in the process. See *The Catholic Record*, "Bishop Fallon's Stirring Call," 8 April 1916.

<sup>46</sup> See Crerar, "Bellicose Priests: The Wars of the Canadian Catholic Chaplains," 38-9.

<sup>47</sup> See *The Globe and Mail*, 13 October 1910. In outlining his position on bilingual education, Fallon stated that he was "opposed to bilingual schools because they cannot provide an education suited to our needs. The bilingual school has not succeeded in the province of Quebec, and will not succeed in this province." In postulating that the controversy itself was designed to undermine separate schools in Ontario, he opined that, "There is a conspiracy against the separate schools, and this conspiracy comes from a source I am loath to suspect; moreover, this conspiracy will lead us to the loss of our separate schools because our enemies, once they see the division which exists among Catholics with reference to bilingual schools, will make use of this to weaken our position, and they will then deprive us of our schools."

<sup>48</sup> On Belcourt's principled battle to restore the right to bilingual education in Ontario, see Patrice A. Dutil's "Against Isolationism: Napoleon Belcourt, French Canada and 'La grande guerre,'" in David Mackenzie, (ed.) *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 96-137.

and application of traditional British principles.<sup>49</sup> Belcourt's crusade against Regulation 17 stirred up ancestral animosities both within Canadian society and within the Canadian Catholic church, where French and Irish factions had long struggled for control, all of this at the historical moment when Catholic leaders were expected to call on their faithful to support the Imperial war effort. While Fallon's support of Regulation 17 was shared by other English-Catholic churchmen in Ontario, such as Father Matthew Whelan of Ottawa, the Bishop of London remained its most prominent and vocal advocate.<sup>50</sup>

The controversy boiled over in March 1915, when the Ontario government effectively declared 190 schools in the province ineligible for funding due to their continued bilingual instruction. Despite Sir Wilfrid Laurier's urgings for the provincial Liberals to oppose the bill, N.W. Rowell and his members supported it, and the issue soon took on national and international dimensions. In June, the bishops and archbishops of French Canada sent a petition to Pope Benedict XV, telling him that the French language was a "rampart" against the mixed marriages deplored by the Holy See. It argued that the battle against Orangeism in Ontario had to be successful, otherwise Protestant forces would exert themselves against Catholicism in other provinces. The petition also asked him to put pressure on the Canadian political system, because under Regulation 17 Catholic schools would fall victim to Protestant inspection, which would "place them at the mercy of an enemy of their traditions and beliefs."<sup>51</sup>

As the battle over language rights in Ontario continued to rage between 1915 and 1917, the province's episcopate continued to stand, almost unanimously, behind Regulation 17.<sup>52</sup> While the episcopate generally agreed that repealing the law might spark a Protestant backlash and threaten separate schools, Fallon went one step further, accusing French Catholics of subordinating religion to nationalism.<sup>53</sup> The silence of Ontario's Irish-Canadian bishops on the matter, combined with Fallon's outspoken nature and known opposition to bilingual instruction, made him a lightning-rod for

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>50</sup> On Whelan's similarly divisive position on Regulation 17, see Frederick J. McEvoy, "Naturally I am passionate, ill-tempered, and arrogant...": Father Matthew J. Whelan and French-English Conflict in Ontario, 1881-1922," CCHA *Historical Studies*, 72, (2006): 54-65.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>52</sup> The only Ontario bishop to defend the status quo regarding bilingual schools was Msgr. Elie-Anicet Latulipe, Vicar-Apostolic of Temiscaming. Even he, however, was among the signatories of a circular of 1917 asking all Ontarians, both francophone and anglophone, to respect and abide by the provisions of Regulation 17. See John Zucchi, *The View From Rome: Archbishop Stagni's 1915 Reports on the Ontario Bilingual Schools Question*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), xix.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

francophone discontent, both in Ontario and Quebec. In public and private pronouncements, Fallon expressed his disdain with the controversy over Regulation 17. In a February 1915 memorandum to provincial treasurer F.W. McGarry, the bishop of London characterized his view of what he termed the “bilingual agitation”:

This agitation is more noisy than serious; it is more superficial than substantial. Reduced to its ultimate terms the issue is whether or not more than ninety per cent of the people of this province are to be ruled by fewer than ten per cent. The taking of the last census was preceded by a province-wide conspiracy of advertising and exhortation on the part of the leaders of French-Canadian nationalism, with the result that in a total population of about 2,500,000, a trifle over 203,000 were returned as of ‘French origin.’ Of this 203,000, there are thousands who do not speak a word of French, other thousands who take no interest in the matter, and thousands still who are sick and tired of the agitation. The French-Canadian nationalists, utterly regardless of conditions, would impose the teaching and study of the French language in all primary public and separate schools, where twenty-five per cent of the children attending are of ‘French origin.’<sup>54</sup>

The mounting crisis in Ontario did not escape the attention of Rome. If Benedict XV anguished at the thought of Roman Catholics on both sides of the trenches in France, he was also concerned with the debate over bilingual education in Ontario, and its divisive effects on Canadian Catholics. In November 1915, Stagni was commissioned to produce a comprehensive report on the controversy. In September 1916, the Pope took the unusual step of issuing a letter to all the bishops and archbishops of Canada, urging French and Irish Canadian Catholics to settle their differences for the sake of Catholic unity. The language of the papal pronouncement was, however, typically ambiguous, allowing both supporters and detractors of Regulation 17 to claim victory. For Fallon and the “Irish” bishops of Ontario, this meant a continued opposition to bilingual education in Ontario, and a continued tension vis-à-vis French Catholics in Ontario and Quebec. Fallon’s unflagging defense of Regulation 17 also caught the eye of Robert Borden, who forwarded the bishop copies of the Hansard debates on the bilingual schools question.<sup>55</sup> In his response to Borden, Fallon denounced Liberal opportunism in bringing the bilingual issue before parliament in the midst of a war, and predicted that the parliamentary debate could only hurt Laurier politically.<sup>56</sup> The prime minister’s relationship with the bishop grew stronger from the spring of 1916 onwards, as Borden sensed that he had a valuable

<sup>54</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 5, Fallon to McGarry, 16 February 1915.

<sup>55</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 5, Borden to Fallon, 13 May 1916.

<sup>56</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 5, Fallon to Borden, 15 May 1916.

political ally in Fallon, a prophecy that would reveal itself to be true during the debates on conscription.

For the duration of the war, Fallon remained an active supporter of Home Rule for Ireland. While he continued to encourage Irish Canadians to heed the Imperial war call, he remained convinced that an autonomous Ireland, possessing Dominion status, was both a viable and optimal objective. While his public pronouncements during the war were few, his private papers reveal a consistent interest in the “Irish Question.” In the spring of 1917, Fallon engaged in an active correspondence with Charles Doherty, Borden’s Minister of Justice, and Charles Murphy, formerly Laurier’s Secretary of State and an active supporter of Home Rule. Fallon advocated support for the Irish Parliamentary Party by English-Catholics in Canada, and suggested to Doherty that a petition, signed by prominent Catholics in non-political roles, could be particularly effective.<sup>57</sup> To that end, Fallon suggested that men such as Charles Fitzpatrick, Chief Justice of Canada, and Justice Francis Anglin would be ideal. Doherty assured Fallon that he would continue to endorse Home Rule in Ottawa, and confided to the Bishop that he shared his “patriotic anxiety.”<sup>58</sup> Fallon remained convinced that Dominion status for Ireland would strengthen the Imperial war effort, and that a delay in its granting could indeed be a hindrance. He believed that Home Rule for Ireland, “instead of weakening the Empire, would remove its most ancient and most dangerous weakness, and would strengthen the Empire from a political, military and moral standpoint.”<sup>59</sup> He feared that a “watered-down” compromise, such as provincial status under a federal scheme, would lead to further unrest. As he observed in 1918, “Such a solution will not appeal to the Irish nation. The government, in a panic, may return to coercion, or attempt to impose conscription, and thus bring about civil war. How will this affect the future of the war?”<sup>60</sup>

In the spring and summer of 1917, as Fallon advocated privately for Home Rule and publicly for Catholic enlistment, tensions between francophone and anglophone Catholics in Ontario continued to ferment. On 10 February, the Ontario episcopate issued a public joint statement, printed in London’s *Catholic Record*, supporting the provisions of Regulation 17, and urging all Ontario Catholics to respectfully observe the law.<sup>61</sup> On 11

<sup>57</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 3, Doherty to Fallon, 4 April 1917.

<sup>58</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 3, Doherty to Fallon, 21 March 1917.

<sup>59</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 6, “The Irish Question: The General Principles of its Solution.”

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* Fallon’s advocacy of Home Rule naturally extended beyond the war years, and included a trip to Ireland in 1920, in which he surveyed damage in Lisburn after a particularly violent Orange riot.

<sup>61</sup> *The Catholic Record*, 10 February 1917.

February the letter, signed prominently by Fallon, as well as by Archbishops McNeil and Gauthier and Bishops O'Brien, Ryan and Macdonnell, was read from the pulpits of all Ontario parishes. In the diocese of London, the situation became progressively worse. In Ford City, near Windsor, Fallon's attempt to replace the deceased Father Lucien Beaudoin with Father François Laurendeau was met with extreme resistance. Beaudoin had clashed with Fallon over Regulation 17, and his death on 18 August created a dangerous vacuum in the diocese. Fallon's selection of Laurendeau was particularly stinging, as the latter had been a political enemy of Beaudoin, and had sat on Fallon's infamous diocesan tribunal of 1913. With passions already running high over language rights a riot ensued, with parishioners refusing to allow Laurendeau to assume the parish.<sup>62</sup> In Quebec, the French-Canadian nationalist press turned the story into front-page news, and Fallon once again became a lightning-rod for the frustrations of French-Canadian Catholics and nationalists. As the federal election of 1917 approached, a perfect storm appeared to be gathering within the Canadian Catholic Church, with Fallon positioned squarely at its centre.

As recruiting in Canada slowed after the summer of 1916, with numbers of recruits running at only 4,000 men per month in early 1917, pressures naturally fell on groups deemed to be under-represented on the battlefields of Europe.<sup>63</sup> French Canada had become a popular target of the English press. While recruitment in Quebec was admittedly low, criticisms extended beyond the province to include Canadian Catholics in general, whose recruitment figures, per capita, also lagged behind those of the major Protestant denominations.<sup>64</sup> As of October 1916, only 14,198 of the 145,121 volunteers for the Canadian Expeditionary Force in Ontario were Roman Catholic. In early November 1917, Archbishop McNeil of Toronto was forced to defend the church's record in light of comments by the Reverend E.I. Hart of Montreal, in which the latter had linked low recruitment in both Quebec and Ireland to the Catholic creed. In the *Toronto Star*, McNeil defended the participation of Catholics in the Great War, alluding to the thousands of

<sup>62</sup> On the details of the "Ford City Riot", see Cecillon, "Turbulent Times in the Diocese of London."

<sup>63</sup> See Jack Granatstein, "Conscription in the Great War," in Mackenzie, (ed.) *Canada and the First World War*, 64. While anti-British and anti-Imperial attitudes did contribute to lower French-Catholic enlistment rates, numerous other factors, such as earlier marriages, out-migration of young adult males before the war, and problems with record keeping, to name a few, also played a significant role.

<sup>64</sup> ARCAT, Archbishop McNeil Papers, FW CS01.28, "Religious Denominations of Troops Enlisted in the CEF to October 1916 (Ontario)." According to the stated figures for Ontario, 14,198 Roman Catholics, out of a total of 145,121 recruits, had volunteered for service in the Canadian Expeditionary Force as of October 1916. This compares to 74,827 from the Church of England, 25,224 Methodists and 18,070 Presbyterians.

French soldiers dying in the trenches of Europe, while assuring readers that the Catholic Church stood shoulder to shoulder with the British Empire:

The speech of Rev. E.I. Hart depicts two great institutions pitted against each other. One is the Catholic Church. The other is the British Empire. In this way he seeks to explain the war attitude of Quebec and Ireland. If this explanation was well founded we might as well begin to prepare for whatever regime is going to succeed the British Empire, for the Catholic soldiers fighting for the cause of the allies far outnumber the Protestant soldiers. Today the loyalty of the Catholic soldier and of Catholic populations is absolutely essential to the continued existence of the British Empire, and people are so confident that this loyalty can be depended on that they play with side issues which seem superficially to indicate that there is a difference between Catholics and Protestants in this war. There is no difference. We are all involved in the same issue.<sup>65</sup>

In an offhand defense of low recruitment rates in French Canada, McNeil offered an explanation for Quebec's lackluster participation:

Canadians who are not British by race are loyal to the Empire more by seasoned submission than by sentiment. They perform their legal duties. They share the financial burdens of the state without complaint. Many of them are even enthusiastic in their support of British institutions. But the ties of blood are not the same in their case as in ours. Quebec differs from Ontario both in race and religion. The mistake of the Reverend E.I. Hart is that of attributing to religion certain phenomena which belong properly to race.<sup>66</sup>

In offering the rather feeble explanation that Quebec's attitude towards the war was attributable to race rather than creed, McNeil still had not disproved the accusations of Protestants that Catholics in Canada, regardless of ethnicity, were not shouldering their share of responsibility to the Empire. Compounding the problem for Catholic leaders was the official neutrality of the Vatican, which aroused Protestant opinion and only served to draw more attention to Catholic recruitment rates. As the federal election of 1917 drew closer, scrutiny of Catholic participation continued to intensify.

On 7 December 1917, just weeks before the election, the headlines of *The Globe* were dominated by news of the explosion of a munitions ship in Halifax harbour. In the same issue, Fallon announced his unequivocal support for Robert Borden and the Union Government, and implored all Catholics, and indeed all Canadians, to vote for Borden in the interests of the British Empire and indeed of civilization. In apprising Canadians of the gravity of

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<sup>65</sup> *The Toronto Star*, 3 November 1917.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

the federal election, he implied the significance of Canada's decision on the fate of the allied war effort:

It is no exaggeration that the eyes of the world are fixed on Canada today, and that the ears of the world are listening for the message which will be voiced by the Canadian people on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December next. Nor, when we call to mind the part that Canada has played in the Great War, is it surprising that the anxious attention of the world should be directed to that momentous decision which this country will then be called upon to make.<sup>67</sup>

In his statement, Fallon emphasized the unparalleled significance of the war effort in the impending election. He deemed conscription "the issue which dwarfs all others in Canada's effective continued participation in the war," and he identified the "crime of slackening" as the gravest sin that Canadians could commit:

...Shall we commit the crime of slackening in our purpose after all the sacrifices we have made? Can any Canadian honestly deny that the defeat of the Conscription Government would mean a real slackening of our purpose? Will not the whole world so interpret such a result of our election? Will it not bring aid and comfort to our enemies?<sup>68</sup>

In addressing the cleavage between recruitment rates in English and French Canada, and in responding to McNeil's defense of French Catholics, Fallon stood in firm solidarity with the English-speaking Catholics of Canada, and with the Union Government:

Under voluntary enlistment Quebec has fallen far behind the other provinces. Some who speak for Quebec offer explanations for this state of things; others neither deny it nor apologize for it. I am concerned neither with the one nor the other. What does concern me is that resentment against the province of Quebec has led to indiscriminate charges against the Catholics of Canada, and the regrettable racial division threatens to cause another and more dangerous cleavage along religious lines. This aggravation of an existing difficulty is wholly unwarranted. It is mischievous. It is criminal...In the name of justice and right and patriotism I demand that this reprobation be openly expressed, that this foul thing which is an ally of the enemy be stamped out.<sup>69</sup>

Regarding Quebec, Fallon had a stern message for his coreligionists, as well as a message of solidarity to Protestant Canada:

I ask my fellow Catholics not to be misled either by mistaken sympathy with a province whose religion must not be confounded with its politics, nor by natural resentment at any insults based on such confusion...In the

<sup>67</sup> *The Globe*, 7 December 1917.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

isolation of Quebec we are told there is a danger to Canada. I admit it. But the isolation of Quebec is of her own choosing. It will have to cure itself. There is a graver danger in needlessly confusing religion with a question purely racial. To avert this graver danger I appeal to my fellow countrymen, Protestant and Catholic alike.<sup>70</sup>

In tone and content, Fallon's statement was an explicit endorsement of Borden and the Union Government, and a denunciation of Quebec's sullen attitude towards the war. The bishop asked his fellow English-speaking Catholics to ignore the anti-Catholic bigotry expressed by certain supporters of the Union Government, and to support the Empire in its hour of need. In language more provocative than McNeil's, Fallon alluded to the "racial divide" between anglophone and francophone Catholics, and offered no defense of Quebec's dismissive attitudes. If a thread of solidarity had remained between Fallon and his francophone coreligionists, it was snapped on 7 December 1917. As the most outspoken Catholic churchman in English Canada, moreover, his intransigent tirade signaled a larger breach between French and Irish Catholics in Canada. The statement faithfully reflected Fallon's loyalties to the British Empire, to Irish Catholicism and to the Roman Catholic faith. It also reflected, publicly and explicitly, his disdain for what he considered to be French-Canadian arrogance, backwardness, and aloofness.

Response to Fallon's statement in Quebec was predictably terse. Henri Bourassa's *Le Devoir* excoriated the bishop of London, and several prominent Québécois expressed dismay at Fallon's divisive commentary.<sup>71</sup> Fallon's papers reveal an overwhelmingly positive response, however, from anglophone Catholics and Protestants in Quebec and elsewhere. Congratulatory messages poured in from prominent members of Canada's political and financial establishment, including the mayor of Toronto, members of the Privy Council and the Civil Service Commission in Ottawa, and Supreme Court justices in Ontario and New Brunswick.<sup>72</sup> Fallon was also congratulated by denominational leaders of all stripes in Canada, including

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> M.J.M. McLaughlin, president of the United States Steel Products Company of Montreal, expressed his disappointment at Fallon's statement, which he anticipated would widen the divide between French and English Catholics in Canada, as well as the divide between Catholics and Protestants. "It is just things of this nature," McLaughlin explained to Fallon, "that undo at a psychological moment what it may take years to foster up to an amicable settlement, and it certainly should ill behoove a man of your education and standing to furnish ammunition from time to time that is eagerly sought by flocks of other beliefs, to the detriment not only of the unity of Canada, but also to the harmony of Catholics and Protestants throughout Canada." See ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 6, McLaughlin to Fallon, 7 December 1917.

<sup>72</sup> See ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 6, "Union Government and Conscription, 1917".

Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Anglican churchmen. D'arcy Scott of the National Board of Railway Commissioners praised Fallon for his defense of Irish Catholics:

In my opinion, I have nothing to do with politics and I am not considering your pronouncement from a political point of view, but in the interests of the Catholic Church in Ontario I think it has done a great good. The people of this province should have it drummed into their bigoted ears, so that even they should understand that the question is a national and not a religious question.<sup>73</sup>

N. W. Rowell of the Privy Council supported Fallon's assessment of Quebec, asserting that "if the leaders of your church in Quebec had sounded the clear, strong, courageous, patriotic note which you did in that admirable statement of yours, I cannot but think that the attitude of the province of Quebec on the matter of war would be radically different from what it is."<sup>74</sup> Montreal lawyer Brooke Claxton, prominent Liberal and father of the future Minister of Defense, praised Fallon's stand in favour of conscription, and condemned both Laurier and French Catholic leaders for Quebec's feeble contribution to the war effort:

We all deplored the Conservative-Nationalist alliance in 1911, but what is more deplorable today is to see that Sir Wilfrid, instead of combating that alliance, has laid down and allowed the Liberal Party to be absorbed by the Nationalists. The Laurierites of this province are simply repeating the Nationalist creed. It is most deplorable and I firmly believe it will not only lead to a tremendous Union victory on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December, but to the un-splendid isolation of the French Canadians. With proper leading, instead of 7,000 going to the front from this province, there would have been twenty times that number. It is not the fault of the people, it is the fault of French Catholic leaders.<sup>75</sup>

Claxton's words spoke volumes about the widening rift between anglophone and francophone Catholics both in Quebec and in the rest of Canada. If the conscription crisis had served to strain the relationship between French and English Canada, Fallon's explicit support of Borden and the Union Government exacerbated the widening rift between French and Irish Catholics.

To the end, Fallon remained faithful to his tripartite loyalties: the British Empire, Irish Catholicism and the Roman Catholic faith. His belief in British institutions, however, primarily as a vehicle for the advancement of Irish Catholics, led him to encourage his flock to participate and co-operate with

<sup>73</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 6, Scott to Fallon, 21 December 1917.

<sup>74</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 6, Rowell to Fallon, 28 December 1917.

<sup>75</sup> ADL, Bishop Fallon Papers, Box 6, Claxton to Fallon, 8 December 1917.

the Protestant majority. The First World War, to Fallon, provided an ideal opportunity for Irish Catholics to prove their loyalty to the British Empire. When French Catholics revealed a distinct lack of enthusiasm for the war, partly due to grievances tracing back to Fallon himself, the bishop emphasized the ethnic, and indeed racial, divide between French and English Catholics, and encouraged Irish Catholics to remain loyal to the Empire and to the faith. This implied, however, a breach with their francophone coreligionists in the interests of advancing the objectives of Irish Catholics. The ties of language and ethnicity had trumped the ties of faith and creed. If Irish Catholics emerged from the Great War legitimized in the eyes of Protestant Canada, it was at the expense of solidarity with the Quebec faithful. Fallon, as the most outspoken Catholic churchman in English Canada, served as a symbol to Quebec of English-Catholic arrogance, intransigence, and collaboration with the Protestant majority. Quebec emerged from the war further isolated not only politically and culturally, but also religiously. While Fallon, by 1918, had helped to secure a greater degree of respect and acceptance for anglophone Catholics and Roman Catholic institutions in English Canada, relations with the Quebec Church were left in tatters, a social and cultural breach which would remain for decades.

## HISTORICAL NOTES

### **Belgians and School Questions in Western Canada – A Comment**

Belgians were not a major immigrant group in Western Canada that attracted extensive ethno-cultural investigation. Nevertheless, as a national group composed of two distinct ethnic communities united by a common religion, they stood apart from other immigrant communities. They quickly became implicated in “school questions” that involved both religious and linguistic controversies. The institutional frameworks in Manitoba and the North-West Territories evolved from dual confessional schools to a separate schools arrangement in Saskatchewan and Alberta and to a public non-confessional system in Manitoba. There was also an intermediate bilingual school experiment, designed to hasten the process of the assimilation of diverse ethno-cultural communities. It tended instead to promote integration into an evolving multicultural society. In other words, the educational situation that Flemings and Walloons encountered in their adopted land was in transition. This transition was in good measure an outgrowth of the demographic changes that challenged the prevailing linguistic conventions. French and English were the original European languages implanted in the West. English was the dominant language of administration and business and French remained the dominant language of Catholic institutions in the region when Belgians began to arrive. This was the cultural context of the region of reception.

In order to understand the experiences of Belgian immigrants settled in Western Canada, one must consider also the educational and linguistic situations in the country of emigration. Belgians are a national group consisting of two principal ethnic communities – Flemings in the north and francophone Walloons in the south. In the period of initial emigration (1880 to 1914 and the 1920s), French was the official language, the cultural language of the upper classes, the language of secondary education and of upward mobility. With the rise of Flemish ethnic consciousness in the late nineteenth century, there were demands for the use of the Flemish dialect of Dutch in the schools, administration and courts, culminating in the

recognition of Flemish as an official language in 1898. Until 1932, Wallonia followed the *jus soli* principle, so that all public schooling was in French, but Flanders followed the *jus personae* principle, so the language of instruction depended on the language of the head of the family. There was also a struggle between state-sponsored non-sectarian schools and Catholic schools that many Flemings preferred. In 1970, Belgium adopted the concept of linguistic communities, each with its official language and no provision for minority language protection. Since 1980, the Flemish Community has officially designated its language as Dutch. Only the capital region of Brussels remains officially bilingual. Belgian immigrants arriving in Canada were not strangers to school controversies involving religion and language.

In Canada there was no constitutional separation of church and state, but organized religious groups could by law or practice engage in public education. Missionaries preceded settlement so that confessional – Catholic, Protestant – schools were the first organized in the North-West. The Catholic Church initially was predominantly francophone and the hierarchy sought to perpetuate this quality through selective immigration, but state and corporate immigration efforts rapidly altered the balance overwhelmingly in favour of Anglo-Celtic settlers and bloc settlements of Icelanders, Mennonites and Doukhobors who, it was presumed, were destined to be assimilated into the dominant new Anglo host society. By 1905, Archbishop Langevin conceded “there is no longer any place at the moment in our diocese for foreign priests who know neither English, nor German, nor Polish, nor Hungarian, but even a French priest will be welcome if he wants to found a parish on the open virgin prairie by bringing out settlers.”<sup>1</sup> The Catholic Church Extension Society of Canada, on the other hand, based on the American model, recruited anglophone priests and British Isles immigrants with a view to making English the language of all ethnic groups.<sup>2</sup> Language was perceived by both French and English Canadians as a political instrument of nation building, and the public schools were the institutional vehicle for its accomplishment.<sup>3</sup> In this context, it was not surprising that the struggle to preserve a religiously-oriented institution, such as a confessional or separate denominational school, was motivated also by linguistic considerations. Language and confessional rights were confused until temporarily disentangled by the Laurier-Greenway Agreement in 1897, only to be reintroduced in 1916 with the closing of

<sup>1</sup> *Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface*, Vol. IV, no. 20 (1905): 306.

<sup>2</sup> Mark McGowan, “‘Religious Duties and Patriotic Endeavour’: The Catholic Church Extension Society, French Canada and the Prairie West, 1908-1916,” *CCHA, Historical Studies*, 51 (1984): 111.

<sup>3</sup> A. Verdoodt, “Language and Nationality,” *Language and Society/Langue et Société*, No. 7 (1982): 17; Cornelius J. Jaenen, “The Public School in Canada: Agency for Integration and Assimilation,” *Actes du Congrès International des Sciences de l’Education*, (Paris, 1976), Tome I: 203-215.

the bilingual school experiment. Where did Belgians fit into this confusing pattern of “school questions”?

When Belgians first settled in Manitoba, Father Théobald Bitsche told them they had avoided two drawbacks of the American system: “i) the public schools in which the children often lose their faith; ii) divorce which ruins family life.”<sup>4</sup> Under the provisions of the Manitoba Schools Act of 1871, the schools frequented by Belgians, mostly Flemings, in St. Boniface, St. Alphonse and Bruxelles were founded and taught by the clergy, offered religious instruction and were taught almost entirely in French. In other words, these schools resembled those in Flanders at the time. The Official Language Act of 1890 made English the sole official language in Manitoba, but francophones did not challenge its constitutionality in the courts until the Bertrand case in 1909, which left some anglophones puzzled. Bertrand won his challenge in district court but the case was not pursued further.<sup>5</sup>

The Public Schools Act of 1890 abolished the Catholic public schools and created a single public system out of the Protestant School sector. In the rural parishes where Belgians were settled, the schools carried on much as before, while in St. Boniface the schools continued to operate in French under the supervision of T. A. Bernier, former Superintendent of Catholic Schools, friend of the archbishop and immigration agent working on the Belgian file. In 1894 an amendment was introduced to deprive schools of provincial funds that continued to offer Catholic instruction. The ultra-conservative journalist of the *Courrier de Bruxelles*, Louis Hacault, took up the cause of francophone Catholic schools, comparing the Manitoba legislation to the Van Humbeek law in Belgium, while attributing the “evil legislation” to the Free Masons, agnostics and Orangemen in the most intemperate language. Leaders in the Belgian community observed that “it was difficult to accept some of his ideas” but “it would have been very embarrassing to attempt to refute them.”<sup>6</sup> Following the Belgian model of *écoles libres*, Catholic schools supported by private funds, Langevin organized “free schools” where Catholic public schools had existed. Response at the local level varied. At Bruxelles and St. Alphonse the parents supported private schools. The municipality of Lorne, on whose council the Belgians were well represented, allocated an annual grant to these two schools. In at least six rural school districts, the Belgians decided to support the publicly-funded non-sectarian school, in spite of clerical opposition to such a “surrender.”

<sup>4</sup> T. Alfred Bernier, *Le Manitoba. Champ d'Immigration*, (Ottawa, 1887), Bitsche to Bernier, 20 December 1886, 10.

<sup>5</sup> *Winnipeg Free Press*, 25 February 1916, Intervention of John Williams MLA.

<sup>6</sup> Société historique de Saint-Boniface (hereafter SHSB), Carton “Belges”, “Un journaliste catholique, Monsieur Louis Hacault,” *Almanach de l'Action Sociale Catholique* : 125-26.

Flemings in these southern Manitoba parishes were united with Walloons in preferring a Catholic education, but some wavered on linguistic matters. The clergy deplored “a certain number of head-strong individuals, revolutionary prejudices,” and the archbishop said “we count on changing their minds.”<sup>7</sup> Belgians were beginning to live up to the opinion the Quebec clergy had already arrived at – they were a very independent-minded and obstinate lot!

An appeal was made to the Consul General, Jules de Bernard de Fauconsol, for financial aid in Belgium for the beleaguered schools. He advised that it would be impolitic to advertise in Belgian newspapers for contributions to the Manitoba Schools Fund and stressed “what discreet reserve I am obliged to observe in this Canadian political question.”<sup>8</sup> He suggested, on the other hand, that the abbé Willems might be sent to Belgium to recruit emigrants “and bring back money.” The abbé Jean Gaire, who had founded the parishes of Grande Clairière, Bellegarde, Cantal and Wauchope and had brought out numerous Belgian settlers to these parishes, was raising awareness in Belgium through a bulletin called *les Annales du denier du Manitoba*.

Msgr. Raphael Merry del Val, who had studied at Collège Saint-Michel in Brussels and who was perceived by conservative churchmen as too liberal, was named delegate extraordinary by Pope Leo XIII in 1897 to investigate the Manitoba school question. The accession to power of the federal Liberals under Wilfred Laurier in 1896 facilitated a negotiated settlement with Manitoba in 1897 known as the Laurier-Greenway Agreement, that shifted the emphasis from religious orientation, unpalatable to a majority of ratepayers, to linguistic accommodation. A system of bilingual schools, in the public sector, available to all significant linguistic communities, such as French, German, “Ruthenian” and Polish, was established and training facilities for bilingual teachers were envisaged. Clause 258 of the revised school legislation provided that “when 10 of the pupils of any school speak the French language, or any language other than English, as their native language, the teaching of such pupils shall be conducted in French, or such other language, and English upon the bilingual system.” There was no provision for religious instruction, for time apportionment between the languages of instruction, for textbooks, or for compulsory attendance. Langevin found the compromise unacceptable but Rome apparently thought otherwise: “It seems that Msgr. Langevin loves wars of faction and race, and in the ardour of his actions he does not weigh their consequences,

<sup>7</sup> Archives de l’Archévêché de Saint-Boniface (hereafter AASB), Fonds Langevin, 1 October 1896.

<sup>8</sup> Archives du Patrimoine de Saint-Boniface (hereafter APSB), Fonds Langevin, L-7128-30, Consul General to Langevin, 20 December 1896.

making himself rebellious to all sound advice no matter from whom it may come.”<sup>9</sup>

Walloons in St. Boniface were part of the cathedral parish and sent their children to the French schools. Flemish parents petitioned their school board for an English-Flemish bilingual school. The school board asked the Marian Brothers to find a qualified teacher for such a primary school. When they were unable to find a suitable candidate the board denied the request. Flemish children attended either the English-French bilingual schools, or the private French schools, or an English public school in Norwood. In south central Manitoba, Belgians supported seventeen English-French bilingual rural schools. Louis Hacault, with the support of the archbishop, continued a vitriolic press campaign against godless “forced schools” and American-style “national schools.”<sup>10</sup> Langevin continued to see the bilingual system as one of assimilation to the English milieu. By and large Belgians had a favourable experience because Flemings, who came to associate more with their anglophone neighbours and, Walloons, who remained almost totally encapsulated in French Canadian districts, each saw their children liberated from ascribed inequalities. From a relatively middle position in the vertical structure of Canadian society, as defined originally by John Porter, Belgians would attain equality within the two collectives.<sup>11</sup>

Following the outbreak of World War I, there was mounting suspicion of “enemy aliens,” a wave of super patriotism, and fears that bilingual schools led to “balkanization.” John W. Dafoe of the *Manitoba Free Press* articulated a common view: “There is a real danger that Canada may become a multilingual country, inhabited by different peoples, speaking different tongues, and cherishing divergent national ideals.”<sup>12</sup> In this charged atmosphere, the newly elected Norris Liberal government commissioned Superintendent of Schools Charles Newcombe to investigate the state of bilingual schools. The tenor of his report did not support the charges made in the local press, but he found great improvement in the quality of instruction

<sup>9</sup> Archives of Propaganda Fide (hereafter APF), DAC, Falconio to Ledochowski, 29 April 1901, ff. 283-298, translated and communicated by Matteo Sanfilippo.

<sup>10</sup> APSB, Fonds Langevin, L-61476-81, Hacault to A. Delmer, 29 July 1907; Louis Hacault, “Les Commandements de Dieu et les écoles publiques,” *Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface*, Vol VI (1907): 258-261; «L’Ecole forcée au Manitoba,» *La Vérité*, 7, 20 (1909), n.p.

<sup>11</sup> Anne Denis & Raymond Murphy, “Schools and the Conservation of the Vertical Mosaic,” (Typescript, National Conference of the Canadian Ethnic Studies Association, 1977), 1-25.

<sup>12</sup> Provincial Archives of Manitoba, R.A.C. Manning Papers, P. Talbot to Manning, 11 June 1915; *Manitoba Free Press*, 24 July 1914; Cornelius J. Jaenen, “Minority Group Schooling and Canadian National Unity,” *Journal of Educational Thought*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (August 1973): 90.

with some reservations about the quality of English spoken in isolated rural areas. The pupils in Bruxelles and Grande Clairière were taught almost exclusively in French, those in Ste. Rose-du-Lac had a better understanding of English than their teacher, and the Flemish children in St. Boniface schools were performing efficiently “at a relatively early age, acquiring ease and fluency in the use of English” as well as French. On the whole, the bilingual system was producing bilingual students, which was not what the Department of Education really wanted.<sup>13</sup> Therefore the government proceeded to abolish the system saying that the Deputy Minister of Education, the respected Robert Fletcher, had found the bilingual schools “near collapse.” It was a charge he later denied, writing in 1951, “By 1916 the schools were producing young people with a fair knowledge of English.”<sup>14</sup> The Belgian Club sent a letter to legislators asking them to restore the bilingual system, but there was no movement in that direction as concern continued to focus on the war effort, not least the Belgian Relief Fund.

In the North-West Territories, the educational system in 1877 was similar to that instituted in Manitoba in 1871. Little by little, the Territorial government eroded French language and Catholic educational rights. Father Leonard Van Tighem, who had opened a school in Lethbridge in 1889 and obtained the assistance of the Sisters, Faithful Companions of Jesus to operate the boarding institution, found that the social leaders in the community belittled his efforts to serve the “foreign element,” which consisted largely of Italian, Slovak, and Flemish coalminers. The local newspaper advocated a single public school to assimilate the immigrants’ children because, it was alleged, “many of them [newcomers] bring hatred of Government, hatred of liberty and hatred of humanity” to the community. However, the saloons, gambling establishments and brothels in Lethbridge, as in many Western towns, were owned and operated by British entrepreneurs.<sup>15</sup>

The Walloons in Bellegarde fared better than the Catholics in Lethbridge because they formed a religiously and ethnically homogeneous community. Under the 1892 Territorial Ordinance, they formed the Bellegarde Catholic Public School No. 50 in 1899 and were permitted to hire the resident priest as teacher because the authorities in Regina were unable to find a qualified teacher willing to come to the new settlement. The curate resigned after a year because he found attendance irregular and the pupils disrespectful and undisciplined. The teachers hired subsequently were not properly certified

<sup>13</sup> Charles Newcombe, *Special Report on Bilingual Schools in Manitoba* (Winnipeg: King’s Printer, 1916), 1-15.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Fletcher, “The Language Problem in Manitoba Schools,” *Transactions of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba*, III, 6 (1951): 53-56.

<sup>15</sup> Alex Johnson & Andy A. den Otter, *Lethbridge. A Centennial History* (Lethbridge: Historical Society of Alberta, 1985), 52-53, 72.

and the authorities threatened to withhold the modest annual grant but relented because they could not find properly qualified teachers. F. W. Haultain, who was the Conservative candidate for the premiership of the newly minted province of Saskatchewan in 1905, recommended certifying the incumbent and paying the full grant and hoped to win the support of the Catholics. The archbishop reminded the faithful in a pastoral letter read from pulpits that the Conservatives had incrementally restricted French and Catholic instruction from 1885 to 1901. Bellegarde's Belgians voted for the Liberal candidate as directed along with the French Canadian communities.<sup>16</sup> The new provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta opted for the Ontario model of a separate school system, rather than the Quebec model of dual confessional schools. So the Belgians found themselves in a Catholic separate school system, although the school was still called a Catholic public school until 1912 and was taught by French nuns holding Quebec teaching certificates. Thus, Flemings and Walloons who found themselves as minorities among other Catholics benefited from the separate school system. The Behiels family, in Morinville, for example, recalled the advantage they enjoyed: "We always spoke Flemish in the home, that is the older ones in the family spoke the language fluently, before learning English and French."<sup>17</sup>

Following the June 1929 elections in Saskatchewan, a coalition government led by the Conservatives under J.T.M. Anderson, former teacher and school inspector, author of the assimilationist manual *The Education of the New Canadian* (1918), passed legislation declaring Quebec teaching certificates invalid, made English the sole medium of instruction and forbade religious garb and symbols in public schools. Belgian humour prevailed when a school refused a Red Cross shipment because it bore a religious symbol forbidden by law in a public school. When Premier Anderson sent a picture of himself to the schools, it was observed that since a depiction of Christ was not permitted one of Anderson could not replace it.<sup>18</sup> Some clergy, including Maurice Baudoux, parish priest at Prud'homme (and future Archbishop of St. Boniface) advised continued disobedience of provincial directives. A different Belgian viewpoint was expressed by Omer Demers, MLA, after speaking with several cabinet ministers, that instead of insisting on the presence of a crucifix in the classroom, for example, it would be more conciliatory to offer to cover it with a white veil to meet provincial regulations that religious symbols should not be "displayed."<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Archives of the Archdiocese of Regina (AAR), Paroisse St-Maurice de Bellegarde, 1897-1949, 12 September 1901; 6 September 1902; 3 October 1902; 22 April 1903; 9 June 1903; 11 October 1905; 5 November 1905.

<sup>17</sup> Maurice & Laura Behiels, "The Behiels Heritage," typescript, 1985: 4-8.

<sup>18</sup> *Le Patriote de l'Ouest*, 14 May 1930.

<sup>19</sup> Raymond Huel, "The Anderson Amendments: A Half Century Later," CCHA, *Study Sessions*, 47 (1980): 9-15.

In 1930, the trustees in Bellegarde were informed that a public school could not operate on property owned by the Filles de la Croix, so two years later they reached a compromise by renting the convent and hiring a lay teacher for a designated “public classroom” within the convent. During 1933 in the midst of the drought and depression, the provincial government decided not to withhold the provincial grant, although the public school was still housed in the convent, the sisters wore their religious habit, and they taught mainly in French. Even an order from the Bishop of Regina to comply with provincial legislation brought no changes. The introduction of larger school units by a CCF government in 1944, an instrument of homogenization and centralization, threatened both the Catholic and francophone character of the Bellegarde school. The community remained adamant and was eventually triumphant when the Supreme Court decision in the Mahé case in Alberta protecting francophone minority rights was officially implemented in January 1999.<sup>20</sup> By contrast, in nearby Manor and Carlyle, the Flemings from Limburg province made no effort to organize a separate school but sent their children to the local English-language public school. Belgians followed their own convictions in these cases, ignoring directives from both state and religious authorities when these did not coincide with their immediate self-interest.

The close relationship between language and religion, postulated by Catholics in general in Western Canada, engendered controversy not only between partisans of denominational and non-sectarian schooling but also among ethnic communities. Walloons and Flemings supported Catholic schools when these were available under a dual confessional or separate school system. Flemings settled in communities where this religious orientation was not available sent their children to the common public school where instruction was in English. Walloons, on the contrary, remained closely identified with other francophones in the West. They participated in the struggle to maintain French instruction. In the Manitoba school question, Catholic leaders fought for the retention of their confessional schools but they avoided challenging the infringement of linguistic rights.

The first generations of Flemish and Walloons were anxious to maintain their mother tongue as part of their culture and as a means of communicating with relatives, especially grandparents, and friends. By the third generation in Canada, the ancestral tongue was appreciated for its perceived or anticipated economic advantage. In addition, there was the social benefit of knowing a second language. There is evidence that a positive attitude toward a dual

<sup>20</sup> Wilfrid B. Denis, “Francophone Education in Saskatchewan: Resisting Anglo-Hegemony,” in Brian Noonan et al., *A History of Education in Saskatchewan. Selected Readings* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 2006), 87-108.

Canadian identity is related to the ability to understand French, as was the case in the early Flemish community. The Flemish perception that there was an advantage, even a necessity in some cases, to learn English even if one mastered French, has been upheld by recent research. The command of English assures a definite earning advantage in Western Canada, and speakers of Flemish and Dutch as their mother tongue have been identified as suffering only a very slight earning disadvantage.<sup>21</sup>

Both Flemings and Walloons remained firmly attached to their Catholic heritage. There is no compelling evidence that public non-sectarian schooling undermined religious belief or practice. Non-sectarian public schools and Catholic schools became more multi-ethnic with the passing of time so that both streams encouraged inter-marriage with other ethnic groups. Both the Flemish and Walloon communities experienced out-group marriages in the third and fourth generations, a characteristic of integration into mainstream society. This suggests the possibility that inter-marriage might threaten Belgian attachment to Catholicism.

Cornelius J. JAENEN

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<sup>21</sup> Peter S. Li, "The Economics of Minority Language Identity," *Canadian Ethnic Studies/ Etudes ethniques au Canada*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 3 (2001): 142



## Reflections on John Webster Grant's Influence on Catholic Historiography in Canada

The title of this short paper may be very baffling to many observers of Canadian religious history. John Webster Grant has been celebrated as one of the pioneer Church historians in Canada for a corpus of research that was primarily concerned with the developments in Canadian Protestantism. This career began in the military, in 1943, when he served on the Wartime Information Board, where he wrote on subjects germane to Non-Roman Catholic Churches. John Grant never wrote a book or paper on an overtly and singularly Roman Catholic subject (although the first three chapters of *Moon of Wintertime* were effectively on Catholic missions in New France)<sup>1</sup>; he did not, as a rule, attend sessions of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association, except during joint sessions with the Canadian Society of Church History, and his writing was almost exclusively in English, thus creating certain linguistic barriers between his work and the majority of Canadian historians studying Catholic history in this country. Given this litany of incongruities between the two principal subjects of this paper, perhaps I had better cease and desist in this line of thought.

Bear with me for a few moments and it may appear that there was method in my madness, and that the relationship between Grant's work and Canadian Catholic historiography is not such a far fetched idea. Significance is sometimes measured in odd ways. John Webster Grant's writings emerged from a period of great hope for the Canadian churches and the optimism inspired by the ecumenical movement of the 1950s and 1960s, as energized significantly by the work of the World Council of Churches and the declarations of the Second Vatican Council; this remarkable era provides an initial point of convergence between our two subjects. Secondly, historians of the Catholic traditions, particularly an emerging generation of professionally trained scholars in English Canada, could not help but

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<sup>1</sup> John Webster Grant, *Moon of Wintertime: Missionaries and the Indians of Canada in Encounter since 1534* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 3-70.

become enamored by the quality of Grant's scholarship. As American historian Robert Handy cited, in a volume celebrating Grant, in 1988: "His appreciation for historical accuracy, theological flexibility, cultural diversity, and human empathy with every concrete situation make this work endure as a benchmark for its genre."<sup>2</sup> This type of critical acclaim spoke volumes to a new generation of religious historians, many of whom were members of both the Canadian Catholic Historical Association and the Canadian Society of Church History. Thirdly, his three most significant monographs of his mid-and late career—*The Church in the Canadian Era* (1972, reprinted 1988) *Moon of Wintertime* (1984), and *A Profusion of Spires* (1988)—provided sweeping narratives of religious history that departed significantly from the biographical and denominationally-focused studies of the past. In this way, Grant's work helped to create a new environment wherein the writing of Canadian religious history was grounded in the grand sweep of Canadian history, and pushed Catholicism into the main narrative in a serious and scholarly way. This rethinking of the way in which "Church history" was written provided the appropriate trans-denominational contexts in which Roman Catholicism found itself as a significant player among other churches across both regions and time periods. If one, however, is looking for a most tangible link one might find it by turning to Hymn 305 in the first edition of the Catholic Book of Worship. There one would discover "O Holy Spirit, By Whose Breath," to the music of Eisenach, with lyrics by John Webster Grant (Ottawa: CCC, 1972).

### **John Grant's Great Ecumenical Project**

John Grant's status as a United Church minister and his early fascination for the great ecumenical projects of the twentieth century were undeniable. In 1956, the appearance of his first book, *World Church: Achievement or Hope* signaled a deep and abiding interest in ecumenism and signaled an early thrust of his scholarship. Grant became known for his articles and books on the United Church of Canada, its founders, and its perceived mission. Rooted in an ecumenical tradition, inspired further, perhaps by the developments at Vatican II in its declarations *Unitatis Redintegratio* (1964) and *Nostra Aetate* (1965), and surrounded by the optimism of the 1960s, it is not difficult to see why—as an historian—Grant would use his writing to build bridges between Christian groups, where few had existed before.

In their monumental multi-authored edition of *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin (both historians

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<sup>2</sup> Robert T. Handy, "Foreword," in John S. Moir and C. T. McIntire (eds.), *Canadian Protestant and Catholic Missions 1820s-1960s: Historical Essays in Honour of John Webster Grant* (New York: Peter Lang, 1988).

of Catholic Christianity in Canada) identified this ecumenical concern as one of the salient themes within Grant's edition of a series of three volumes titled *The Christian Church in Canada*. Commenting on Grant and his two co-authors H.H. "Nick" Walsh, and Grant's lifelong friend and colleague, John S. Moir, Murphy and Perin observed:

In addition, the *History of the Christian Church in Canada* reflected the ecumenical spirit of the 1960s and 1970s and the intense preoccupation with Canadian identity which was characteristic of that era: the use of 'church' instead of 'churches' in the title signaled the authors' commitment to the ideal of Christian unity; and one of their central concerns was to identify what was distinctively Canadian about Christianity in the country.<sup>3</sup>

Grant's concern for all of the Christian churches and the common experiences they shared in Canada came at an interesting transitional point in Canadian religious historiography; John Moir has demonstrated that, until the mid twentieth century our field of study had been dominated by providential approaches to history, denominational studies that scarcely looked beyond the walls of one's own congregation of communion, and rather pious biographies of clergy and religious. When reflecting on the state of the craft at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association, Moir confessed:

Canadian Religious History in forms other than biography also seems to suffer from the same distortion [no denomination really wants to hear about the humanness of its particular saints]. In past denominationalism projected into history gave the reader so often the impression that the only Christians, perhaps the only humans, to inhabit Canada were members of 'Denomination X.'<sup>4</sup>

Grant had recognized this himself and had tipped his hand using a case from the history of Canadian missions. In his introduction to Moir's *The Cross in Canada* Grant's thoughts could have been applied equally to the religious historiography of Canada in an earlier time:

Similar as the churches of nineteenth-century Canada may appear to students of another era, contemporaries were most aware of their differences. The early mission to Canada was consciously conceived as so many separate missions to Canada, intersecting only at points of mutual irritation. It is actually possible to read the journals of some early missionaries without suspecting that any others were at work in the same region, for Canadian life outside the sphere of God's chosen emissaries is described to us in terms of complete spiritual destitution. Denominational

<sup>3</sup> Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin (eds.), *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996), ix.

<sup>4</sup> John S. Moir, "Coming of Age, But Slowly: Canadian Religious Historiography since Confederation," *CCHA Study Sessions*, 50 (1983): 91.

conflict seemed to be the primary phenomenon, while the underlying unity of purpose was sensed only by a few leaders in moments of unusual clarity.<sup>5</sup>

Grant helped to change this. In his major works Grant was expert at pulling together the disparate parts of the Christian Church under one roof. Grant's own contribution to the Centennial trilogy, the third and final volume, *The Church and the Canadian Era*, offered a sweeping overview that included all churches, and a careful eye to the developments of the Church in Quebec and how these related to other parts of the country. Upon reflection, the trilogy, and for that matter *Moon of Wintertime* and *Profusion of Spires* provided broad frameworks for the consideration of Christian development in Canada (in the case of the latter, Ontario), or perhaps, what Paul Dekar once referred to as "the outer story."<sup>6</sup> In each of the major works Catholic and Protestant could be seen cheek-by-jowl with one another, working on their various enterprises in full knowledge of, admiration for, and, sometimes, hostility to the other.<sup>7</sup> An excellent example of this integration, or contextualizing the traditions, emerged in chapter eight of *A Profusion of Spires*, wherein Grant summarizes each of the Ultramontane movement, Tractarianism, and the Great Disruption in the Scottish Kirk as particular responses to the encroachment of the state on religious life.<sup>8</sup> In a sweeping analysis, Grant crossed denominations, demonstrated points of intersection, and discussed the transfer of ideas and movements from a European metropolis to a Canadian hinterland. Likewise, in the trilogy, Grant and his colleagues had provided a similar narrative structure inclusive of the major issues facing each of the Christian traditions, thus providing scholars young and old with fertile ground for rethinking the past and the posing of imaginative questions; as new generations of historians moved forward in their work, they would help to reveal the "inner stories" by means of thematic studies, denominationally-based studies on themes, or micro-historical studies. For Catholics these works by Grant, Moir, and Walsh helped break down the silos in the historiography and encouraged some historians of Catholicism to see their own historiography in a different way.

<sup>5</sup> John Webster Grant, "Introduction," in John S. Moir, *The Cross in Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1966), x.

<sup>6</sup> Canadian Society of Church History, Papers, 1980.

<sup>7</sup> See *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: Ontario Historical Studies and University of Toronto Press, 1988), 67.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 118-34.

## The Canadian Society of Church History

In practical terms Grant's role as one of the founders of the Canadian Society of Church history, in 1960, also enabled Catholic historians to come out of the cloister. Open to scholars of all denominations or no denominations, the CSCH served and continues to serve as an embodiment of what Grant and other founders had hoped for: a meeting of the minds on questions germane to the study of Canada's religious history. Although the Society functioned primarily in English (joint sessions were held with French scholars in 1987 in Hamilton and again in 1989 at Laval and 1993 in Ottawa) and a majority of members were studying the numerous Protestant groups in the country; there was, and continues to be, many members of the society who study Canada's Catholic churches; co-operation was also evident, when in "every-other-year" at the Learned/Congress, the Canadian Society of Church History and the Canadian Catholic Historical Association, would meet in a joint session. There are numerous historians and archivists who are members of each.

In some small way this Society was an extension of Grant's abiding interest in the ebb and flow of religious history wherein all groups could be seen within the context of one another, and in these encounters, scholars could present and study themes that were trans-denominational in character, regionally specific, or grounded in one particular point of time. Moreover the Society was a window on the transition that was taking place in the craft as the dominance of church historians who were professors of divinity, or active clerics, began to give way to a stronger representation of scholars who were trained in, or currently taught in departments of history, religion, or one of the social sciences. Whether conscious or oblivious to these developments, those studying the history of the Catholic Church in Canada have much to thank Grant for seeing the "big picture" and helping to foster these scholarly interchanges.

I for one am grateful. In 1968, his Presidential address to the CSCH was titled "The Reaction of Wasp Churches to non-Wasp Immigrants." It was a crisp and concise essay on how Protestant Canadians attempted to deal with the religious and cultural "others" who flocked to Canadian shores during the Laurier-Borden Period. Setting forth a template of Protestant responses that were categorized as coming from—a threat to Church and Society, a Call to evangelize the *papist* and Orthodox hordes, and the challenge to maintain the values and virtues of Victorian Canada—Grant invited scholars to explore Catholic-Protestant-Orthodox relations in a new and innovative way. I took up the gauntlet, under the watchful eye of Grant's colleague John Moir, and began the study of Ukrainians of the Byzantine Catholic Rite, their migration to Canada, and their interaction with Protestants and

Latin Rite Catholics. There were other graduate students similarly engaged by Grant's probing questions and pleasant personal manner.

### **Grant's Work and "the Big Picture"**

Finally, I would like to return to the three works that I consider important invitations to expand our historiography and discover the inner stories of Canadian Christianity, and Canadian religion for that matter. In Grant's major books, not only were all the varieties of Christianity gathered into one tent, facing and encountering their similarities and differences; they were cast expertly within the context of their times. In *Moon of Wintertime; Church in the Canadian Era*; and *Profusion of Spires* Grant was careful to engage the development of Churches with the ebb and flow of life in Canada. It did not seem possible, having read Grant's sweeping approaches to religious history, which by and large were historical narrative with pointed themes running throughout the chronological approach, that historians of religion in Canada, let alone researchers of any specific denomination, could write their history without a sense of the history of Canada writ large. Grant appeared sensitive to the manner in which religious concerns were woven into the fabric of general historical developments, or how religion itself was transformed by social, economic, and political variables in the world around it, and vice-versa. Canadian religious historians would by necessity have to be better Canadian historians. Church history, in this sense, was not necessarily just another handmaiden to theology. For Canadian historians to appreciate fully the historical importance of religion in Canadian life, religious or "church" historians would have to do a much better job engaging the historiographical debates within the discipline and the changing trends afoot among mainstream Canadian historians.

In the wake of the 1960s and the reformulation of Canadian religious historiography by Grant and others, there has been a notable difference in the way in which the history of the Catholic Church in Canada has been approached. First, it has become increasingly clear that historians of Canadian Catholicism, by necessity, must transcend the linguistic divide and recognize the key relationships that existed within Canadian Catholicism between francophones, anglophones, and allophones. Moreover, as Grant's sweeping narratives indicated, there is more to Canada than central Canada. Those working in the Catholic historiography have had to become more aware of the need to break away from narrowly constructed studies of individuals, religious orders, and topical issues in Canadian Catholicism, and instead have set their research against the broad canvass of Canadian history. Terry Fay's recent survey *A History of Canadian Catholics: Gallicanism, Ultramontanism, and Canadianism* (2002) comes to mind as a Grant-style work, weaving together disparate players, salient themes, and the integration

of religion (in this case Catholicism) with other aspects of Canadian society. What results is a concern for readers to not only appreciate the broad strokes of Canadian Catholic history, but to propose new points of departure, foster new research, and stimulate scholarly debate. Although Grant was neither the first to be conscious of the Canadian historical panorama, nor was necessarily the most effective, his major synthetic works set serious benchmarks for all those who would follow. If religion was to be taken seriously as a variable in Canada's historical development, it would have to be written with an attention to the sweep of Canadian history itself. Research and work by Terrence Murphy, Brian Clarke, Brian Hogan, Gerald Stortz, Vicki Bennett, Roberto Perin, Luca Codignola, Raymond Huel, John Zucchi, Robert Choquette, Elizabeth Smyth, Paula Maurutto, and Mark McGowan, reflect the need to see Canadian Catholic history as an integral part of Canadian religious history and Canadian history as a whole.

Perhaps these reflections have been entirely too personal, but to some extent I have been part of the historical generation most affected by the broad brush strokes painted by Grant and Moir; when I joined the CSCH in 1984 and attended my first meeting of the Society in Guelph, there was a different cast of historical characters in the audience; the presence of Moir and Grant loomed large over the room—even though they did not give papers—where it showed most was in the question and answer session after every paper: their questions made you think, pushed your brain harder, and invariably challenged your historical certainties. John Webster Grant helped to open doors and open minds; historians of the Catholic Church in Canada are in his debt.

Mark G. McGOWAN



## Abstracts/Résumés

Patricia E. ROY

### **“The Pirates of the Penitentiary”: Religion and Politics in late 19<sup>th</sup> Century British Columbia**

Chronic reports of mismanagement in the British Columbia Penitentiary resulted in several investigations and a recommendation that Arthur McBride, the long-time warden, be superannuated. That set off a contest for the wardenship between the Orangeman, provincial gaoler William Moresby, who had the support of local politicians, and James Fitzsimmons, the Catholic deputy warden and protégé of J.G. Moylan, the Inspector of Penitentiaries, who had members of the Catholic hierarchy in English Canada lobbying for him. Meanwhile, the federal government appointed a Royal Commission in 1894. Much of the evidence concerned Fitzsimmons’ practice of providing the adjacent Good Shepherd Orphanage with convict labour and prison supplies. The government dismissed Fitzsimmons but briefly reinstated him as deputy much to the consternation of many British Columbians who objected more to his alleged dishonesty than to his religion. Though important in national politics, religion was not a divisive issue in British Columbia.

*Des rapports constants de mauvaise gestion dans le pénitencier de la Colombie-Britannique ont donné lieu à de nombreuses enquêtes et à la recommandation que Arthur McBride, son directeur depuis longtemps, soit mis à la retraite. Lorsque s'est ouvert le concours pour la direction de l'établissement, deux personnes se sont opposées. D'une part, le geôlier provincial William Moresby, un orangiste qui avait le soutien des politiciens locaux, et, d'autre part, James Fitzsimmons, le sous-directeur catholique de l'établissement. Celui-ci était le protégé de J.-G. Moylan, inspecteur des pénitenciers, et il pouvait compter sur le lobbying de membres de la hiérarchie catholique au Canada anglais. Sur ces entrefaites, le gouvernement fédéral a nommé une commission d'enquête parlementaire en 1894. La plupart des témoignages qui y ont été entendus ont porté sur la pratique courante de Fitzsimmons de fournir au Good Shepherd Orphanage adjacent de la main-d'œuvre pénale et du matériel carcéral. Le gouvernement a alors destitué Fitzsimmons, mais l'a réinstallé comme suppléant pendant une courte période, à la grande consternation de beaucoup en Colombie-*

*Britannique, qui ont fait davantage valoir sa malhonnêteté présumée que sa religion. Bien qu'ayant de l'importance au niveau national, la religion n'était pas une question susceptible de diviser la population en Colombie-Britannique.*

Peter E. BALTUTIS

### **“To Enlarge Our Hearts and To Widen Our Horizon”: Archbishop Neil McNeil and the Origins of Social Catholicism in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, 1912-1934**

From 1912-1934 Archbishop Neil McNeil of Toronto introduced a new paradigm of Catholicism that revolutionized how English-speaking Canadian Catholics were to understand and live their faith. Known as social Catholicism, this understanding of Catholic morality forged a link between the mission of the Catholic Church and the economic, political, and social order of the world. McNeil was the first Canadian Bishop in English-Canada to apply the seminal concepts embedded in Catholic social teaching to the practical context of industrial Canada. McNeil's theological and ethical vision involved implementing a methodical program of education in Catholic social thought for Toronto's clergy and laity. Stressing practical action, McNeil also designed, implemented and maintained a sophisticated network of Catholic benevolent organizations that effectively served the social welfare needs of the archdiocese. Furthermore, McNeil was a public advocate for social justice who openly lobbied the government to enact legislative reforms that corrected the capitalist system.

*De 1912 à 1934, l'archevêque Neil McNeil de Toronto a introduit un nouveau paradigme dans le catholicisme, qui a révolutionné la façon dont les catholiques canadiens-anglais allaient comprendre et vivre leur foi. Connue sous le nom de catholicisme social, cette interprétation de la moralité catholique a forgé un lien entre la mission de l'Église catholique et l'ordre économique, politique et social. McNeil était le premier évêque au Canada anglais à appliquer les concepts majeurs ancrés dans l'enseignement social catholique au contexte pratique du Canada industriel. La vision théologique et éthique de McNeil comprenait la mise en œuvre d'un programme méthodique d'enseignement de la pensée sociale catholique à l'intention du clergé et des laïcs de son diocèse. Mettant l'emphasis sur l'action pratique, McNeil a également conçu, mis en œuvre et entretenu un réseau sophistiqué d'organismes catholiques bénévoles qui ont répondu efficacement aux besoins d'aide sociale de l'archidiocèse. De plus, McNeil était un véritable défenseur de la justice sociale, et en tant que tel il a ouvertement exercé des pressions sur le gouvernement pour que ce dernier édicte des réformes législatives pour corriger le régime capitaliste.*

Robert H. DENNIS

### **Beginning to Restructure the Institutional Church: Canadian Social Catholics and the CCF, 1931–1944**

Following the formation of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in the early 1930s, prominent Archbishops in Quebec issued episcopal directives against participating in and voting for the party. Re-examining how the Church opened to the CCF and offered limited acceptance by the mid-1940s reveals broader implications for the development of Roman Catholicism in Canada. During the Depression-era, much of Roman Catholic social and political thought was being reframed within a neo-Thomist tradition that influenced the development of social Catholicism in Canada. Since the platform of the party reflected the aspirations of many social Catholics, they in turn challenged how the institutional Church engaged economic and political questions particularly with respect to instructing the laity. This article argues that accommodation between the Church and the CCF was largely the product of social Catholicism influencing episcopal decisions and was part of the broader forces of secularization and Canadianization beginning to restructure the institutional Church.

*Après la formation du CCF au début des années 1930, des archevêques du Québec ont émis des directives interdisant aux fidèles de participer à ce parti et de voter pour ses candidats. Le réexamen de la façon dont l'Église, au milieu des années 1940, s'est ouverte au CCF et a fini par l'accepter, au moins modérément, révèle des implications plus vastes au niveau du développement du catholicisme au Canada. À l'époque de la Dépression, une grande partie de la pensée sociale et politique catholique commençait à être reformulée au sein d'une tradition néo-thomiste qui a influencé le développement du catholicisme social au Canada. Comme la plate-forme électorale du parti reflétait les aspirations de beaucoup de catholiques sociaux, ceux-ci ont à leur tour remis en question la façon dont l'Église institutionnelle abordait les questions économiques et politiques, en particulier dans son enseignement aux laïcs. Cet article soutient que l'influence du catholicisme social sur les décisions épiscopales a rendu possible cet accord entre l'Église et le CCF, et qu'elle s'inscrit dans le mouvement plus général de sécularisation et de canadianisation qui commençait alors à restructurer l'Église institutionnelle.*

Adrian CIANI

### **An Imperialist Irishman: Bishop Michael Fallon, the Diocese of London and the Great War**

The First World War has been deemed, by generations of historians, as a singularly significant nation-building experience in Canadian history. The war also provided Catholics the opportunity to prove their loyalty to both nation and Empire, which they did through their largely ebullient and patriotic response. Not all Canadian Catholics, however, rallied to the Imperial war call, as many francophone Catholics remained aloof or inimical to the conflict. The diocese of London, which contained large numbers of both anglophone and francophone faithful, provides an interesting case study on intra-denominational tensions underlined by the Great War. London's irrepressible Bishop, Michael Francis Fallon, remained driven throughout by his tripartite loyalties: to the British Empire, to Irish Catholics and to the Roman Catholic Faith. For Fallon, the war provided Catholics the opportunity to defend the just ideals of the British Empire, and the chance to accent Catholic patriotism in the eyes of Protestant Canada. His call to arms, however, was complicated both by French-Catholic antipathy to the war, and by the controversy surrounding French-language instruction in Ontario schools, on which Fallon took a conspicuous and contentious position. If anglophone Catholics emerged from the Great War further legitimized in English-Canada, it was at the expense of solidarity with their francophone co-religionists, accentuating a social and cultural breach that would persist for decades.

*Dans l'histoire du Canada, des générations d'historiens ont considéré la Première Guerre mondiale comme une expérience particulièrement significative au niveau du développement du pays. La guerre a aussi été une occasion pour les catholiques de démontrer leur loyauté envers la nation et l'Empire, ce qu'ils ont fait par leur réaction énormément exubérante et patriotique. Cependant, tous les Canadiens catholiques n'ont pas répondu à l'appel à la guerre de l'Empire ; beaucoup de catholiques francophones ont gardé leurs distances vis-à-vis du conflit et y sont resté hostiles. Le diocèse de London, qui comptait un bon nombre de fidèles anglophones et francophones, nous offre un cas d'étude intéressant des tensions intra-confessionnelles soulignées par la Grande Guerre. L'évêque incoercible de London, Michael Francis Fallon, est resté entièrement motivé par ses loyautés tripartites envers l'Empire britannique, les catholiques irlandais et la foi catholique. Pour Fallon, la guerre donnait aux catholiques une occasion de défendre les justes idéaux de l'Empire britannique, et la chance d'accentuer le patriotisme catholique aux yeux du Canada protestant.*

*Cependant, son appel aux armes a été brouillé, d'un côté, par l'aversion des catholiques francophones vis-à-vis de la guerre, et de l'autre, par la controverse tournant autour de l'enseignement en français dans les écoles de l'Ontario, controverse dans laquelle Fallon a pris une position très tranchée. Si les catholiques anglophones sont ressortis de la Grande Guerre plus légitimés dans le Canada anglophone, cela s'est produit aux dépens de la solidarité avec leurs coreligionnaires francophones, accentuant ainsi une brèche sociale et culturelle qui persistera pendant des décennies.*



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Here are some examples:

### **Books**

Robert Choquette, *Language and Religion: A History of French-English Conflict in Ontario*, Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1975), 161-247.

For subsequent references: Choquette, *Language and Religion*, 9-43.

### **Articles**

Elizabeth Smyth, “Congregavit Nos In Unum Christi Amor: The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, in the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1851-1920,” *Ontario History*, 84, vol. 3 (1992): 230-233.

### **Archival**

St. Francis Xavier University Archives (hereafter STFXUA), Extension Department Papers (hereafter EDP), Moses M. Coady to R.J. MacSween, 24 March 1953, RG 30-2/1/2963.

### Web Site

Author's name, title of publication, date of publication, <url>, and date accessed.

For example: William Lyon Mackenzie King Papers, MG 26J, Series 13, Diary entry for 10 June 1940, <http://king.collectionscanada.ca>, accessed on 20 June 2005.



