

All Peoples' Mission And The Legacy of J. S. Woodsworth: The Myth and the Reality

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Abstract:

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The legacy of James Shaver Woodsworth, according to the traditional biographies, has been an indelible one on the Canadian historical landscape. His biographers have elevated Woodsworth to not only a hero of the Canadian political left, but of the whole nation. Studies of Woodsworth's life have traditionally rested their case on All Peoples' Mission in Winnipeg, calling it a watershed moment in the ideological development of J. S. Woodsworth. They characterize his time as Superintendent, from 1908-1913, as the defining moment which would later lead him to found the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation.

This Master's thesis seeks to analyze the historical periphery of this period in order to illustrate Woodsworth's standard approach to the Social Gospel in Canada. By employing a micro-historical methodology, a greater context reveals that All Peoples' Mission was not the dynamic, revolutionary institution that his biographers describe. Instead, Woodsworth spent his time in Winnipeg experimenting with different and sometimes conflicting philosophies.

This stage of Woodsworth's ideological development can instead be best characterized by his strong nativist beliefs. His writings and speeches during this period indicate a struggle between Woodsworth's understanding of assimilation and

integration. James Shaver Woodsworth was a far more complex character during this period than his biographers would have us believe.

## Acknowledgements:

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## Chapter One – The Social Gospel

James Shaver Woodsworth has been elevated to the status of one of the most important men in Canadian history. Historians in past decades have attributed to this man many of the social programmes that today define Canadians' national identity. These credits are misplaced. Instead, Woodsworth was a typical social gospeller, exploring these new ideologies and reconciling them with existing beliefs. He was not the innovator that his biographers would have us believe. Woodsworth's time in the North End of Winnipeg did not represent the watershed moment in Woodsworth's ideology, but instead was a period of change and experimentation with different ideological paradigms which were developing in Canada during the early-national period.

J. S. Woodsworth was born in Ontario but came to historical prominence in the prairies as a very active member in the Methodist Church. He came to embody many of the political, social and moral ideals that developed out of one of the most dynamic changes in early-national Canadian society: the Social Gospel. As a senior minister in the Methodist Church in Manitoba, Woodsworth was an experienced evangelist and was preoccupied with the new social ideology that was being developed within Protestant Christianity. Swept up in the crisis and enthusiasm of this new application of religion, Woodsworth and the Social Gospel sought to reform society to ensure the salvation of all, instead of saving society one individual at a time through personal salvation. The dominant Christian evangelist traditions up until the mid-nineteenth century was to try

and reach the individual soul. The Social Gospel believed that people would be drawn to the protestant churches through their reform of society.

It has been argued that Woodsworth's new theology came to full fruition when he was appointed to the All Peoples' Mission, Winnipeg, in 1908. The All Peoples' Mission has been touted by historians as one of the pioneering institutions of the Social Gospel, and a place where James Shaver Woodsworth transformed his religious beliefs into an action plan for general social change and renewal.<sup>1</sup> It is his time at this institution that will be examined in the following chapters.

The existing research on the Social Gospel, and J. S. Woodsworth, focuses largely on the theories developed by, and the personal involvement of, the great players in reforming Canadian society. Little emphasis has been placed on developing a fuller understanding of the legacy of these institutions and practices that developed out of the actions of the great leaders.<sup>2</sup> This gap in the historical examination has led to a view of J. S. Woodsworth, and the Social Gospel, that is largely ideological in nature and doesn't fully comprehend the grassroots interpretation of this new ideology; the emphasis has been on the ideas and not the execution.

An examination of the day-to-day activities of the All Peoples' Mission and the application of J. S. Woodsworth's ideological beliefs clearly indicates that this

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<sup>1</sup> Ziegler, Olive. *Woodsworth: Social Pioneer*. (Toronto: The Ontario Publishing Co., Limited, 1934), p. 53, and, MacInnis, Grace. *J. S. Woodsworth: A Man to Remember*. (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1953), p. 62, and, Mills, Allen. *Fool For Christ: The Political Thought of J. S. Woodsworth*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), p. 38, and McNaught, Kenneth. *A Prophet in Politics: A Biography of J.S. Woodsworth*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), p. 57, Chauvin, Francis X. *The Founder of The CCF: James Shaver Woodsworth, 1874-1942*. (Windsor: Personal Publication, 1944. University of Toronto Fisher Library, Wood Pam 00033), p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Emery, G. N. "The Methodist Church and the 'European Foreigners of Winnipeg: The All People's Mission, 1889-1914,'" *Transactions of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba* 28 no. 3 (1971-72), p. xvii.

institution of the Social Gospel was not as innovative and revolutionary as the orthodox interpretations would have us believe. Instead the All Peoples' Mission represented a completely standard social settlement, and many of the 'ground breaking' programmes initiated by J. S. Woodsworth were not new to the Canadian context, or to the Social Gospel in general. James Shaver Woodsworth was not a social prophet, but simply a very dedicated reformer who believed that the efforts of the individual could reform Canadian society.

The Social Gospel developed out of the religious crisis that arose in the mid- to late- nineteenth century. Beginning in Britain and spreading to North America, it tackled the crises of industrialism, urbanization, higher criticism, and Darwinian thought. These four developments in the nineteenth century cast doubt on the traditional nature of Christianity and forced its theologians to redevelop the gospel to be more applicable and relevant in a world where the promise of salvation in the next life no longer appealed or applied to society.

The increase in industrialism and urbanization, that came with the industrial revolution, created an environment in which conditions were deplorable for a large portion of the population. In Britain and the United States, and eventually in Canada although at a slower pace, industrial slums were beginning to develop in major cities, the working class was being exploited to greater and greater degrees by the capitalist elite, and the lower classes had less of a role in society.<sup>3</sup> After these conditions continued to worsen, religion could no longer be an adequate promise for salvation in the next life,

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<sup>3</sup> Allen, Richard Ed. *The Social Gospel in Canada: Papers of the Interdisciplinary Conference*. (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1975), p. 3.

these people at the bottom of society began to agitate for a better life.<sup>4</sup> This lack of faith in the traditional gospel forced theologians to re-examine the goals of Christianity and reevaluate how best to achieve personal salvation - their answer was the salvation of society.<sup>5</sup>

The next crisis that faced Christianity came in the nineteenth century as historians began to examine the text of the Bible, applying new notions of scientific methodology in a process called higher criticism.<sup>6</sup> This process revealed with greater confidence that the Bible was not historically accurate and was more a collection of works written by many authors over time.<sup>7</sup> Instead of being solid fact, these critics argued that the Bible offered lessons inspired by God, rather than a factual account of events. No longer could the Bible be viewed as a source of God's word, but instead of God's lessons.<sup>8</sup> The foundation of the Christian faith was not as true as theologians would have liked society to believe, forcing them to recast Christianity, and the Bible, as a moral guideline to follow.

The final blow to traditional theology came with the publication of Darwin's theories of evolution in 1859. While at first it did not make a direct correlation to the evolution of humans, the threat to the belief in God's role in creation put into question all the other theological beliefs in personal salvation and the promise of heaven in the afterlife.<sup>9</sup> Darwin's theory also created the corollary of social Darwinism that argued

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<sup>4</sup> Cook, Ramsay. *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Later Victorian English Canada*. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1985), p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Cook, *Regenerators*, p. 176.

<sup>6</sup> Emery, "The Methodist Church", p. 42.

<sup>7</sup> Cook, *Regenerators*, p. 17, p. 21.

<sup>8</sup> Emery, "The Methodist Church", p. xvii – xviii.

<sup>9</sup> Cook, *Regenerators*, p. 9.

that evolution and development could be framed in the context of society, and so justified Christian beliefs in working together to create a strong and virulent community that would thrive.<sup>10</sup>

These challenges in the nineteenth-century culminated in the Social Gospel. This theological movement championed the re-branding of Christianity as predominantly a social religion concerned with the salvation and regeneration of society instead of the individual.<sup>11</sup> It was believed that the social situation had become so deplorable that the only way to save the individual was to reform their environment and enable them to find God through social work and reform.<sup>12</sup> The problems that faced society had largely been the individualistic practices of capitalism, and therefore the antidote was a Christian revival of a cooperative society outlined in the lessons of the Bible and the teachings of Jesus, who was now being portrayed as the first, and greatest social reformer.<sup>13</sup> Christianity was no longer to be a religion directed at spiritual salvation, but on social rejuvenation. This change opened the churches to new avenues of social activity that the All Peoples' Mission in Winnipeg developed and thrived in.

The institutions that the protestant churches developed to carry out their mission of social regeneration eventually increased in power and influence as the Social Gospel wore on. By the early twentieth-century, institutions like the All Peoples' Mission or the Canadian Welfare League, began to realize the limitations to their churches' enthusiasm for reform, and started to push for greater autonomy, replacing the church administration

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<sup>10</sup> Allen, "The Background..." in *The Social Gospel in Canada*, p. 30.

<sup>11</sup> Allen, Richard. *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-1928*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. 37.

<sup>12</sup> Cook, *Regenerators*, p. 26.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

with more government direction.<sup>14</sup> J. S. Woodsworth was one of the main proponents of greater government involvement and represented this shift by resigning his post at the All Peoples' Mission in 1913,<sup>15</sup> shifting his efforts of social reform to the newly formed government Bureau of Social Research.<sup>16</sup> Woodsworth, while being touted as an example of the radical element of the Social Gospel who left the church, he was more representative of the moderate elements of Social Gospel. The moderates comprised those who refused to abandon their religious beliefs or who simply agitated for the church to go further in their reform efforts. However, regardless of the fact that some social gossellers were radical reformers, conservatives, and a group of progressives who walked a moderate middle line,<sup>17</sup> the Social Gospel eventually developed from a sacred campaign of social rejuvenation to a secular campaign for social reform.<sup>18</sup> By the inter-war period the Social Service Council of Canada came to represent the efforts of the Social Gospel more than the churches, and this organization shifted its focus away from moral reform and focused predominantly on social reform.<sup>19</sup> "Radical" reformers like J. S. Woodsworth "...left the church out of frustration at the church's hesitancy rather than for ideological reasons."<sup>20</sup> By the end of the Second World War Canada had redirected the sacred Social Gospel into a secular social reform movement that had established the

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<sup>14</sup> Emery, "The Methodist Church", p. 154.

<sup>15</sup> Emery, "The Methodist Church, p. 97.

<sup>16</sup> McNaught, p. 72.

<sup>17</sup> Reeve, Ted Ed. *Claiming the Social Passion: The Role of the United Church of Canada*. (Toronto: Centre for Research in Religion, Emanuel College and The Moderator's Consultation on Faith and the Economy, 1999), p. 20, and Allen, *The Social Passion*, p. 17.

<sup>18</sup> Allen, *The Social Passion*, p. 37.

<sup>19</sup> Allen, *The Social Passion*, 63.

<sup>20</sup> Reeve, *Claiming The Social Passion*, p. 21.

groundwork for the modern social welfare system that Canada enjoys as one of its most defining features as a nation.<sup>21</sup>

The shift from religious movement to government initiatives is one of the most centrally debated features of the Social Gospel by historians. The other feature, that I will examine shortly, is whether the impact of the social gospel was predominantly social or political. Both these arguments centre on the notions of secularization and the relevancy of the church prior to and following the Social Gospel. While these two debates are clearly linked, they have not been correlated together by historians, in fact, the debate regarding the shift from sacred to secular is one fixed to the historians viewpoint, whereas, the discussion of the Social Gospel's relevancy seems to be more tied to the period in that the historian penned his or her work.

Historians of the Social Gospel have largely been divided in to two broad groups. The first, and more numerous, have been dubbed declension theorists; their opponents being the evolution theorists.<sup>22</sup> The declension theorists, including Richard Allen, Robert Craig Brown, Neil Semple, and Ramsay Cook, argue that the church released their hold on society during the Social Gospel through a process of action and reaction to reformers.<sup>23</sup> The initial allowances for the application of social Christianity were made in an attempt to reinvigorate the church and replace it as a dominant feature of society, however, this new social religion began to develop in ways that were not predicted, and the church began to attempt to temper the pace of radical reform.<sup>24</sup> This attempt to slow and control the pace of reform pushed many reformers out of the fold of the churches

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<sup>21</sup> Reeve, *Claiming The Social Passion*, p. 108.

<sup>22</sup> Emery, "The Methodist Church", p. xvii.

<sup>23</sup> Cook, *Regenerators*, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107

and into the arms of municipal, provincial and federal governments, shifting the innovative push for social reform from church institutions to government initiatives.

Richard Allen, in his seminal work *The Social Passion*, argues that the split between the radical reformers and the churches came in two waves. The first wave followed the end of the First World War. The radical reformers who had left the church were free to develop specific action plans for social reform, promising to society tangible gains to be made in society. These clearly articulated action plans enabled the radical reformers to become popularized and more relevant to the general public, while the churches, having to tailor their reform ideologies to their various denominational priorities while maintaining an emphasis on evangelism, could not appeal to the wider society.<sup>25</sup> Allen argues that at this point in history salvation of the Canadian nation became focused on the radical reformers in government, and not the moderate reformers within the Protestant churches.

The second wave that highlighted the churches' refusal to continue at the rapid reform pace demanded by the people came with the Winnipeg General Strike, a point that is echoed in Ramsay Cook's work *The Regenerators* and Rev. Ted Reeve's *Claiming the Social Passion*. These historians argue that the churches' refusal to offer their public support to the striking workers illustrated to Canadians that the churches were not interested in the types of social reform that were now being demanded by the labour movement. The churches believed that the strike was a challenge to the existing social order, that they benefited from, and saw such an act as too dangerous and too

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<sup>25</sup> Allen, *The Social Passion*, p. 63.

destabilizing to society as a whole.<sup>26</sup> The churches refusal to support the strikers further pushed its radical reformers out of the churches and into the arms of the secular reform movement. It also placed them in opposition to the returning soldiers who believed that they had fought the First World War to bring a new era of peace and prosperity – the Church was fighting against the new social contract that was developing in the minds of striking Canadians.<sup>27</sup>

The declension theorists believe that the Protestant churches released its grip unwillingly on social issues during the course of the Social Gospel, and that the subsequent social welfare state that developed out of the ideology of the Social Gospel was one that developed in opposition to the churches ideas of social reform and salvation. By the mid-twentieth century, declension theorists argue that church had been removed as one of the major institutions of Canadian society, and that this new marginalized status represented a secularizing Canada.<sup>28</sup> Allen, Brown, Semple, and Cook all believe that the society that emerged out of the Second World War was predominantly a socially democratic and secular one with the churches no longer playing a role in the lives of Canadians, but simply being institutions of spiritual relevance; a position that was not desired or designed by the churches. Instead of maintaining their relevance in the face of the crises of the nineteenth-century, the reform programmes of the churches during the Social Gospel actually reduced their place in society. Canada was now heading towards a secular society and the churches had largely contributed to the rapid pace of secularization during the period.

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<sup>26</sup> Reeve *Claiming The Social Passion*, p. 25.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>28</sup> Cook, *Regenerators*, p. 229.

This theory is countered by the evolution theorists of Neil Semple, Reverend Ted Reeve, Carolyn Strange and Tina Loo, Ben Smillie, and now by George N. Emery a recent historian who has crossed the floor in this debate. These historians represent a more revisionist school of thought, challenging the traditional notions that the church lost its grip on society through the reforms of the Social Gospel. Instead they posit that religion was recast less as a player in institutional activities of society, but more as a moral guiding institution, by providing the moral and ideological framework for the social welfare state. The main concern had shifted from personal salvation to the salvation of society, while maintaining the evangelical spirit.<sup>29</sup> The church did not lose its grip on society, it lost its church attendance, but gained a permanent role by having its social and moral principles enshrined in Canadian social welfare beliefs.<sup>30</sup> Society had not secularized, but had simply stopped attending church.

In his work Neil Semple argues that this shift was inevitable as protestant religion, the dominant religious denomination in English-Canada, would have eventually been forced out of an institutional position as one of the central tenets to Protestantism was the belief that religion was held within the individual and the pomp and ceremony of an organized religion was bound to disappear as this was not a central aspect to protestant faith; the relationship to God lay in the individual and not within the priest.

G. N. Emery echoes this view in *The Methodist Church*, by highlighting the fact that in many of the secular institutions, for example at the All Peoples' Mission where religion was downplayed in favour of providing aid to *all people*, the reason for many of

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<sup>29</sup> Cook, *Regenerators*, p. 25, Reeve, *Claiming The Social Passion*, p. 1, Emery, "The Methodist Church", p. xviii.

<sup>30</sup> Allen, *The Social Passion*, p. 3.

the hundreds of volunteers and workers was not secular but sacred.<sup>31</sup> While J. S. Woodsworth may not have believed in the dogma of personal salvation, many of the workers at the mission were there to provide newcomers with that very experience. Evangelism was at the front of many of their minds, just not Woodsworth's.<sup>32</sup> Emery carries this argument further, saying that in many of the social welfare institutions established by various governments the underlying beliefs of those working on these programmes were not secular but sacred. While the power of the church may have been diminishing, the beliefs in the teaching of God and Jesus Christ were not falling out of the minds of Canadians.

This theory points to the belief that the development of a secular social welfare system in Canada was a natural development out of Protestant theology and teaching. The church did not lose its grasp on Canadian society, but shifted its control from beliefs embodied in the Protestant churches to enshrining their belief system in Canadian politics and government. The secularization, cited by declension theorist in declining church attendance and institutional power, was not secularization at all because the individual continued to hold Christian beliefs as central to their identity. Christianity had not lost its grip on society but had followed the natural evolution of Protestant theology to a government run social welfare system designed around Christian morality. This end was not secularization, but was the natural conclusion to the teaching of Jesus Christ and the Bible according to Protestant theology. In this revisionist interpretation, the Declensionists are not only recasting the process of secularization, they are also trying to assign credit for the new social system to Protestant ideology.

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<sup>31</sup> Emery, "The Methodist Church", p. 149.

<sup>32</sup> Emery, "The Methodist Church", p. 89.

The second point of historiographical contention is whether the impacts of the Social Gospel were predominantly social or political. The division in this debate generally has not rested on the individual historian, but rather the period in that he or she crafted their arguments. The division would appear to have come sometime during the early 1980s, a period marked by the repatriation of the constitution and greater interest in the political traditions and systems of Canada.

Richard Allen and his colleagues emphasized the social nature of the Social Gospel and how it had its major impacts on the way that Canadian society operated. A renewal in religious interests and an increase in social activism marked the beginning of a renaissance of Canadian evangelism, that predominantly affected the day-to-day lives of those involved in either proclaiming the *social passion*, or those targeted by the movement's benevolence. This social reform ultimately ended with a removal of the churches' role in providing social aid and replacing it with a new secularism not seen before in Canada. All of these reforms are framed by these early Social Gospel historians to be major changes in the social fabric of the Canadian nation.

Conversely, historians publishing since the 1980s and into the twenty-first century have emphasized the major reforms to the political fabric that were ushered in during and after the Social Gospel. Ramsay Cook, while being a fellow declension theorist of Richard Allen, agrees that the Social Gospel greatly affected the social lives of Canadians, but places the majority of his emphasis on the affects this social regeneration had on the political fabric of Canada. Cook and others argue that the Social Gospel enabled the social welfare state to be established, thus forcing a major re-examination of the Canadian constitutional system. This had the effect of putting into

question notions of provincial-federal power relationships, as well as municipal-provincial distributions of responsibilities. As the social welfare state became more and more entrenched in Canadian society new system of power-sharing and funding formulas had to be developed, that created a constitutional regeneration of the Canadian system, further pushing the Canadian reality farther from the highly centralized power of the federal government envisioned in the British North America Act.

The political emphasis is taken even further by the emerging feminist historical analysis of the Social Gospel in Canada, spearheaded most notable by Marilyn Whiteley and Cathy James. Both these historians argue that women played an import role in setting Social Gospel policy and used their maternalistic traditions to shape notions of Canadian morality and behaviour that have become central to the social welfare state today.<sup>33</sup> James argues that women achieved a new political power through participating in the Social Gospel, which eventually developed into women's suffrage and a very active political role in the post-Second World War period. This central role of women is counter to the established historiography as "...women have not figured large in the accounts of the Social Gospel."<sup>34</sup>

While the feminist approach to the Social Gospel has not been thoroughly debated and examined as of yet, it does provide an interesting approach to recasting the Social Gospel and a process that reformed both society and politics. While the two historians mentioned focus largely on how the Social Gospel opened the political sphere

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<sup>33</sup> James, Cathy. "Women, the Settlement Movement, and State Formation in the Early Twentieth Century." in *Framing Our Past: Canadian Women's History in the Twentieth Century*, (eds. Cook, Sharon Anne, Lorna R. McLean and Kate O'Rourke, p. 222-227. Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 2001), p. 222, Whiteley, Marilyn Fardig. *Canadian Methodist Women, 1766-1925: Marys, Marthas, Mothers in Israel*. (Waterloo: Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion, 2005), p. 182-184.

<sup>34</sup> Whiteley, *Canadian Methodist Women*, p. 184.

to women it also inherently points to a major social development. Women carved out a place in society where they could spearhead action on social and moral issues, as evidenced by Whitelely's examination of the activities of the Women's Missionary Society. The evangelism that women were so adept to participate in because of their maternalism,<sup>35</sup> enabled women to force themselves into action in other arenas of social and moral reform such as 'the social evil' of prostitution, white slavery, and most notably prohibition and the Women's Christian Temperance Union. The WCTU was a Social Gospel institution of considerable importance that has been most thoroughly researched by Sharon Ann Cook in *'Through Sunshine and Shadow: The Women's Christian Temperance Union, Evangelism, and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930.*

When examining the political impacts of the Social Gospel, a brief examination of economic impacts is inherently warranted. The effects on the Canadian state are quite apparent, but the Social Gospel was as much about providing economic security to the Canadian people. Rev. Ted Reeve argues that the economic role of the state quickly developed into a regulatory role, where the government would be responsible for economic stimulus in the inevitable downturns of capitalism, and a social safety net to protect those most affected by the fickle economy.<sup>36</sup> These notions first came to prominence under Maynard Keynes and clearly indicate the close relationship of politics and the economy during this transformative era in Canadian history.

These two major debates regarding the Social Gospel, those of declension versus evolution, and social versus political impact, focus on a top-down interpretation of the movement. The existing histories have focused their examination on the key players and

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<sup>35</sup> Emery, "The Methodist Church", p. 35.

<sup>36</sup> Reeve, *Claiming The Social Passion*, p. 5-6.

great thinkers of the Social Gospel and have derived their theoretical positions from this elitist standpoint. The majority of these works are framed as biographies or prosopographies, failing to follow the ideas formulated by these men and women, to their execution to see how the theories were applied in real-world situations. The failure of the existing histories to examine the application of the Social Gospel ideology on an institutional level creates a lack of understanding of the motivations of those working ‘on the ground’ as well as how the Social Gospel developed in the eyes of most Canadians, and not the theologians or philosophers of the time. To the well-known historians of this field the Social Gospel was predominantly an elitist movement that the general population must have simply followed based on the merits of its theories. The following chapters seek to illustrate the diversity of beliefs among social gospellers, and how the movement was interpreted by the workers at All Peoples’ Mission..

An alternative approach, following the theories of micro-history, can provide a more comprehensive understanding of All Peoples’ Mission. Micro-history argues that

“thick description therefore serves to record in written form a series of signifying events or facts which would otherwise be evanescent, but which can be interpreted by being inserted in context, that is to say, in the flow of social discourse. This approach succeeds in using microscopic analysis of the most minute events as a means of arriving at the most far-reaching conclusions.”<sup>37</sup>

However, this theory neglects the essential role of leadership in any movement.

By blending the top-down approach, and a bottom-up analysis two important aspects of the movement can better be explained. First is the manner in that the intellectual ideas were executed by the followers of the Social Gospel. Secondly, a

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<sup>37</sup> Burke, *History and Social Theory*, p. 98.

blended approach reveals the lived experience of the average gospeller without losing the context of the national narrative. In examining the lived experiences of those involved in the movement, but linked to a major historical figure, history can create a more truthful and relevant construction of the past.

I have decided to follow a closer line of examination on one Social Gospel institution; The All Peoples' Missions, Winnipeg. This institution is frequently referred to in the histories of the Social Gospel in Canada, and has been touted as a major institution of social reform and innovation. Historical references to the Mission always rely on the existing biographies of J. S. Woodsworth, and rarely go past those sources.. Mentions of the All Peoples' Mission usually will only take reference from Kenneth McNaught's biography of Woodsworth, or from annual reports made to the Methodist Church. As of yet there has not been a sustained and in depth examination of how the All Peoples' Mission functioned and how the ideas developed by J. S. Woodsworth were actually executed. My research will focus on the ephemera and articles left behind by not only Woodsworth, but the other administrators and volunteers at the All Peoples' Mission. The majority of this material has been preserved in the J. S. Woodsworth fonds at Library and Archives Canada, and provides a more in depth and detailed understanding of how the ideology laid down by the Social Gospel was executed in the real-world situations found in the North End of Winnipeg in the early twentieth century.

The materials used in this thesis are dominated by newspaper articles collected by Woodsworth over his tenure at All Peoples. These articles, written by Woodsworth, workers at the mission, as well as local reporters, represent many of the papers and community newsletters that covered the Mission during his tenure provide multiple

views of All Peoples'. Those written by Woodsworth are from the perspective of a promoter who is desperately trying to find funds and volunteers. Articles written by other workers at the mission provide an understanding of why and how they worked in the North End, while those written by reporters provide a more clinical account of All Peoples'. The ephemera that also exists in the Woodsworth fonds helps to flesh out the historical image and allude to the operations of the mission. These documents however, can be criticised for being too biased, as most of them were produced by those working at the mission.

The selection of documents within these files was made by Woodsworth, and later added to by his daughter Grace MacInnis. While Woodsworth did go through a period later in life where he destroyed many of his documents, these scrapbooks survived. I do not believe he made any particular selection to preserve these sources as he was recovering from his second stroke, and had been removed from his position within the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. His attempt to erase his archival records came at a time of duress and intellectual frustration, and was not as methodical as could be interpreted. Furthermore, one of the scrapbooks was copied from his daughter's fonds. While he destroyed the documents he had in his control, many of his records remained in the hands of his family, who have helped to reconstruct his historical record at Library and Archives Canada.

The focus of the following chapters will be on some of the main aspects that have long been touted as Woodsworth's great innovation in social aid, that allegedly made the All Peoples' Mission such an important Social Gospel institution. The emphasis has always been placed on the general design of the *plant* – the build

environment of the All Peoples' Mission – the use of educated women as social workers, and most centrally the Peoples' Forum; a type of public theatre and educational venue that historians have claimed was developed by Woodsworth to address the problems of providing aid to multi-cultural communities. While I acknowledge that the work done by James Shaver Woodsworth and the All Peoples' Mission was important and beneficial to its membership, I do theorize that the work done here was neither ground breaking, nor original. The All Peoples' Mission was a completely ordinary social settlement for its period not only in Canada, but among other Social Gospel nations. It did not represent the great beginning of Woodsworth's destiny to regenerate the Canadian nation, nor did it represent the greatness of Woodsworth's political ideology. This viewpoint will become clear by examining closely the actual activities at the All Peoples' Mission instead of listing off its accomplishments outlined in the reports sent to the central Methodist Church. Woodsworth should not be portrayed as a great social prophet who was the only person qualified to reform Canadian society, but rather as a dedicated citizen who felt that hard work and determination on the part of the individual was the only path to social regeneration and salvation. Woodsworth's time as superintendent did not represent a ground shaking moment in his ideological development, but instead was characterized by continuity and gradual change in his beliefs.

Cathy James has spearheaded an interest in social settlement history in Canada. The works that exist, however, are few in number and focus more directly on a micro-historical level. They do not expand their research to a greater Canadian context, but examine the social settlement from a predominantly social perspective. Cathy James

places the emphasis on the work of the social settlements in Toronto as having a major impact on helping the individual communities adjust to Canadian life, but does not extrapolate her findings to a national context.<sup>38</sup> This pattern is mirrored in Enrico Cumbo's study of the social settlement among the Italian community in Toronto.<sup>39</sup> The only place where Cathy James strays from her socio-economic framework is in *Framing Our Past* that is a short piece that recasts the social settlement as a place where women were able to carve out their own place in setting the moral identity of the nation and providing the marginalized female population with a voice in crafting the nascent Canadian nation.<sup>40</sup>

The All Peoples' Mission is more generally applicable to notions of how Canada functions as a nation because its superintendent from 1908 to 1913 was James Shaver Woodsworth. Moving on from the All Peoples' Mission in 1913, Woodsworth was involved in the labour movement, the Winnipeg General Strike, federal politics, and eventually in founding the national leftist party of considerable importance, the CCF. These reasons have all led to an interest in Woodsworth as well as an interest in finding a meta-narrative in his life. He was involved at every point in the development of the Canadian leftist movement, from Social Gospel, to labour, to parliament. This meta-narrative that has developed out of his life has cast the All Peoples' Mission as one of the most important moments in Woodsworth's life. To his biographers and historians alike, the lessons learned at the All Peoples' Mission, and his frustrations with the limitations of the Methodist Church, were central to creating a well formed ideology in

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<sup>38</sup> James, Cathy. "Reforming Reform: Toronto's Settlement House Movement, 1900-20," *Canadian Historical Review* 82 no. 1 (2001), p. 55-90.

<sup>39</sup> Cumbo, Enrico Carlson. "Blazing the Trail and Setting the Pace: Central Neighbourhood House and its Outreach to Italian Immigrants in Toronto: 1911-1929," *Italian Canadiana* vol. 12 (1996), p. 68-93.

<sup>40</sup> James, "Women, The Settlement Movement..." in *Framing Our Past*, p. 222.

Woodsworth's mind, and a clear plan of action to reform Canada through labour and politics. The All Peoples' Mission is considered the genesis of Woodsworth's political career; a career that became of great importance to Canadian politics and society as he helped found some of the central institutions of the Canadian welfare state.

It is this clear story, crafted by the historians, that I will attempt to dispel in the following chapters. The Woodsworth myth is reliant on a belief that he was a social pioneer from the beginning of his career and that only he had enough experience and qualifications to take his place at the head of the social reform movement.<sup>41</sup> By examining the All Peoples' Mission with greater detail, a new reality emerges that undermines this myth. Most importantly, that the All Peoples' Mission was not an innovative social settlements. This can be seen by comparing the 'great new ideas' of Woodsworth to those of other social settlements and social gossellers of the same period. More specifically those founded by Sara Libby Carson, an American who has been surreptitiously omitted from many Canadian histories of the Social Gospel. These institutions in Toronto were founded by Carson on her own initiative and, eventually, were supported by the Presbyterian Church of Canada.<sup>42</sup> Carson in fact should be credited with bringing social settlements to Canada, however is disregarded by Woodsworth's biographers in favour of better representing Woodsworth as a revolutionary. The research on Sara Libby Carson's activities in Canada is somewhat underrepresented, however, Cathy James provides adequate evidence of these settlements existence and activities in several of her articles published in "Reforming Reform: Toronto's Settlement House Movement, 1900-20" and "Not Merely For The

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<sup>41</sup> Chauvin, *The Founder of the CCF*, p. 13

<sup>42</sup> Parsons and Bellamy, *Neighbours*, p. 23.

Sake Of An Evening's Entertainment': The Educational Uses of Theatre in Toronto's Settlement Houses, 1910 – 1930.”

Following a comparison of the All Peoples' Mission to other contemporary institutions it is hoped that the Woodsworth myth will appear less compelling and will eventually be replaced by a more normalized approach to James Shaver Woodsworth's life, perhaps one that he would appreciate more. In one of his most well know works, *My Neighbour*, Woodsworth declares that the majority of the problems found in Canada are not the result of industrialism and capitalism, "... but more largely the selfish indifference of the majority of the citizens."<sup>43</sup> This opinion has been lost through the Woodsworth myth. Woodsworth's message of individual action has been obscured by the mythology of his life that has portrayed social action and great social reforms can only be accomplished by the great men and great thinkers of Canada. Woodsworth was not a great Social Gospeller. He did not create new forms of social aid, nor did he develop an entirely new ideology for the social welfare movement. J. S. Woodsworth was an ordinary citizen who believed strongly in social reform and dedicated his life to achieving the greatest good for the greatest number of people. He believed that the individual had the power to reform society, a point that I shall make through examining All Peoples' Mission.

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<sup>43</sup> Woodsworth, James Shaver. *My Neighbour*. Michael Bliss, ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), p. 126.

## Chapter Two – The Woodsworth Myth

The writing and rewriting of Woodsworth's biography over the past 75 years has resulted in the formation of an elaborate mythology that elevates James Shaver Woodsworth to the position of a Father of Confederation. While there are nuances within each biographer's interpretation, the overall theme remains the same: J. S. Woodsworth was a man who touched all parts of the country and had an everlasting impact on the character and structure of Canadian society.

The mythology has placed the narrative above the historical accuracy of Woodsworth's life. To achieve the mythical tone of the other biographies, each new author selects different historical events to gloss over and misrepresent in order to cast Woodsworth as an even greater hero who was more acceptable to the mentalities of the era. The misrepresentation began with Olive Ziegler, in the 1930s, who underemphasized Woodsworth rejection of religious orthodoxy in order to cast him as a Christian hero, and continued up to the 1990s with Allen Mills' most recent casting of Woodsworth as an intellectual hero who overcame moral contradiction to serve Canada. At the heart of each version of the myth is Woodsworth's time spent at the All Peoples' Mission in the North End of Winnipeg.

The All Peoples' Mission is selected by all biographers as the most influential point of Woodsworth's life; the moment when he finally settled on his religious, political, and moral beliefs.<sup>1</sup> His time at the All Peoples' Mission moulded Woodsworth

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<sup>1</sup> Zeigler, *Social Pioneer*, p. 53, and, MacInnis, *A Man to Remember*, p. 62, and, Mills, *Fool for Christ*, p. 38, and McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 57, Chauvin, *The Founder of the CCF*, p. 21.

into the man that became a leader and a father of Canada. The Woodsworth myth relies on their interpretation of the All Peoples' Mission to be correct. Historically, Woodsworth would have had to develop a cutting edge social welfare system that incorporated many new, ground-breaking ideas. He would have had to realize at that moment that he could never remain in the Methodist Church because he no longer believed the doctrines of that church. Historically, Woodsworth would have had to accomplish this mostly on his own, and before others could think of it. The historical reality is, however, that none of this happened, and the following mythology is therefore in a precarious position:



(Figure 1 – James Shaver Woodsworth)

Named after his father, a leader in the Methodist Church, James Shaver Woodsworth was born into an Anglo-Protestant family from Etobicoke. His upbringing

emphasized the centrality of religion in Canadian society at the time and exposed Woodsworth to all parts of the country, experiencing a pioneering lifestyle early on.<sup>2</sup> He had been raised in an environment that prepared him for the life that was to come; he was pioneering, ingenious, resourceful, and now connected to the prairies and its peoples. J. S. Woodsworth was also raised to be a central member of his church. This destiny was clearly laid out for him early on by his parents, and Woodsworth himself entered into the field of religious studies with enthusiasm and zeal.<sup>3</sup> This zeal eventually faded as Woodsworth yearned for a placement as a teacher at the Methodist college in Winnipeg, Wesley College. Woodsworth had always viewed himself more a teacher than a minister, preferring to interact directly with his flock instead of from the pulpit. This trait may have been one of his most influential, as this self-image as a teacher guided him to many major events in his life.<sup>4</sup>

First beginning at Wesley College for Mental and Moral Science,<sup>5</sup> then at Victoria College for Divinity, Woodsworth developed an interest in helping individuals and educating them about their rights and roles in Canada.<sup>6</sup> While studying in Toronto, Woodsworth lived with his two cousins Charlie Sissons, Clara Woodsworth, and her friend Lucy Staples.<sup>7</sup> First nurturing affections for his cousin Clara, years later J. S. Woodsworth would contact Lucy Staples, develop a romance, and marry her in 1904.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> MacInnis, *A Man to Remember*, p. 11-12

<sup>3</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. 10, Ziegler, *Social Pioneer*, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. 18.

<sup>5</sup> Zielger, *Social Pioneer*, p. 14

<sup>6</sup> Chauvin, *The Founder of the CCF*, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> MacInnis, *A Man to Remember*, p. 26.

<sup>8</sup> McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 23, Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. 22.

Lucy would then become J. S. Woodsworth's main support throughout his exhausting public career.<sup>9</sup>

After completing his studies in Toronto, Woodsworth moved on to Oxford University. Here he continued his studies in Christian Ethics, further developed his distaste for industrialism and capitalism, and took one of the most defining treks of his life.<sup>10</sup> During his Christmas break at Oxford, Woodsworth took a working holiday to East London and stayed with some colleagues at a social settlement entitled Mansfield House in Canningtown.<sup>11</sup> Here Woodsworth got his first taste of social work and how British social gospellers were dealing with the same problems he was beginning to see in Canada.

At Mansfield House Woodsworth experienced how a social settlement was run; how it was designed, the buildings, the programmes, the staff, etc. Here Woodsworth decided that he wanted desperately to get involved in a similar project in Canada. His experience here provided Woodsworth with a framework that he could channel all his energies of regeneration into. The social settlement in London provided Woodsworth with a *modus operandi* for reforming society. He would take up the cause of the Social Gospel and work toward the regeneration of society and the environment instead of saving the individual.

Following his studies in England, Woodsworth took another voyage to Germany before returning home. This excursion provided Woodsworth with more understanding of how other countries dealt with their poor and deprived populations. Woodsworth

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<sup>9</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. 25, McNaught, p. 23.

<sup>10</sup> Chauvin, *The Founder of the CCF*, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Ziegler, *Social Pioneer*, p. 18-19.

used the time he had in the early years of his life to collect information and learn the methods that others had employed in solving the ills that resulted from a capitalist-industrial society. Woodsworth, the teacher, spent the first quarter-century of his life learning how best to serve his Lord and his society. The answer he settled on was to join the church and bring the truths that he had seen at Mansfield House, and in Germany, to the people of Canada. He decided he would return to Canada and become a professor.<sup>12</sup>

Olive Zeigler, writing while Woodsworth was still sitting in the House of Commons, wrote her biography "...with the hope that it may help in making him [Woodsworth] known to his fellow citizens generally, as he is already known and respected among those who have followed him throughout the years with open and unprejudiced minds."<sup>13</sup> The biography was based on personal writings and interviews and placed heavy emphasis on the personal life of J. S. Woodsworth.<sup>14</sup> This approach to writing the history of Woodsworth's life, however, has resulted in a clear bias towards Woodsworth by Ziegler: the author casts Woodsworth as a religious "prophet" who was directly responsible for shaping modern Canada.<sup>15</sup> Ziegler even goes so far as to compare Woodsworth to Jesus several times, stating that in Jerusalem "...it was on that 'sacred evening' in the garden on the Mount of Olives that he decided that he must follow his convictions even though that course involved severance from the church of his fathers."<sup>16</sup> Her analysis of his life glosses over his religious criticism in an attempt to portray a man who is more appealing to Canadians who remained deeply religious as Woodsworth pursued his more radical beliefs. Ziegler has written a biography of a man

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<sup>12</sup> MacInnis, *A Man to Remember*, p. 43.

<sup>13</sup> Ziegler, *Social Pioneer*, p. ix.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. ix-x.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63-64.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

who is still alive and therefore she never directly criticises him, creating a hagiography more than a biography. The author began, in 1934, a trend of idolizing Woodsworth and elevating him above his place in Canadian history.

Woodsworth's dream of returning home to Winnipeg and becoming a teacher was quickly dashed when his father, a senior member of the Methodist Church, informed him that there were no teaching positions available at Wesley College. Woodsworth then turned to his friends in the Methodist Church to council him on what to do next. By the end of the Methodist National Convention in 1907, Woodsworth was assigned to the All Peoples' Mission where he would make the best use of his ingenuity and pioneering character.<sup>17</sup>

In 1908, Woodsworth arrived at the All Peoples' Mission. The newly formed mission was located in the poor, immigrant filled North End. It was a region of Winnipeg that had, and retains, a reputation as one of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the city and at the turn of the twentieth-century, in Canada. Here Woodsworth put into action the many social reform programmes that he felt would contribute to the regeneration of Canadian society. While his goal was to provide aid to those who needed it, the work at the All Peoples' Mission resulted in a refocusing of Woodsworth's ideology to be more national in focus and less denominational.<sup>18</sup>

During his years in Winnipeg, Woodsworth pioneered such institutions as the Peoples' Forum, a social sharing theatre that encouraged cultural displays and intellectual exchanges; a meeting place for the settlement community and a focal point

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<sup>17</sup> McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 31-32.

<sup>18</sup> Chauvin, *The Founder of the CCF*, p. 5, Emery, p. 92.

for entertainment activities. The Peoples' Forum was adopted at other Methodist missions and settlements and, eventually, at many other social settlements across Canada.<sup>19</sup> Woodsworth also reorganized the All Peoples' Mission into a settlement, similar to Mansfield House, in 1912.<sup>20</sup> A social settlement has many of the same services and facilities as a regular religious mission, however, the social workers live within the neighbourhood in order to display their idealized culture and way of life. He moved his family into a house on Stella Avenue next to All Peoples' and opened his doors to the community and transformed the Woodsworth family home into another facility within the plant of the Mission.<sup>21</sup> The reorganization meant that Woodsworth was applying the lessons he learned in Europe to a Canadian context. While it was extremely different ministering to an allophone community of newly immigrated men, women and families, the theories behind All Peoples' Mission and Mansfield House were the same. Woodsworth had adapted a British solution to a Canadian problem.

Woodsworth also spearheaded campaigns to provide supervised playgrounds for children in Winnipeg,<sup>22</sup> create mandatory kindergarten for all children in the city, and generally forced the municipality to take a more active role in providing social welfare to all its citizens. Woodsworth passed the time at All Peoples' Mission in a very active manner. By 1913, when James Shaver Woodsworth resigned from his position as superintendent, and his membership in the Methodist Church, he had become an icon in Winnipeg and began to have a well-deserved reputation across the country.<sup>23</sup> By the end of his career at All Peoples' Mission, J. S. Woodsworth was becoming more secular in

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<sup>19</sup> Chauvin, *The Founder of the CCF*, p. 6.

<sup>20</sup> Emery, p. 94, Ziegler, *Social Pioneer*, p. 48.

<sup>21</sup> Ziegler, p. 32.

<sup>22</sup> Ziegler, *Social Pioneer*, p. 41.

<sup>23</sup> McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 59-61.

outlook, while retaining his belief in the teaching of the bible and Christ, and was becoming more political in approach.

In 1953, Grace MacInnis, Woodsworth's daughter, was the first to write a biography of Woodsworth in nearly twenty years. Her biography, *J. S. Woodsworth: A Man to Remember*, broke academic ground on Woodsworth in the 1950s and began a steady trend of publishing books on Woodsworth's life. She breathed life into her father's historical memory, currying interest in his accomplishments. Her book is neither ground-breaking, nor historically erudite, however it provides the reader with an intimate look that connects Woodsworth with the reader.<sup>24</sup> Many histories published after MacInnis' would reference her monograph and she is used as a standard source on his life, situating it as a seminal work on Woodsworth<sup>25</sup>. MacInnis was in a position to defend Woodsworth's image in a more personal manner because she was a publishing academic, respected and active in academia, making it difficult for other historians to be critical or even neutral to the accomplishments of her father as they rely so heavily on MacInnis' personal accounts.

MacInnis' biography, however, remains an important document that influenced the historiographical trend in the mid twentieth century by tempering interpretations of Woodsworth's life and generally deterring any strong criticism from historians. The presence of an active interest group did more to influence the history of Woodsworth in this period than did the trends in historiography of the time that would have seen a strong criticism or in-depth examinations of the 'great men' in history, especially one so closely linked to revolutionary fears of the left.

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<sup>24</sup> MacInnis, *A Man to Remember*, p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. x-xi.

After leaving the Methodist ministry, J. S. Woodsworth became the director of the Bureau of Social Research in 1916, an organization set up by the prairie provinces to examine the social situation that had developed out of the rapid expansion, cultivation and population growth of the west.<sup>26</sup> Here, Woodsworth was offered the opportunity to use his resourcefulness to set up an innovative governmental body that was designed to serve the social needs of the prairie peoples. Woodsworth was tasked at setting up an institution that had no direct predecessor, was carving its own niche out of other programmes that overlapped but never provided adequate social services, and was decidedly more regional in focus than local.<sup>27</sup> Woodsworth had an opportunity at the Bureau of Social Research to act on his Social Gospel beliefs and push his influence passed the local level to a more visible stage.

After the Bureau commenced its work, Woodsworth found himself in a difficult position; should he sacrifice his personal beliefs to remain in a position he desperately desired and felt uniquely qualified for, or stick to his pacifist morals. With the rapid escalation of tensions across Europe, and the increased likelihood of a coming war, Woodsworth discovered that his belief in passivism and peaceful cooperation were not tolerated at such a public organization.<sup>28</sup> On January 31, 1917, Woodsworth's employment at the Bureau of Social Research was terminated, and he found himself again unemployed because of his radical ideological beliefs.<sup>29</sup> In four years he had been pushed out of two institutions – the Methodist Church and the Bureau of Social Research – because of his controversial and progressive ideology. He could not remain

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<sup>26</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. 53.

<sup>27</sup> McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 72-73.

<sup>28</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. 30.

<sup>29</sup> McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 77.

in the church because of his progressive ideas regarding theology and the authority of the church, and he was not allowed to continue at the Bureau while he openly protested against the government's position regarding the growing conflict in Europe. J. S. Woodsworth found himself 43 years old, unemployed, and not welcome within the fields that he had already dedicated the majority of his life pursuing. He then moved to British Columbia with his family where he accepted some work as a minister for a small church in Gibson's Landing.<sup>30</sup> This was a short lived project that ultimately led him to work as a longshoreman in the dockyards of Vancouver.<sup>31</sup>

It was in Vancouver that Woodsworth first made his transition from a progressive Christian reformer to developing an allegiance with the labour movement. This link would eventually become Woodsworth's most identifiable stamp on Canadian society. Through a series of extremely coincidental events, Woodsworth found himself working as a longshoreman, living with many of his colleagues (his family remained at Gibson's Landing), and deeply involved with the local union.<sup>32</sup> Here he was introduced to the power of mass organization of the workers, and the newest ideology tied to unionism: the One Big Union (OBU).<sup>33</sup> The OBU movement was already underway when Woodsworth became involved, but he managed to carve out a place where he could agitate and promote the cause in the same manner that he did at the All People's Mission and the Bureau of Social Research. Fulfilling his idolized role as a teacher, Woodsworth began at the end of the First World War to travel across the country

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<sup>30</sup> Ziegler, *Social Pioneer*, p. 74.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>32</sup> McInnis, *A Man to Remember*, p. 123.

<sup>33</sup> The One Big Union was a concept that argued that as capitalism leans closer and closer to absolute monopolies, workers must organize themselves in increasing larger unions in order to compete with the capitalists' increased power. The OBU was hoped to prevent further social injustices and equalized the socio-economic strata of the nation.

lecturing on the merits of unionism, organized labour and the OBU.<sup>34</sup> Hearing about the strike on one of his speaking engagements, Woodsworth became very interested in the developments, but knowing the strike was nascent and confined to a few local unions he elected to continue on his scheduled tour of the prairies and arrive on schedule in Winnipeg, 1919, where he became the replacement editor of the *Strike Bulletin*. It was at this place and time that marked a dramatic shift in J. S. Woodsworth's ideology; Woodsworth's name would no longer be synonymous with the Methodist Church and Winnipeg, but instead with the labour movement and Ottawa.

While still in prison for publishing seditious libel material in the *Western Labor News*, the strike bulletin, Woodsworth's supporters began discussing his name as a potential representative of the labour movement in the House of Commons. In the 1921 election, J. S. Woodsworth ran in Winnipeg Centre for the Independent Labour Party, that had recently formed with the help of William Irvine from Calgary East.<sup>35</sup> The ILP was the first instance of labour interests being represented in parliament. With the help of A. A. Heaps, who was also elected to his ILP seat in Winnipeg in 1925, Woodsworth began his long journey to promote a socially democratic system to be developed in Canada.<sup>36</sup>

In 1959, Kenneth McNaught published his history of J. S. Woodsworth, six years after Grace MacInnis. He was educated at Upper Canada College and graduated from the University of Toronto in 1941. McNaught acted as editor for many academic and religious magazines such as *Canadian Studies in Government* and *Christian Outlook*.

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<sup>34</sup> Chauvin, *The Founder of the CCF*, p. 9, McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 97.

<sup>35</sup> Chauvin, *The Founder of the CCF*, p. 11, Ziegler, *Social Pioneer*, p. 149.

<sup>36</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. 101

He also acted as chairman for several organizations relating to Canadian Studies. In his monograph McNaught openly stated that he believed that the existing history of Woodsworth was extremely biased and lacked any historical context.<sup>37</sup> McNaught's book *A Prophet in Politics: A Biography of J.S. Woodsworth*, actually did little to overhaul the history of J. S. Woodsworth, and instead simply recast Woodsworth as a liberal reformer instead of a socialist radical or Christian evangelist. McNaught accomplished this by reemphasizing Woodsworth's rejection of faith, and underemphasized his affiliations with the Labour movement.

McNaught is attempting to redefine Woodsworth, and distance the man from the two principle myths that were created in the early histories of J. S. Woodsworth. McNaught recasts Woodsworth as a social and political progressive who was more concerned with liberal ideas of social and political progress instead of religious zeal, as argued by Ziegler.<sup>38</sup> McNaught is writing Woodsworth as a more moderate character who did have an impact on Canadian history, but that impact was principally about social progress and not the Social Gospel or a Red Revolution.<sup>39</sup> McNaught is trying to maintain Woodsworth's role as a hero in Canadian history, but he is actively redefining Woodsworth in order to make him acceptable to the general population at a time when the conflict with the Soviet Union was at its peak.

During the Second World War, and continuing into the Cold War, historians including McNaught tended to move away from political histories and emphasized the origins of liberal institutions, a switch that had to do largely with ensuring public support

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<sup>37</sup> McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. v.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 317.

for the continuing Cold War conflict in the name of protecting these institutions.<sup>40</sup>

McNaught is recasting Woodsworth as a man who was central to the creation of the liberal institutions that shaped modern Canada, and who was inspired by the notion of liberal progress. McNaught's attempts at challenging the preceding historical saint hood of J. S. Woodsworth were unsuccessful, and instead McNaught has simply revised history to make Woodsworth more acceptable to the general public of the 1950s.

McNaught's biography, however, has been elevated to a place of academic prestige and is assumed to be one of the most unbiased biographies of Woodsworth.<sup>41</sup>

J. S. Woodsworth's many speeches in the House of Commons highlighted his desires to push forward a system of public ownership of key industries in the Canadian economy. Woodsworth used his position within Parliament to play the political game and pass major social reforms while only holding two seats in the House of Commons. Woodsworth accomplished this through familiarizing himself with and mastering the art of the Committee. Here Woodsworth was resourceful with his limited assets and managed to push through reforms to divorce courts in Ontario,<sup>42</sup> increases in national minimum wage standards, and eventually, during a minority government in that the Independent Labour Party held the balance of power, was able to force the King government to enact a national Old Age Pension programme.<sup>43</sup>

Woodsworth's time in Parliament, however, was not defined by his immediate political gains, but rather on the permanent mark he left on the national political system:

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<sup>40</sup> Berger, Carl. *The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing since 1900*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), p. 172-174.

<sup>41</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. xi.

<sup>42</sup> MacInnis, *A Man to Remember*, p. 194-195.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187-191.

the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. In the early 1930s Woodsworth, encouraged by the support of disaffected progressives formerly of the Liberal party, began to formulate a plan for the creation of a nationally organized political party that would not only represent the interests of labour, but more widely the interests of the producers, those who work with little financial compensation.<sup>44</sup> Woodsworth's goal was to form a party with enough grass-roots support that it would be democratically elected to parliament with a mandate to reform the socio-economic system in the hopes of providing better distribution of natural, economic, and political resources. Woodsworth's aim in founding the CCF was to revolutionize the Canadian political system from within, free of violence or revolution.<sup>45</sup>

The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation represented for the first time the unification of those disenfranchised by the capitalist system and provided them with a political voice. The CCF, as Woodsworth laid out in the *Regina Manifesto*, hoped to reform the socio-economic system by democratizing key industries and providing more programmes to equalize the distribution of wealth.<sup>46</sup> The CCF called for the nationalization of transit, banking, natural resources, medicine, education, etc. It sought to remove those monopolies that dominated the economy, and whose leaders also dominated the House of Commons. The CCF was so influential because it transformed the political landscape of federal politics. It shifted the Canadian Parliament to a multi-party system that was no longer dominated by the old Liberal and Conservative parties,

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<sup>44</sup> McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 166-167 and , p. 255.

<sup>45</sup> MacInnis, *A Man to Remember*, p. 215.

<sup>46</sup> Chauvin, *The Founder of the CCF*, p. 19.

both dominated by big business interests. The CCF was to represent the interests of those abused by the capitalist elite.

Under the CCF Woodsworth led a group of extremely resourceful MPs. At first meeting with electoral defeat in provincial as well as federal by-elections, the CCF made their first political break when several seats were elected to the British Columbian provincial legislature.<sup>47</sup> The CCF began their long voyage to what Woodsworth hoped was a new Canadian order emphasizing fairness, compromise and equality. Shortly after the CCF met with success in the federal election.<sup>48</sup> Woodsworth personally traveled across the country to help establish local CCF chapters and grassroots funding scheme; he has been credited as being the only man who could have organized the CCF, and the only man who can be credited with being the heart around that the movement formed; Woodsworth embodied the CCF.<sup>49</sup> The party was the ultimate expression of Woodsworth's social, political, and economic ideology. The CCF, that would later become the New Democratic Party, changed the face of Canadian politics forever because it pushed the political discourse farther to the left. The Liberal party, in an attempt to stop the haemorrhaging of support to the CCF, began adopting many of the CCF's platforms in a policy of adapt or be left behind. The CCF, while never forming government or official opposition, was able to agitate and provide support for such early social welfare programmes as an expanded Old Age Pension, minimum wage, work-place standards, and other similar programmes. Woodsworth also began to agitate for three major reforms that would later become key defining aspects of Canadian politics.

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<sup>47</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. iv

<sup>48</sup> McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 249.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 255.

The three reforms, that were arguably a half-century ahead of their time were; the repatriation of the Constitution;<sup>50</sup> the amending formula that required unanimous consent of the provinces;<sup>51</sup> and the notion of entrenching a code of human rights within the constitution so that they would be protected by the highest court, making the federal government themselves unable to override the civil liberties of its citizens in the manner that Woodsworth had witnessed in 1919. These reforms never materialized in his lifetime, but it is fascinating that J. S. Woodsworth was so innovative and *avant garde* in his ideology that many of his goals were not realized for a further five decades.

In 1991, however, the long standing tradition of focusing on Woodsworth's institutional accomplishments was broken by Allen Mills in his biography *Fool For Christ: The Political Thought Of J. S. Woodsworth*. Mills is attempting to redefine Woodsworth as an individual who was not a prophet but an intellectual revolutionary. It is the first and clearest examination of how Woodsworth's political and social thought developed through an analysis of writings, letters and speeches.

Mills is attempting to revise the history of Woodsworth to recast him as an intellectual innovator and not as a social prophet or socialist agitator. Mills argues that Woodsworth was an intellectual who developed out of a period when religious influence was decreasing and that his inspiration came from intellectual study and not from the Social Gospel or Communist ideology.<sup>52</sup> Mills is once again distancing Woodsworth from the traditional interpretations and recasting him in a way that would be more acceptable to a modern Canada. In *Fool For Christ: The Political Thought Of J. S.*

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<sup>50</sup> Chauvin, *The Founder of the CCF*, p. 2

<sup>51</sup> Ziegler, *Social Pioneer*, p. 109

<sup>52</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. 38-40.

*Woodsworth*, there is heavy emphasis put on the historical and intellectual context of everything that Woodsworth did.<sup>53</sup> Mills is attempting to cast Woodsworth as an individual who was affected by his surroundings and not as a prophet who was driven by divine inspiration.

Mills does not acknowledge any personal factors that influenced Woodsworth and instead concentrates solely on the intellectual context of the period.<sup>54</sup> He does not wish to portray Woodsworth as a regular man who was inspired by his family and life experiences, but rather as a man who was highly educated, and used this education to develop ideas and institutions that would benefit all Canadians. Mills embraces the elitism that so many other biographers downplayed in their attempts to make him a ‘normal’ labouring man struggling for social justice.

The final years of Woodsworth’s life was marked by his gradual loss of control of the CCF. While still a revered figurehead and their haloed founder, Woodsworth led the party with some difficulty as his programme of reform was tweaked and altered by the next generation of party membership.<sup>55</sup> In 1939 J. S. Woodsworth suffered a stroke and found himself unable to retain control of the CCF. After decreasing his role within the party, Woodsworth experienced another stroke and found himself too ill to continue in parliament.<sup>56</sup> He returned home to Toronto briefly then continued on the Vancouver. There he died, surrounded by family. Woodsworth’s funeral was noticeably lacking in religious references, going so far as to replacing the Lord’s Prayer with a prayer he had penned while preaching at the Labour Church in Winnipeg. While there was singing of

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xii.

<sup>54</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. xii.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248-249.

<sup>56</sup> McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 314-315.

songs and reading passages of the Bible, James Shaver Woodsworth's funeral placed more emphasis on remembering the secular labour leader who transformed Canada, rather than the radical Methodist who was inspired by the lessons of Jesus and the Golden Rule to dedicate his life to social service and teaching the benefits of social democracy to Canadians. Woodsworth's died on March 21, 1942, and his ashes were scattered across English Bay, in Vancouver.<sup>57</sup>

The hero of Canada, the hero of the disadvantaged, and the hero of the CCF, had left an impressive mark on Canadian politics. He had redirected the flow of Canadian history from its pioneering and early industrial beginnings toward a society that values the good of society over the personal ambitions of individuals. James Shaver Woodsworth was a man who, starting in Winnipeg, spent his life dedicated to serving society. He was the man who fathered the left in Canada and he alone was qualified for the task according to many historians. He constituted all of the qualities that were required in a leader at that time. He had old connections to the prairies and the west, central Canada, and began to make a name for himself in Montreal and the Maritimes. He had experience with local reform movements, labour organizations and national politics. He knew everyone who needed to be involved and he alone was the central force that brought together all of the aspects required to create a successful political movement that continues today.

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<sup>57</sup> Mills, *Fool For Christ*, p. 252.

The reality of Woodsworth's life is very important to understand in order to debunk this mythology, however, such an exhaustive study is not permitted in the page constraints of this Master's thesis. In its place a close examination has been selected as an alternative to a glossed over biography. By examining All Peoples' Mission not only can Woodsworth's lived reality be more clearly understood, but a more balanced understanding of the motivations of those involved in the Social Gospel can also become clear.

The first obstacle that faced this thesis was the unfortunate fact that J. S. Woodsworth had not wished to be studied or eulogized by historians, and so destroyed many of his personal documents toward the end of his life. This unfortunate reality left no journal or diary written by Woodsworth during the period studied in this paper. However, a three page leaflet written in Woodsworth's hand writing remained in the Woodsworth fonds in Ottawa. This document allows a partial picture to be constructed of the real life of Woodsworth during the time as Superintendent, stating that "a record of our work week, kept as a matter of curiosity" would provide a partial idea of what his responsibilities were.<sup>58</sup>

He begins by enumerating the various organizations and charities that he attends in his capacity as superintendent:

During the past year he has served on the Deaconess Board, and the Fresh Air Committee, the Board of Associated Charities and in Committee ... and Relief, the Board of Children's Aid and its ... Home Committee, the

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<sup>58</sup> Woodsworth, "All Peoples' Mission Reports and Papers, 1908-1909," in *Diaries and Notebooks* Librabry and Archives Canada H2277, p. 1.

Anti-Tuberculosis Society and its Committee on Education and Publicity, and the Playgrounds Association.<sup>59</sup>

While maintaining a busy administrative schedule Woodsworth also attended to the many meetings that were required to maintain such a large operation.

Sundays began mid-morning with interviews with members of the congregation at the Burrows Avenue branch. He then moved to the Maple Street branch for a class meeting. The afternoon was spent at the Sunday School, organizing and meeting with the various school teachers. His evenings also included some mission business during his is off hours. During this particular week Woodsworth had an evening tea with Professor Rose, attempting to enlist his support at All Peoples'. Sunday ended with Woodsworth noting that he had a "quiet evening at home – the first for weeks."<sup>60</sup>

Monday morning consisted of a series of meetings regarding the various needs of the teachers as well as many of the committee's he served on. This Monday included a meeting with two deaconesses and the architect regarding the construction of new facilities. The afternoon was occupied with attending various committee meetings and more interviews with staff.<sup>61</sup> Tuesday morning consisted of more meetings and in the afternoon, Woodsworth made several collecting calls and attended the meeting of the Deaconess Board. During the evening, Woodsworth attended the meeting of the Socialist Party that was held in Selkirk Hall. Wednesday was again dominated by meetings and committees, and finished at 6 o'clock with more collecting calls.

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<sup>59</sup> Woodsworth, "All Peoples' Mission Reports and Papers, 1908-1909," in *Diaries and Notebooks* Library and Archives Canada H2277, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Woodsworth, *Diaries and Notebooks* LAC H2277, p. 2.

Wednesday evening consisted of a prayer meeting and making arrangements for a “Peoples Concert”.<sup>62</sup> Thursday was again a typical day of meetings, however, in the evening Woodsworth had the opportunity to teach a class at the Night School at the Burrows Avenue branch.<sup>63</sup> Friday morning was spent meeting with Deaconesses and in the afternoon Woodsworth made arrangements for “girls to go into Grace Hospital.”<sup>64</sup> Friday evening was spent making collecting calls and Woodsworth also oversaw a Boys Club and the new Institute.

Saturday was spent in a slightly different manner. Woodsworth usually hoped to take off Saturday as a day of rest, but was interrupted by important telephone calls, and therefore continued to work through his time away from the Mission.<sup>65</sup> While Woodsworth was surely a busy man he did not spend as large a portion of his work time interacting directly with those in need. Whereas other staff members attended to the immediate needs of those living in the North End, Woodsworth played the role of advocate, not social worker. His efforts were far more logistical than missionary in style.

The realities of Woodsworth’s time in Winnipeg is that he was a man who motivated. He motivated individuals to donate their time and work with those in need, and he encouraged others to provide money and support to his cause. J. S. Woodsworth was a brilliant organizer, not a ground-breaking social worker. He embodied many of

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<sup>62</sup> Woodsworth, *Diaries and Notebooks* LAC H2277, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> Woodsworth, *Diaries and Notebooks* LAC H2277, p. 3.

<sup>64</sup> Woodsworth, *Diaries and Notebooks* LAC H2277, p. 3.

<sup>65</sup> Woodsworth, *Diaries and Notebooks* LAC H2277, p. 3.

the characteristics of a great leader, something that ideally suited him for his later life in politics. To understand the origin of the mythology that his biographers have promoted, a closer examination of the daily lives of those working at All Peoples' is necessary.

The truth in the mythology of Woodsworth's biographers can be found in the work of the other workers at the mission. Much of the evidence provided by Woodsworth's biographers regarding his life in social work is accurate, however they have misplaced the credit. All Peoples' Mission was a successfully run Social Settlement, and the men and women who worked in the North End deserve much of the credit.

## Chapter Three – All Peoples’ Mission

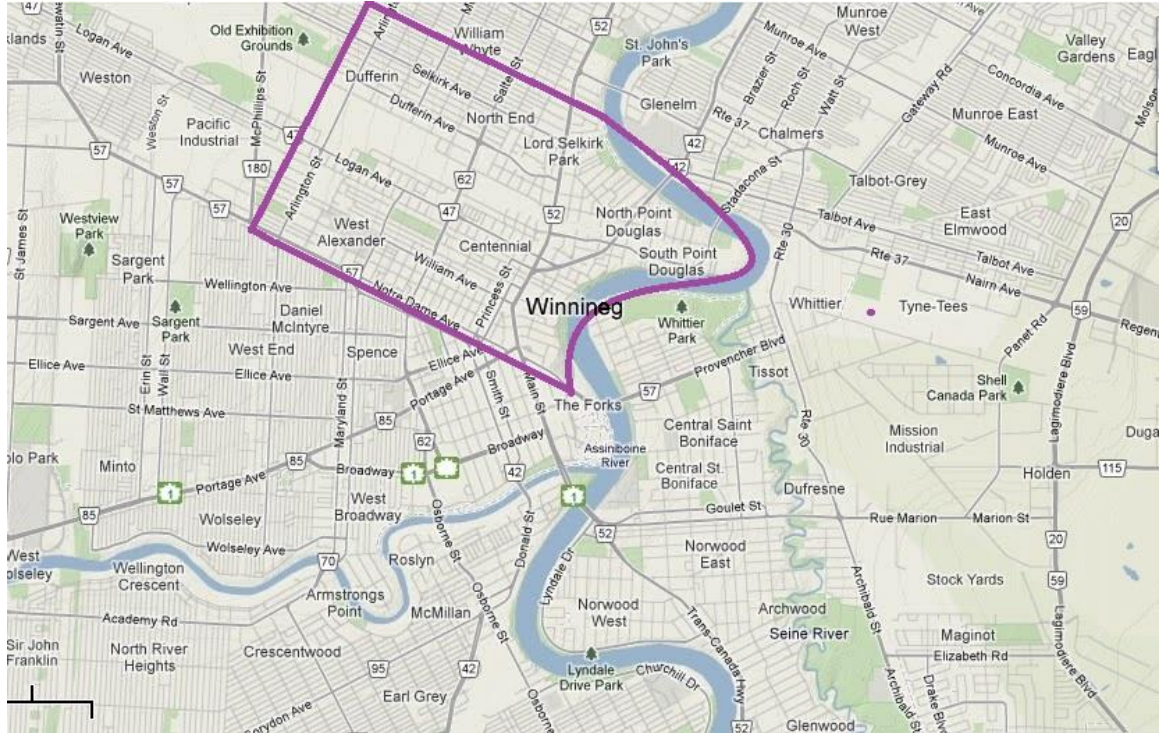
The North End of Winnipeg, centred around the neighbourhood of Point Douglas North totalling around 20,000 residents, was one of the focal points of the moral panic surrounding the influx of ‘newcomers’ to Canada in the early national period.<sup>1</sup> This neighbourhood was bound by the bend in the Red River to the east, Sinclair St. to the west, and Burrows St. and Notre-Dame to the north and south. The main commercial activity centred around the stretch of Main St. that cut through the middle of this area comprised of wards 4, 5, and 6 within the municipality of Winnipeg.<sup>2</sup> (see Figure 2) This neighbourhood appeared on first glance to be a respectable neighbourhood, at one time it housed senior municipal officials in fairly sizable Victorian houses. The streets were broad and treed, providing the false perception of space. These houses, that cramped the streets as the years passed and the immigrant community boomed, sheltered some of the newest and poorest Canadians to come to the prairies. The respectable appearance of the neighbourhood betrayed the reality that the housing conditions represented the most cramped, filthy, impoverished and inhumane living conditions in all of Winnipeg; it had become a tenement district. During a canvassing tour of the North End, Rose commented that “the appalling fact that I saw was the way the people lived. In nearly every room there were two, three, and four beds. Within single rooms

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<sup>1</sup> J. A. “Foreigners and Overcrowding,” *Free Press*, May 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935).

<sup>2</sup> Anon., “Needs of North Winnipeg,” n.d. [c. 1909]. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

men, women, and growing children herd together.”<sup>3</sup> It was this crowding and mixing of the population that threatened the middle-class Victorian sensibilities.



(Figure 2 – The North End of Winnipeg)

Within this neighbourhood there were several churches attempting to cope with the terrible conditions that the ministry saw surrounding them, “All Peoples’ originated from local initiative rather than from the conscious policy of the Methodist Church.”<sup>4</sup> These churches, however, were faced with an immigrant community that did not speak English and largely did not attend that particular denominational church. Emery notes that at this point

<sup>3</sup> Rose, “A Kindergarten Pilgrimage,” *The Christian Guardian*, April 3, 1908. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935).

<sup>4</sup> Emery, “The Methodist Church...”, p. 85.

All Peoples' had been a private mission which was supported by the Methodist churches of Winnipeg. It had not been an official Methodist mission because it lacked church members and was, therefore, outside the provisions of the *Discipline*. Mission workers overcame this regulation, which was designed for English-speaking populations, by banding together themselves.<sup>5</sup>

Their flock had left the neighbourhood, and these Churches didn't have the support or money to continue their services in a traditional manner.

The Methodist Church, faced with the imminent collapse of their current efforts in the area, decided to reorganize their resources and establish a mission that could better serve the needs of the 'newcomers.'<sup>6</sup> Individual Methodists inspired by their evangelical traditions, began to work in this area in the belief that society in western Canada would perpetuate the Protestant, English-language culture that had developed in Ontario and other parts of eastern Canada.<sup>7</sup> However, it was principally the individuals inspired on a local level that began work in this area among the new Canadians, not the Methodist Church. In 1889, Miss Dollie McGuire, began holding Sunday school classes each week in German at McDougall Church. Average attendance, once the programme was established approached 100, largely due to the fact that she also distributed food and clothing to those who participated.

The work of Miss McGuire drew further attention to the moral panic surrounding these 'newcomers', and as interest increased more people became involved with what

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<sup>5</sup> Emery, "The Methodist Church...", p. 87.

<sup>6</sup> Brown and Cook, *Canada 1896-1921*, p. 101-102.

<sup>7</sup> Emery, p. 85, and James, "Women, The Settlement..." in *Framing Our Past*, p. 224.

was becoming known as missionary work ‘for all peoples’.<sup>8</sup> Rev. R. L. Morrison first became involved with this work in 1901. In order to achieve an entrée into the homes of the immigrants, Rev. Morrison offered medical aid<sup>9</sup>, thereby gaining their trust and making Methodism appear less threatening. By 1902, the work that was being done under the banner of All Peoples’ Mission had outgrown the facilities, so a permanent home was purchased on Stella Street and placed under the administration of Rev. J. V. Kovar, an Austrian protestant who increased the variety of languages used by the missionaries. He regularly held services in German, Slavic, Bohemian and several other languages.<sup>10</sup> The mission flourished as they added more and more programmes in various languages, finally reaching 400 immigrants, representing 16 nationalities, in 1907, the same year that the various church facilities were reorganized into the unified All Peoples’ Mission.<sup>11</sup> It operated on a modest budget, supplied by the Methodist Church, Women’s Missionary Society, as well as philanthropists,<sup>12</sup> of \$25,000 per year, allocating nearly three quarters of their entire budget to work among European immigrants.<sup>13</sup> By 1908, All Peoples’ Mission had its own building and a permanent staff of 11, with countless volunteers passing through its doors.<sup>14</sup> The newly formed All Peoples’ Mission, however, needed a strong leader who could manage in the harsh conditions of the North End, and inspire effective Christian work.

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<sup>8</sup> On the side of the new permanent facility was printed the passage from Isaiah 5:7 which read – “My house shall be called a house of prayer for *all people*.” It was from this passage which All People Mission took its name. Emery, *The Methodist Church*, p. 141.

<sup>9</sup> Emery, “The Methodist Church...”, p. 87.

<sup>10</sup> Emery, “The Methodist Church...”, p. 87.

<sup>11</sup> Emery, “The Methodist Church”, p. 143-144.

<sup>12</sup> Woodsworth, *All Peoples’ Mission, Winnipeg: Report, 1907-1908*, [PAMPHLET] Woodsworth, J. S. *All Peoples’ Mission – Reports (Personal Papers)*. LAC: H2278 15 8 (1907-1912), p. 7-8.

<sup>13</sup> Emery, “The Methodist Church...”, p. 98.

<sup>14</sup> Emery, “The Methodist Church...”, p. 94.

At the same time as the mission was being reorganized, James Shaver Woodsworth had been growing more and more radical in his social beliefs, and was faced with another crisis of faith. In June, 1907 he submitted another letter of resignation to the Methodist Church.<sup>15</sup> His previous attempts had met with failure because the Methodist Committee could not stand to lose such a good mind and a close family member from their ranks.<sup>16</sup> They were understandably upset with the news of another resignation letter from Woodsworth. Reviewing its contents it is clear that he had not lost his faith. J. S. Woodsworth was rejecting the religious dogma and the institutionalization of faith.<sup>17</sup> His opinions of Christianity were not in question, it was how best to interpret the lessons that were taught in the New Testament – his faith in the system was what he had lost by 1907, not his belief in the moral teaching of Jesus Christ.<sup>18</sup>

The opportunity to provide Woodsworth with hard work at All Peoples' Mission seemed like a perfect way to dissuade him from leaving the Church, "it was exactly the sort of practical work he had craved for."<sup>19</sup> This lure proved too great for Woodsworth to pass up. Once offered the job of Superintendent at All Peoples' Mission, Woodsworth decided to remain with the Methodist Church, but he followed a Christian

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<sup>15</sup> Mills, *Fool for Christ*, p. 33.

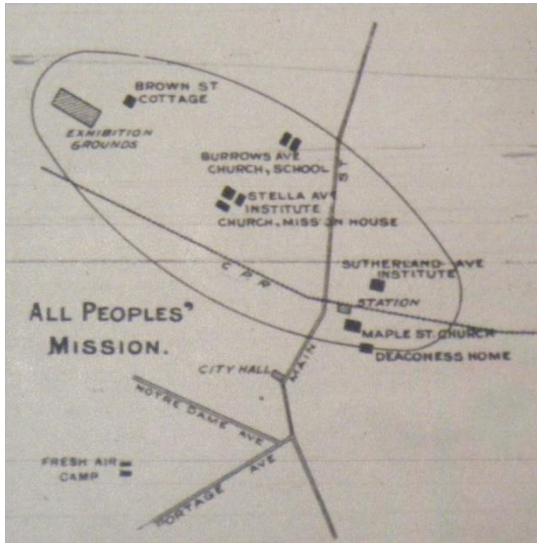
<sup>16</sup> J. S. Woodsworth had submitted three letters of resignation to the Methodist Church; 1902, 1907, and 1913. The main reasons which he provided related to his moral and intellectual problems with Christian and Methodist Dogma. (Emery, p. 89.)

<sup>17</sup> Mills, p. 34-35, Emery, p. 97.

<sup>18</sup> Emery, "The Methodist Church", p. 41.

<sup>19</sup> Mills, *Fool for Christ*, p. 36.

dogma rooted in practicality.<sup>20</sup> He was eager and willing to serve God in this fashion. His work in Point Douglas North began in the “late spring of 1907.”<sup>21</sup>



(Figure 3 – All Peoples Mission facilities)

Upon his arrival Woodsworth was faced at the All Peoples' Mission with a scattered collection of buildings and programmes that included four facilities (see Figure 3). The two facilities were the principle Maple Branch, close to the CPR depot, and the Stella Branch at the corner of Stella and Powers Streets.<sup>22</sup> At the Maple Branch, Woodsworth had close access to the Immigration Hall and the main point of entry for all those coming to Winnipeg, and the West. The building, a small, pitched roof chapel with clapboard siding was unimpressive for the amount of work and traffic it accommodated.<sup>23</sup> (See Figure 4) One staffer remarked “it imitates the modest daisy too

<sup>20</sup> Mills, *Fool for Christ*, p. 36.

<sup>21</sup> McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 36.

<sup>22</sup> “Annual Report 1907-1908”, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> *Photograph of Maple Branch, All Peoples' Mission* in Masson, “Kindergarten Work in All Peoples' Mission,” *The Christian Guardian*, Nov 6, 1907. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935).

much: in its modesty rather than its beauty and sweetness.”<sup>24</sup> It also featured, on one side, a mural that identified it as a place open to all people; welcome was written in large lettering in more than eight languages. The namesake of All Peoples’ came from a religious passage, that Woodsworth was very familiar with, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.”<sup>25</sup>



(Figure 4 - Maple Street Branch)

This place would become the focal point of the social activities of the middle-class religious community of Winnipeg. Through this mission, Methodism was going to uplift the population of Point Douglas North to “higher and better things,”<sup>26</sup> thereby improving the deplorable and immoral conditions and transforming them into good Christian Canadians worthy of the great nation that was hoped would be a successful experiment “...in social justice, an experiment in human comradeship, an experiment in successful democracy, and an experiment in the natural consequences of widely diffused

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<sup>24</sup> Rose, “A Kindergarten Pilgrimage,” *The Christian Guardian*, April 3, 1908, p. 8. (WS021-022)

<sup>25</sup> Isaiah 5:7

<sup>26</sup> Masson, “All Peoples’ Mission, Winnipeg: Kindergarten Annual Report of Miss L. S. Masson,” *The Christian Guardian*, Sept 22, 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935).

intelligence.”<sup>27</sup> The immigrant community was an important part of this experiment, and how the Anglo-protestant community reacted to their arrival is a testament to how dedicated the west was to this understanding of their Dominion.

The mission’s early success at recruiting newcomers to their facility owed much to the already established system that the Methodist Church had implemented in order to deal with the moral panic surrounding the flow of immigrants into the gateway city and the west. Under the Methodist Immigration Department, and later the Home Department of Missions, the Methodist Church placed officers at each point of entry into the country;<sup>28</sup> St. John’s, Halifax, Quebec City, Montreal, Toronto, as well as Winnipeg, as it was the gateway city to western Canada.<sup>29</sup> These agents were treated with the same respect and offered the same resources as the government Immigration Officials who were trying to guide the much needed labour to the Canadian West.<sup>30</sup> The agents waited at the immigration hall for newcomers to arrive some of whom were Methodists in their home country. It was common for immigrants to approach their local pastor/reverend and ask for a “note of removal” prior to his/her departure. These Methodists were then presented with a red pin, to identify them, and any information that was available on the Church’s presence at their destination.<sup>31</sup> Upon arrival at the ports of entry, these pins also identified the agents at the Immigration Hall. The Methodist officers, who were usually volunteers or students, provided them with an introduction card, identifying the

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<sup>27</sup> Osborne, “The Church and the Immigrant: An Address at the National Mission Congress,” *The Christian Guardian*, April 14, 1909, p. 9. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>28</sup> Anon. “Canada and Emigration: How the Methodist Emigrant Is Helped,” *The Methodist Times*, August 20, 1908, p. 101. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>29</sup> Anon. “Canada and Emigration,” *The Methodist Times*, August 20, 1908, p. 102.

<sup>30</sup> Woodsworth, “Methodist Immigration Work at Winnipeg,” n.d. [c. 1907]. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935).

<sup>31</sup> Anon. “Canada and Emigration,” *The Methodist Times*, August 20, 1908, p. 102.

name of the priest/pastor, location of the church, and other pertinent information.<sup>32</sup> The agent would then notify the next agent down the line to expect a new arrival. This system continued until the immigrant arrived in his or her final destination.

The agents in Winnipeg also guided new immigrants who appeared to need help and guidance to All Peoples' Mission, as it was the closest resource centre to the Immigration Hall and main CPR station.<sup>33</sup> (See Figure 5) This system of direction enabled Woodsworth and the All Peoples' Mission to provide aid to a great number of people, averaging a turnover rate of about 25%; approximately every four years those being helped by the mission were a completely new group of people.<sup>34</sup> Woodsworth commented that "the workers [at All Peoples' Mission] have no lack of the 'spice of variety' in their everyday duties. The changes and combinations might almost be described as kaleidoscopic."<sup>35</sup> Woodsworth, as Superintendent was the man who managed the activities of the constantly changing mission, and had a hand in developing the most efficient methods for helping such a vast, diverse, and changing group of new Canadians.

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<sup>32</sup> Methodist Church Immigration Department "Introduction Forms: All Peoples' Mission" *Woodsworth Scrapbook, 1906-1910* [Reel# C13074] and Methodist Church Immigration Department "Introduction Card" *Woodsworth Scrapbook, 1906-1910* [Reel# C13074].

<sup>33</sup> Woodsworth, "The Gateway City," n.d. [c. 1907]. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>34</sup> Wigle, "Inasmuch As Ye Did It," *The Christian Guardian*, Jan 29, 1908. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>35</sup> Woodsworth, "Among The Foreigners In Winnipeg: Three Remarkable Events," *The Missionary Outlook*, n.d. [c. 1908].



(Figure 5 - Immigration

Hall)

The programmes that the All Peoples' Mission offered tended to heavily favour the importance of education. The provision of better education was believed to be the best and most effective way of creating good Canadians out of the patchwork or 'newcomers.' Woodsworth commented in 1909 in a speech made at the Broadway Methodist Church that his principle goal was to "...mix these people and mould them in some way into Canadian citizens,"<sup>36</sup> something that he would later try and accomplish with the Citizen's Forum. But upon his arrival, Woodsworth's main focus was expanding the existing education programmes in order to provide an opportunity for more immigrants, and more age groups, to learn how to live in their new home.

The Kindergartens, first set up by Miss Dollie McGuire at McDougall Church,<sup>37</sup> were the first thing to be expanded when the All Peoples' Mission was reorganized. At the Maple Street Branch in 1907 the roll call included 72 names, with an average weekly attendance of 45, at the Stella Avenue Branch, their average attendance approached 50

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<sup>36</sup> Anon. "Sunday Services: Tell of Mission Work," *The Free Press*, April 8, 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>37</sup> McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 40.

children per week.<sup>38</sup> These included children from many different nationalities and linguistic backgrounds from Eastern Europe. These numbers represented the full capacity of the facilities, and it was not until 1908, with the construction of the New Institute on Sutherland Avenue that more space would be opened up that "...made possible much that we have longed for in the past."<sup>39</sup> J. S. Woodsworth strongly felt that this work among the children was "...probably the most important but that was not clearly seen at first",<sup>40</sup> and vigorously agitated for compulsory schooling acts and municipal facilities to be provided.<sup>41</sup> Woodsworth believed that since these small children were going to represent the next generation of Canadian citizens, enfranchised with the vote, they must be educated in the ways of Canadian life and morals.

This moral approach to education was not uncommon during the Social Gospel. Woodsworth represented an ideological belief that 'newcomers' needed to be uplifted and taught how to be good Canadian citizens. This uplifting could not just happen with their minds, but also their bodies and their morals.<sup>42</sup> This paradigm is what inspired the educational programmes that were offered to the young boys and girls of the North End. The goal of the Boys and Girls clubs were to create good strong, moral Canadian citizens.

The best example of this was the creation of a Bands of Hope at the mission. Bands of Hope were societies that children would join and pledge to never imbibe or

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<sup>38</sup> Woodsworth, "All Peoples' Mission, Winnipeg" n.d. [c. 1907].

<sup>39</sup> Woodsworth, *All Peoples' Mission, Winnipeg: Report, 1908-09*, [PAMPHLET] p. 7. Woodsworth, J. S. *All Peoples' Mission – Reports (Personal Papers)*. LAC: H2278 15 8 (1907-1912).

<sup>40</sup> Woodsworth, "Reaching the Foreigners," *The Missionary Outlook*, March 1909, p. 54. Woodsworth, J. S. *All Peoples' Mission – Reports (Personal Papers)*. LAC: H2278 15 8 (1907-1912).

<sup>41</sup> Woodsworth, "All Peoples' Mission," n.d. [c.1907].

<sup>42</sup> James, "Women, The Settlement Movement..." in *Framing Our Past*, p. 224.

abuse alcohol. It was an attempt on the part of the moral panic surrounding alcohol to imbue the message of prohibition in children before they encounter bad influences. It also offered prohibitionist an influential voice within each household, encouraging each child to speak out against any alcohol abuse within their own homes. Other attempts were being made to reach young boys and girls at the same time. In fact, many of the attendees of one club would usually participate in several others.

The Boys Clubs at the mission were targeted towards young boys, under the age of 16. They offered many opportunities for normal social development, including: games, clubs were held in all of the branches; sports, the New Institute offered better facilities that included several swimming tanks; a gymnasium and an outdoor field; as well as secret societies that developed among many of the boys, usually centred on athleticism but also including many educational overtones.<sup>43</sup> The central aim of the Boys Clubs, as stated by Cathy James, was to "...prepare themselves to be educated, law-abiding voters and workers in a capitalist democratic state."<sup>44</sup> The goal of these activities were clear, the missionary work would take a back seat to the more important problem of creating "one strong Brotherhood" through social work.<sup>45</sup>

The Girls Club closely mirrored the activities of the boys, but had a decidedly more dour approach to citizenship, believing that the programmes should prepare these young girls for the "larger and more important duties in life."<sup>46</sup> The principal clubs that the young immigrant girls of the North End were encouraged to join were the kitchen

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<sup>43</sup> Anon., "All Peoples' Institute a Boon to Newcomers," Free Press, November 25, 1908. (WS069)

<sup>44</sup> James, "Women, The Settlement Movement..." in *Framing Our Past*, p. 224.

<sup>45</sup> Woodsworth, "Letter from J. S. Woodsworth, B.A.," March 23, 1909, p. 913. Woodsworth, J. S. *All Peoples' Mission – Reports and Papers (Diaries and Notebooks)*. LAC: H2277, 11 7 (1908-1909).

<sup>46</sup> Anon. "Winnipeg: Deaconess Work at All Peoples' Mission," The Christian Guardian, April 14, 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

garden club, and the cooking class. (See Figure 6) Girls would begin in the kitchen garden, learning how to grow their own food and how to create healthy meals from the vegetables available.<sup>47</sup> Once they had mastered this, they would graduate to the kitchen where they would take cooking classes. The aim of this class was to “...teach the girls how to make a few cents go a long way and yet have the dishes taste good too.”<sup>48</sup> Once these children were taught the ways of middle-class life in Canada, they would be able to raise the future generations of Canadians. Rev. Samuel East stated that “if they are to become useful members of society, they must have teaching in elementary culinary arts and in sanitary essentials.”<sup>49</sup> Reaching the young girls as they arrived in this country became one of the most apparent examples of how the Social Gospel was dealing with the moral panic over the increasing immigration rate. It represented a clear assimilation and nativist theme in the work done by Woodsworth and his staff at All Peoples’ Mission.



(Figure 6 - A cooking class)

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<sup>47</sup> A. R. F. “The Work Among Foreigners in Winnipeg,” n.d. [c. 1908]. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>48</sup> Anon., “Latest Tidings from Subjects for Prayers and Study For May: ‘Strangers Within Our Gates,’” *Missionary Outlook* May 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>49</sup> East, “All Peoples’ Mission and its Work” *The Christian Guardian*, March 11, 1908, p.11. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935).

The All Peoples' Mission also ran several programmes directed at uplifting the adult population of Point Douglas North. In particular the numerous single men that were adding to the moral panic. Night Schools and Industrial schools were two programmes that were mainly directed at the male immigrant population in an attempt to provide them with skills and information that would enable them to find employment and support themselves, and possibly a family. The Night Schools, held three times a week, offered these men with an opportunity to learn English, one of the most important skills as many couldn't understand anything but their mother tongue, creating a very fragmented community which furthered the panic surrounding this new population.<sup>50</sup> The activities were hoped to direct these men away from immoral acts, like drinking, and toward being a more productive member of Canadian society.

The Industrial Schools were a similar example of the need to find stable employment for these men. A controversial issue during the period itself, the aim of these schools was to give their students an opportunity to work in a shop, learning a trade, for a short period of the schools year, alternating with time in the classroom.<sup>51</sup> Woodsworth was very interested in this education technique, and followed the debate as he accompanied the Committee of the Technical Education Commission of Manitoba on their investigation into similar programmes in the north-eastern United States in 1909.<sup>52</sup> Of which Woodsworth was a member of the board.

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<sup>50</sup> Anon., "Methodist Mission Work in Winnipeg," Free Press, n.d. [c. 1907]. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>51</sup> Anon., "Half-Time School Scheme Inspected: Manitoba Educational Commission Visits Novel institution in Fitchburg," March 3, 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>52</sup> See newspaper clipping from Feb 22, 1909 – Mar 10, 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

The work among women, was equally, if not more important in Woodsworth's eyes, in attempting to craft good citizens. Mothers' Meetings were usually held several times a week, offering service and education on child rearing, specifically breast feeding, first aid, cleaning and sanitation. These meetings were overseen by usually one deaconess, with an assistant or two. The meeting would always conclude with a small prayer study, where the mothers would break up into groups by nationality and perform a bible reading and prayer. Following this was a social hour with tea, where these women could interact socially with the deaconesses, practice their English and listen to some music. The mothers who attended were being trained to be good Christian Canadians, and would themselves then raise good Christian Canadian families.

All Peoples Mission was dedicated to far more than educational programmes. Woodsworth, and the Social Gospel, both believed that you must reform the deplorable living conditions present within our society in an attempt to create heaven on earth, and be closer to God.<sup>53</sup> This lofty goal meant that the mission had to provide much more than educational services, but had to target all aspects of Canadian society, from providing help in finding employment, to creating a more sanitary urban environment. One of the goals that Woodsworth advanced was educating these 'newcomers' in the legal traditions of their new nation.

The legal aid programmes resulted in two important improvements in the life of the immigrant. Firstly, it afforded these 'newcomers' with legal help in defending their civic rights against those who would profit from their ignorance. The mission had lawyers who would help the membership explain their situation in court, or find redress

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<sup>53</sup> Emery, "The Methodist Church...", p. 92.

from landlords unfairly demanding higher rents in their tenement houses, that were in themselves already prohibited under municipal laws.<sup>54</sup> The other effect of providing legal aid programmes was that these new immigrants began to understand their legal and constitutional rights, as well as the legal and political system of their new home.

Woodsworth was so impressed with the progress of their understanding when those immigrants affiliated with socialism marched to City Hall on May 1, 1908, protesting the unfair and harsh working conditions and the need for more labour initiatives.<sup>55</sup> By becoming involved in the political system, Woodsworth believed these new Canadians would become the backbone of a new Canadian electorate; these immigrants were not strangers within our gates' but the newest Canadians to arrive in this land of opportunity and they needed to be taught to be responsible Canadian citizens. This programme made the lives of these 'newcomers' more fair, but the provision of a healthy living environment was equally important. Providing health care was one of the many priorities of Woodsworth, the Social Gospel and All Peoples' Mission.

Three forms of healthcare were made available to those who received aid from the mission. The first was in the form of home visits. Deaconesses and volunteers would make a complete census of the inhabitants of several street blocks in order to better understand what the community required. This was usually done by going in to each house around midnight to inspect how many people actually slept in each room,

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<sup>54</sup> While overcrowding was illegal at this point in time, the deterrents didn't out way the potential profits that a landlord could make running a tenement house. Fines could run between \$5.00 and \$20.00 depending on the frequency of offences, with an addition \$2.35 in court fees. However, with a room holding between 6 and 12 people, renting beds at \$2.50 a month, landlords could make far greater profit by continuing to run the tenement building paying the fines along the way. J. A. "Foreigners and Overcrowding," *Free Press*, May 1909.

<sup>55</sup> Anon. "A Demonstration in Force," *The Christian Guardian*, May 13, 1908. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

averaging 8-12 inhabitants in a small sized room.<sup>56</sup> Each room provided a different glimpse into the unacceptable living conditions present in this area of Winnipeg. It was quite common to immigrants suffering from severe injuries or sick and dying children. The volunteers would provide as much aid as possible within the tenement, bringing with them first aid supplies and their training.

The other form of medical aid that was provided was removing these people from the deplorable conditions and taking them to a hospital. In many cases, the volunteers would be able to secure help from a doctor without charge. The hospital facilities, however, were lacking. A new children's hospital was opened in the community, enabling the mission to provide better care for some of the sickest children in the city. This expansion coincided with the establishment of a free dispensary at the Burrows Branch. With these new facilities, the mission would be able to provide free drugs that were needed to fight diseases such as tuberculosis; many of the health problems could have easily been treated by reforming the conditions in that these people lived, a point not lost on Woodsworth.

A Fresh Air Camp was also constructed along the banks of the Assiniboine River, about 10 kilometres west of Winnipeg.<sup>57</sup> This additional branch of All Peoples' enabled the workers to remove mainly children and mothers from the urban slums, and expose them to an environment that could afford some freedom of space and tranquility. The Fresh Air Camp consisted of seven white canvass tents pitched on a piece of land

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<sup>56</sup> Anon. "Social Conditions In City's Foreign Colony," *The Free Press*, April 3, [c. 1909].

<sup>57</sup> Miss Allen, "Deaconess Work: Fresh Air Work at Winnipeg," *The Christian Guardian*, Sept 16, 1908, p. 17.

along the river.<sup>58</sup> It was located next to Sturgeon Creek, that was just deep enough at the camp to be able to swim and enjoy a cooling afternoon during the hot prairie summer. The camp capacity was 25, averaging 170 visitors in one week<sup>59</sup>, and was overseen by 2-3 deaconesses. The majority of those who attended were children who, it was believed, needed to be exposed to a healthy and moral environment to counter the “scenes of wretchedness, vice and squalor” that could have a negative influence of these young Canadians if unchecked.<sup>60</sup> This belief in the moral uplifting power of the environment was quite common in the Social Gospel not only in Canada, exemplified by Camp Meetings, but also in the American practice of Mass Revivals. These camps also offered a respite for women and mothers either dealing with illness themselves or a sick member of their family. By bringing these women to the Fresh Air Camp, the deaconesses hoped to rejuvenate and reinvigorate these women who were the hearts of their families.<sup>61</sup> These overtones at the fresh Air Camp exemplify the high moral tone of the programmes at All Peoples’ and their stated aim to create good Christian Canadians.

All of this work was carried out by the massive staff at All Peoples’ Mission. Boasting two ministers, two college students, four deaconesses, four kindergarten teachers, one teacher and an interpreter, and a constantly fluctuating rank of volunteers, sometimes reaching 100, All Peoples’ Mission never seemed to keep pace with the demand for their services.<sup>62</sup> (See Figure 7) The mission represented many

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<sup>58</sup> Anon., “Methodist Mission Work in Winnipeg,” Free Press, n.d. [c. 1907].

<sup>59</sup> Miss Allen, “Deaconess Work: Fresh Air Work at Winnipeg,” *The Christian Guardian*, Sept 16,1908, p. 17. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>60</sup> Miss Allen, “Deaconess Work: Fresh Air Work at Winnipeg,” *The Christian Guardian*, Sept 16,1908, p. 17.

<sup>61</sup> Miss Allen, “Deaconess Work: Fresh Air Work at Winnipeg,” *The Christian Guardian*, Sept 16,1908, p. 17.

<sup>62</sup> Woodsworth, *All Peoples’ Mission, Winnipeg: Report, 1908-09*, [PAMPHLET] p. 3.

denominations as well as socio-cultural backgrounds. This, Woodsworth boasted, was what made the All Peoples' Mission so effective.



(Figure 7 - Workers at All Peoples' Mission)

The non-denominational character of the work, that was a common policy among settlement houses, ensured three things.<sup>63</sup> First, that the work could appeal to all members of the immigrant community.<sup>64</sup> Though the Doukhobors were feared by many Canadians in the West during their pilgrimage to find a new home, they were welcomed with open arms at the mission.<sup>65</sup> Second, by abandoning the religious subtext of providing aid in order to achieve conversion to one denomination, workers and volunteers could be drawn from across the city.<sup>66</sup> This enabled them to reach many different groups simultaneously, for example Mr. Longmans worked directly among the Chinese community,<sup>67</sup> and All Peoples' was able to support the Polish National Catholic

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<sup>63</sup> Parker, "The Origins and Early History..." in *The Social Gospel in Canada*, p. 113. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>64</sup> Osborne, "The Church and the Immigrant: An Address at the National Mission Congress," *The Christian Guardian*, April 14, 1909, p. 10.

<sup>65</sup> Woodsworth, "All Peoples' Mission, Winnipeg: Passing Glimpses," n.d. [c.1907]. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>66</sup> Anon. "Methodist Mission Work in Winnipeg," *Free Press*, n.d. [c. 1908]. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>67</sup> Woodsworth, "The Chinese Work at All Peoples' Mission," n.d. [c. 1907]. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

Church, members of the community who wished to cut their ties to their old church and establish their own community parish in Winnipeg with one of their own as preacher.<sup>68</sup>

Finally, the lack on denominationalism opened All Peoples' Mission to receiving funding it could not do without.<sup>69</sup> In addition to getting money from the Methodist Missionary Society, the mission was reliant on government grants, philanthropic benefactors, and donations from other churches within Winnipeg. By following his belief that aid needed to be supplied to the individuals in society and not their souls, Woodsworth expanded the programmes at All Peoples' Mission so as to include as many volunteers from other denominations as possible. Woodsworth was siding in this case with the radical Social Gospellers who were agitating for a removal of any church influence over social aid and instead championed for the establishment of government institutions that could provide aid to all who needed it across the whole Dominion; Woodsworth himself stated that "standardization is highly desirable."<sup>70</sup> Here he appears to be pushing for increased services that would create good Canadians, instead of good Christians.

This drive to create good Canadians is what identifies J. S. Woodsworth organizational stamp on the social settlement. Each of the workers that taught the kindergartens, or visited homes, those who volunteered or even just attended the community activities, had their own personal call to service; they worked for social betterment for their own personal and sometimes religious reasons. This diverse

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<sup>68</sup> Woodsworth, All Peoples' Mission, Winnipeg: Report, 1908-09, [PAMPHLET] p. 4.

<sup>69</sup> Osborne, "The Church and the Immigrant: An Address at the National Mission Congress," *The Christian Guardian*, April 14, 1909, p. 10.

<sup>70</sup> Woodsworth, *Labor in Parliament*, p. 5. Woodsworth, J. S. *Following the Glean (Personal Papers)*. LAC: H2279 15 6 (n.d.)

ideological makeup is what made All Peoples' Mission so successful, and what identifies it as a perfect test case for understanding how the Social Gospel reacted to the moral panics facing Canada in the early national period. During this period there was an influx of immigrants to major cities in Canada, Winnipeg swelled from 42,340 to 139,863 from 1901 to 1908,<sup>71</sup> one article observed that "...every third man who steps off the train at Winnipeg does not speak English."<sup>72</sup> This torrential flow of foreigners marked the beginning of a moral panic that saw the Social Gospel divide in two. In many ways the schism related to how far the church must go to solve the moral, urban, social, and legal challenges that faced Canada.

The Social Gospel, in its attempts to reform society to bring people closer to God,<sup>73</sup> was faced with two options; reform church institutions to take a central role in reforming society, or build new institutions within government to guide renewal. The solution to the problems of the North End, and similar communities across Canada was clear; direct involvement and contact with these 'newcomers' in order to provide education, moral guidance, and acceptable living conditions. The radical social gospellers agitated for their government to step in as the most able-bodied institution to deal with the social problems.<sup>74</sup> This was linked to their understanding that the federal government had the onus stemming from its tax revenue base and its responsibility to ensure Peace, Order and Good Government. In the north end Woodsworth saw no peace, no order and poor government. The more moderate reformers of the Social Gospel, however, saw the problem as best being resolved through missionary and

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<sup>71</sup> Woodsworth, *All Peoples' Mission: Report, 1908-1909*, [PAMPHLET] p. ii.

<sup>72</sup> Anon., "What's the Matter with the Methodist Church?" n.d. [c. 1907]. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>73</sup> Woodsworth, *All Peoples' Mission: Report, 1908-1909*, [PAMPHLET] p. 3

<sup>74</sup> Woodsworth, *All Peoples' Mission: Report, 1908-1909*, [PAMPHLET] back cover

evangelical work; to be a good Canadian you had to be a protestant first. Woodsworth, at this point in his life appeared to be a more radical reformer, moving further and further away from the Methodist Church.

The nature of the programmes that he oversaw during the six years at All Peoples' indicates a strong belief in creating a strong, educated citizenry. They were closely resembled those services which Woodsworth had been inspired by at Mansfield House, and were highly representative of the social settlement movement in the Protestant world. Most programmes included religious services, most obviously relating to the religious nature of missionary work, however, the focus was never on conversion, but on education and community participation. For Woodsworth religion took a back seat to helping those in need. The All Peoples' Mission gave Woodsworth the opportunity to test his theories of social reform and reconstruction. It is this experience that the biographies have imbued with the significance of starting him on his struggle to rejuvenate the entire Dominion.<sup>75</sup> The historians thus far, have used the activities of the All Peoples' Mission to create a story of a man, larger than life, who gained experience in an urban laboratory and later applied that experience in the House of Commons to redefine Canada's institutions and to a degree Canadian identity.

This narrative is a lofty one, and elevates J. S. Woodsworth to a position that he does not deserve. To exemplify the work of Woodsworth as a social pioneer, is to marginalize those who actually acted under him; those who interacted daily with the 'newcomers in need'; those volunteers who were inspired by their own belief in service. The experience of the workers at All Peoples' Mission affords a different impression of

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<sup>75</sup> Zeigler, *Social Pioneer*, p. 53, and, MacInnis, *A Man to Remember*, p. 62, and, Mills, *Fool for Christ*, p. 38, and McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, p. 57, Chauvin, *The Founder of the CCF*, p. 21.

the work done there. When examining the daily efforts of those who touched the lives of so many immigrants new to Canada, it becomes clear that just as the Social Gospel was becoming fractured, the motivations and justifications for service varied considerably among individuals.

## Chapter Four – Deaconess Work

During the Social Gospel women were afforded a greater role in many Christian denominations. This, however, happened much earlier within the Methodist tradition as women were integral to the establishment and propagation of their religious beliefs when John Wesley first established the Church in England.<sup>1</sup> Women held positions of importance within the religious community, and were an important aspect of evangelising their interpretation of Christianity. This tradition is what notably enabled Dollie McGuire to establish kindergarten classes and other missionary work at MacDougall Church in 1889, and what characterized the type of work, and its delivery during Woodsworth's tenure as Superintendent. Woodsworth by no means revolutionized the provision of social aid by incorporating educated, middle-class women into his social work; they were present prior to his arrival and would continue to toil in the North End long after he resigned from the church in 1913.

This sense of purpose within the Methodist church not only enabled women to participate in providing aid, but also in promoting the cause and agitating for more involvement from the community, as well as the government. Women became very active in social regeneration during this period, founding many notable groups such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union and a plethora of Women's Missionary Societies.<sup>2</sup> The Deaconesses at All Peoples' Mission shared many of the same administrative role as Woodsworth, while at the same time going into the community

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<sup>1</sup> Whiteley, p. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> Allen, "The Background..." in *The Social Gospel in Canada*, p. 13-14.

and interacting with those in need on a daily basis.<sup>3</sup> Agnes Allen, Wilberta Hart, L. S. Mason, Grace Tonkin, and many more worked and promoted the mission and played an important role in making All Peoples' the effective social reformatory that it has been credited with. (See Figure 8) The work of these women, however, was self-motivated. While they did follow the direction of their charismatic superintendent, they all acted in accordance with their own beliefs, whether that was secular, like Woodsworth, or sacred, like the more moderate social gospellers.



(Figure 8 - Deaconesses at All Peoples')

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<sup>3</sup> Another important thing to note regarding the work done by the deaconesses at All Peoples' is that they were not just there on the auspices of the Methodist Church. Their efforts were partially funded, and largely encouraged, by the Women's Missionary Society. They were educated and trained in the arts of providing social aid, and the Society was continually supplying the Deaconess House with new recruits. They contributed funding as well as promoted the work in many of their newsletters and correspondence. The women of All Peoples' were not there because Woodsworth believed it to be a bold new step in providing social aid, but because of their traditional role as evangelists within Methodism, and their very active philanthropic societies. Women were not merely following Woodsworth, but they were driving the work at All Peoples' forward. See Marilyn Whiteley's *Canadian Methodist Women, 1766-1925* for a fuller explanation of the role of Women within the Methodist Church.

Miss Agnes Allen<sup>4</sup>, one of the permanent deaconesses at All Peoples', stated that her weekly schedule was quite heinous and busy; only allocating one day a week for rest – Saturday. Her mornings always consisted of the same variety of activities. She would begin by prepping for her classes later in the day or that evening. This would usually include arranging for any extra materials, entertainment, or food needed depending on the group that she worked with that day. Taking care of any administrative tasks also fell into her morning routine. Allen would make any business calls, or write any reports or newspaper articles needed that week. As one of the permanent deaconesses, Allen was responsible for informing the public of the work that her and her staff were carrying out, and as always, make her plea for more resources and volunteers.<sup>5</sup>

Another part of her morning consisted of making canvassing calls if time allowed. This entailed going out into the community and taking an informal census of the conditions and needs of a particular area of the neighbourhood.<sup>6</sup> A common practice, canvassing the neighbourhood was required to fully understand the needs of the community, and to locate and isolate the more desperate cases in the North End.<sup>7</sup> (See Figure 9) This practice was carried out by the deaconesses during the day, to be able to interact with the inhabitants of the tenements, but was made at night by municipal health officials who were trying to get an accurate count of the number of people actually

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<sup>4</sup> While the document accounting the weekly schedule was published anonymously, other documents indicate that Miss Agnes Allen was at that period responsible for the Deaconess work among the adult population. See Woodworth, "Our Deaconesses at All Peoples' Mission, Winnipeg" *The Christ*, November 20, 1907.

<sup>5</sup> Anon. "All Peoples' Mission," *The Christian Guardian*, November 18, 1908. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>6</sup> Anon. "All Peoples' Mission," *The Christian Guardian*, November 18, 1908.

<sup>7</sup> Woodworth, "Reaching the Foreigners," *The Missionary Outlook*, March 1909, p. 54. Woodworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

inhabiting the small rooms. Miss Allen made well over 120 house calls in one month.<sup>8</sup> Combined, these results provided a fairly accurate and disturbing portrait of life in the tenement district.



(Figure 9 - A Deaconess making a canvassing call)

Monday afternoon was spent going into the parish and making sick calls.<sup>9</sup> This represented some of the most disturbing work done by Miss Allen because it put her in close contact with conditions where "...light, cleanliness, good food, [and] reserve, are practically out of the question."<sup>10</sup> Crowded tenements usually provided their residents with only one lavatory and one water tap, frequently in the same room. This had the obvious result in promoting illness and disease, tuberculosis being one of the common afflictions, but not the only health problem<sup>11</sup>. In 1909 an epidemic of measles swept through the tenement district in November and December.<sup>12</sup> Other diseases abounded, but the most common health problem remained issues of malnutrition and lack of proper

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<sup>8</sup> Woodsworth, "Our Deaconesses at All Peoples' Mission, Winnipeg," *The Christ*, November 20, 1907. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>9</sup> Anon. "All Peoples' Mission," *The Christian Guardian*, November 18, 1908.

<sup>10</sup> East, "A Kindergarten Pilgrimage," *The Christian Guardian*, April 3, 1908, p.8-9. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>11</sup> J. A. "Foreigners and Overcrowding," *The Free Press*, May 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>12</sup> Mason, "All Peoples' Mission, Winnipeg: Kindergarten Annual Report of Miss L. S. Masson," *The Christian Guardian*, September 22, 1909. (WS102)

care. One visit to a tenement room revealed that a husband had not sought proper medical attention for his wife when she fell ill. The mother passed away despite being taken to the hospital by the deaconess, and the father was left with four children. Among these children “the eldest girl, nine years old, kept the place, looked after the other three children, and kept a boarder!”<sup>13</sup>

Miss Allen, after completing her rounds all afternoon, would head to the Burrow Branch of All Peoples’ to hold Night School.<sup>14</sup> These classes targeted young men who were too old to join the kindergarten or Boys Club’s and needed an opportunity to learn not only English, but the important lessons of how to survive in their new home.<sup>15</sup> They boasted an average attendance of 100 men over the three nights.<sup>16</sup> The goal of these programmes was to “break down prejudices and establish friendly relations” with the young men, in the hopes of gaining access to their hearts and minds.<sup>17</sup> These classes, however, were reduced, and eventually eliminated as the municipality increased their own programmes, All Peoples’ then shifted its focus to other areas of need.<sup>18</sup> Every night Miss Allen would return to her place of residence, the Deaconesses House, just south of the CPR station outside of the deplorable conditions of the North End.

Tuesday mornings were spent as usual, and like Mondays, Allen would make parish and sick calls through the neighbourhood. In the evenings she held a Mothers’ Meeting at the Stella Branch.<sup>19</sup> Here the deaconesses were able to train and educate the

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<sup>13</sup> Anon. “Incidents of All Peoples’ Mission, Winnipeg,” n.d. [c. 1908]. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>14</sup> Anon. “All Peoples’ Mission,” *The Christian Guardian*, November 18, 1908. (WS068)

<sup>15</sup> Woodsworth, “Reaching the Foreigners,” *The Missionary Outlook*, March 1909, p. 54. (WS088)

<sup>16</sup> Anon., “Methodist Mission Work in Winnipeg,” *Free Press*, n.d. [c. 1908]. (WS010)

<sup>17</sup> Woodsworth, “Reaching the Foreigners,” *The Missionary Outlook*, March 1909, p. 55.

<sup>18</sup> Anon., “Methodist Mission Work in Winnipeg,” *Free Press*, n.d. [c. 1908].

<sup>19</sup> Anon. “All Peoples’ Mission,” *The Christian Guardian*, November 18, 1908

young mothers of new Canadians how to take care of their children, and feed their families. The meetings would usually include 1-2 hours of sewing or other domestic work, followed by a prayer reading. For this the meeting would break into three or four smaller groups, by nationality, and would study a bible passage in their mother tongue. After this, the groups would reunite for a social hour when the girls from the kitchen classes would bring food out and set it up on tables with linens. The girls were always dressed in respectable clothes, provided by the mission, and the food was displayed in a traditional high-tea manner in order to impress upon these mothers the importance of middle-class civility, Allen commenting “We are sure that the dainty table and the clean little waitresses who served the lunch in such an orderly fashion have made an impression on these women – to many of whom refinement is quite unknown.”<sup>20</sup> Here the aim was not only to alleviate the suffering of the mothers’ and their families, but also to create good British-Canadian citizens. Although religion took a back seat, Allen still included strong religious elements in her programming as she clearly equated her Christianity with her national identity.

Wednesday afternoons were spent at the Stella Branch working among the English minority.<sup>21</sup> This Women’s Club was reserved for English speakers as they had been discouraged from attending many of the other clubs and classes in order to free up as much room in them to allow the immigrants to participate, providing them with more opportunities to come into contact with English-Protestants. The Women’s Club at the Stella Branch focused on educating women and providing them with resources that would enable them to become more moral citizens. The Women’s Institute ran this club

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<sup>20</sup> Allen, “All Peoples’ Mission, Winnipeg,” *The Christian Guardian*, April 8, 1908.

<sup>21</sup> Anon. “All Peoples’ Mission,” *The Christian Guardian*, November 18, 1908.

and it was modeled along similar lines. While less developed than other programmes, this club enabled the deaconesses to reach almost every ethnic community in the North End, and ensure that all those in need were being provided for. Wednesday evenings were spent at the Burrows Branch instructing the Night School that was held three times a week.

The Maple Branch is where Miss Allen spent her Thursday afternoons instructing some more Women's meetings for English speakers.<sup>22</sup> These were not modeled after the Women's Institute format, and consisted of somewhat less regimented activities, usually providing services and aid, but with no rigid class structure. The meetings were designed to impart information more than any moralizing activity, and also to engage these poor, English speakers in socializing to uplift their character.

Prayer meetings were held on Thursday evenings at the Stella branch, and Miss Allen always attended.<sup>23</sup> The prayer meetings betrayed the secular overtones that Woodsworth championed, but represented the differing beliefs in what exactly the mission was there for. While Woodsworth was given a free hand to revitalize the mission it remained a Methodist Institution. While many of the volunteers and staff represented the various religious denominations of Winnipeg, All Peoples' Mission still was considered "...a means by which the Methodism of the city may come into touch with the foreign element."<sup>24</sup> The prayer meetings were an opportunity to get rid of the superstition and backward thinking of Catholicism and replace it with the moral,

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Anon., "Methodist Mission Work in Winnipeg," *Free Press*, n.d. [c. 1908].

righteous, and free Protestant religion.<sup>25</sup> Samuel East, a worker at All Peoples' and a prominent figure in Winnipeg commented that Catholicism is like "...the deep darkness of spiritual night" and that the Catholic traditions are hindering his work in creating good Canadians.<sup>26</sup>

The final day of the 'work week' consisted of a Women's Meeting at Burrows Branch that was only open to Ruthenian and Polish women.<sup>27</sup> Being two of the largest communities in the area, these nationalities required a lot of resources to not only break down the language barrier, but also the religious one. It was believed that Catholicism was making their transition to a new life in Canada more difficult because the deaconesses, unable to speak the language, believed that the catholic priests were translating information improperly to the Ruthenian and Polish population, trying to scare them away from accepting any medical or social aid coming not only from the Protestant missions, but also the hospitals and municipal services. Whether this fear is true or not remains debatable, however, All Peoples' did rely on Miss Kochella on more than one occasion to translate medical information to scared Catholics who had been told by their priests that the doctors would harm them. After Miss Allen's Women's Meeting, she would walk to the Burrows Branch for her final evening of teaching Night School for the week.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Anon. "Sunday Services: Tell of Mission Work," *The Free Press*, April 8, 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>26</sup> East, "All Peoples' Mission and Its Work," in *The Christian Guardian*, March 11, 1908, p. 11.

<sup>27</sup> Anon. "All Peoples' Mission," *The Christian Guardian*, November 18, 1908.

<sup>28</sup> Anon. "All Peoples' Mission," *The Christian Guardian*, November 18, 1908.

A restful Saturday quickly gave way to a busy Sunday, when Miss Allen would attend her own parish Church uptown for Sunday service, then return to the Burrows Branch to run the Sunday School there among the children.

Sunday evenings of almost all deaconesses, staff and all volunteers were spent at the Stella Branch. Here is where many of the evening's activities transpired among the whole community of the North End, frequently reaching capacity and forcing people to stand or sit during the presentations and discussions. These Sunday evenings included cultural as well as some religious activities, and were focused on sharing the differences between the communities. The deaconesses would sometimes prepare with their kindergarten classes or Boys and Girls Clubs different performances or bible readings to show the progress of their classes to the membership at All Peoples'. These activities would later become reorganized by J. S. Woodsworth in 1910 into the Citizen's Forum, first held at the Opera House on Sunday October 2.<sup>29</sup>

Miss Wilberta Hart worked primarily at the Institute running the Industrial classes, that were well organized and boasted an average attendance of 100.<sup>30</sup> In her first act as the newest deaconess, Miss Hart canvassed the neighbourhood and visited a total of 469 homes.<sup>31</sup> She ran two Girls Clubs at the new Institute every Sunday morning. Her clubs reached an average of 66 girls per week, gaining an entrée into

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<sup>29</sup> "All Peoples' Mission," *North Ender*, Sept. 29, 1910.

<sup>30</sup> Hart and Tonkin, "Notes From All Peoples', Winnipeg," *The Missionary Outlook*, February 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>31</sup> Woodsworth, "Reaching the Foreigners," *The Missionary Outlook*, March 1909, p. 54. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

many homes in the North End.<sup>32</sup> Hart exemplified the hard-working character of the workers at All Peoples’.

As Miss Hart became more experienced she took over the responsibility of running the sewing and cooking school. She enacted two small reforms to attempt to mitigate the costs of running the programme, and instil in the girls a sense of responsibility and civic duty. The first being a 5 cent charge to participate in the sewing club. It was hoped that this would prevent any girls from just taking advantage of the programme, and partially or completely cover the costs of the materials for the classes. The second measure that Hart enforced was mandatory sewing projects dedicated to the benefit of others in the community; those that needed clothing or other goods. It was hoped that this would create a sense of civic responsibility in the girls, and would also provide more clothing and supplies to be distributed to those who needed them in the neighbouring district.<sup>33</sup> Hart strongly believed in training these newly arrived immigrants to be responsible Canadian citizens who would go on to raise the next generation of good Canadians. Here Miss Hart’s motivations appear to be primarily in line with those of J. S. Woodsworth – service to the people was far more important than service to God and their denominational beliefs.

L. S. Mason, the Kindergarten directress of the Mission,<sup>34</sup> was another very active woman at All Peoples’ and represented a decidedly more religious understanding of service at the mission. Rose commented that Miss Mason “belongs to the company of

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<sup>32</sup> Hart and Tonkin, “Notes From All Peoples’, Winnipeg,” *The Missionary Outlook*, February 1909.

<sup>33</sup> Tonkin and Hart, “Latest Tidings From Subjects for Prayer and Study for May: ‘Strangers Within Our Gates’,” *The Missionary Outlook*, May 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>34</sup> East, “A Kindergarten Pilgrimage,” *The Christian Guardian*, April 3, 1908, p.8-9. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

universal mothers, whose large hearts find room for any whose need cries out for sympathy and help.”<sup>35</sup> Rose is drawing a connection to the idea that these women were ideally suited to this work because of their maternalistic instincts.

The challenge of Miss Mason’s work always came when she first began a new Kindergarten class and had to seek out new pupils. This was initially accomplished with the help of other volunteers, and followed a similar pattern to canvassing. Miss Mason would trek through Point Douglas looking in each home for children who were school aged. A systematic approach to canvassing was the only way to ensure that all of the children who should be in kindergarten, would be in kindergarten as there were no compulsory education laws at this time in Manitoba. This meant moving from house-to-house inspecting each room within. Once she had made contact with the children and explained to their parents what the kindergarten programme offered, Mason noted that the mothers were more than willing to have their children attend, and in many cases found that the mothers were so eager that they would volunteer to help clean and maintain the facilities.<sup>36</sup>

Miss Mason’s kindergarten classes had an enrolment of 115 children. The most important part of the work among these children, in the eyes of Miss Mason, was that it gave them access to their parents; an entrée into the otherwise closed off families crowded into the tenements.<sup>37</sup> By providing services to these children, the deaconesses, and the rest of the mission staff, were trying to illustrate that they could be trusted, and that even among the masses of strangers there was always one resource that could be

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<sup>35</sup> Rose, “A Kindergarten Pilgrimage,” *The Christian Guardian*, April 3, 1908.

<sup>36</sup> Woodsworth, “Reaching the Foreigners,” *The Missionary Outlook*, March 1909, p. 54.

<sup>37</sup> Anon., “Sunday Service: Tell Of Mission Work,” *Free Press*, April 8, 1909.

counted on: All Peoples' Mission.<sup>38</sup> Believing that children were most impressionable up until the age of 7, the kindergarten was the most important programme offered by the All Peoples' Mission because it would create good citizens for the rest of their lives; if these new immigrants can be reached early on, Canada has a better chance of creating good Christian citizens instead of dealing with the patchwork of 'newcomers'.<sup>39</sup>

Reporting on her work in the spring of 1908, Miss Mason lauds the accomplishments of the mission thus far, especially in the work she has been doing among the kindergarten children. She believed very strongly in converting these children to a moral and Christian temperament, and declared that "we can but say thank God that the blessed sounds of the Saviour's name is on the lips of the children as the first English they knew."<sup>40</sup> Mason's principal motivations for working with these children was not necessarily to craft the next generation of good citizens, but to ensure that these 'newcomers' were incorporated into the Christian fold; religious denominationalism played a role in Miss Mason's inspiration for service.

Furthermore, Miss Mason rejoiced with the idea that the children of All Peoples' Mission were very interested in singing the songs of Jesus and his love for them.<sup>41</sup> Miss Mason strongly believes that the mission of All Peoples' was to reach as many of those living in the North End, and to that end, championed the work among kindergarteners because it granted access to the more superstitious and cautious parents.<sup>42</sup> In this

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<sup>38</sup> Anon., "Winnipeg: Deaconess Work at All Peoples' Mission," *The Christian Guardian*, April 14, 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>39</sup> Mason, "Kindergarten work in All Peoples' Mission," *The Christian Guardian*, November 6, 1907. (WS007).

<sup>40</sup> Mason, "Among Strangers," May 1908. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>41</sup> Mason, "Among Strangers," May 1908.

<sup>42</sup> Anon. "Sunday Services: Tell of Mission Work," *The Free Press*, April 8, 1909.

context the term *superstitious* usually referred to those of Catholic faith. Not only is Mason emphasizing her religious beliefs, but she is also stressing the importance of adhering to a Protestant understanding of Christianity. Mason believed that she was helping these ‘newcomers’ to be uplifted to “higher and better things” and was encouraged by their progress, that only provided her with “greater zeal in sowing the seeds” of Christianity in the minds of these new Canadians.<sup>43</sup>

Miss Grace Tonkin dedicated her time at the All Peoples Mission to organizing classes among the children of the North End. Her main focus was on establishing programming for the young women of the neighbourhood, dedicating her time to two sewing classes;<sup>44</sup> where girls were taught the important skills that would be required for them to provide for their future families; two kindergarten classes; and one cooking school, where the young girls were taught the important skills of how to provide and support the families that they were expected to rear in their new home on the prairies<sup>45</sup>. Tonkin’s work was primarily focused on reforming these young immigrant women into Canadian women who could raise a family in a Canadian middle-class manner. These programmes offered the young women participating educational activities in home economics as well as frequent interaction with middle-class Anglo-Canadian women; it was designed to assimilate these immigrants to a Canadian way of life.

Operating primarily at the Stella Branch, Miss Tonkin headed up two Girls clubs with an enrolment of 75 young women. The girls who benefited from these activities ranged in age from 12 to 19 years of age. Representing six nationalities, Miss Tonkin

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<sup>43</sup> Mason, “All Peoples’ Mission, Winnipeg: Kindergarten Annual Report of Miss L. S. Masson,” *The Christian Guardian*, September 22, 1909.

<sup>44</sup> Woodsworth, “Our Deaconesses at All Peoples’ Mission, Winnipeg,” *The Christ*, November 20, 1907.

<sup>45</sup> Woodsworth, “Our Deaconesses at All Peoples’ Mission, Winnipeg,” *The Christ*, November 20, 1907.

was able to come into contact with an average of 45 girls per week and impart to them the knowledge and skills that they would need to build their homes in Canada.<sup>46</sup>

Average attendance at Miss Tonkin's Sunday School was 101. In her other classes, Tonkin reached 40 girls during the week at the kitchen garden and cooking classes, 32 in the Girls Club, and 65 young men at the Burrows Branch school.<sup>47</sup> While only marginally involved in Industrial classes, Miss Tonkin, did operate one programme that boasted an average weekly attendance of about 100 individuals.<sup>48</sup> However, the activity that dominated the majority of Deaconess Tonkin's time, was going directly into the community and making house calls. She primarily worked directly with those in need, within the environment that was at the time considered to be of very low moral and sanitary standards. In a two month period in 1909, Miss Tonkin visited 549 homes in the North End.<sup>49</sup> In these homes Miss Tonkin could expect to witness some of the most deplorable conditions, as well as some of the most heartbreaking stories.

Within the classes that she taught, Grace Tonkin strictly enforced a policy of discouraging English speakers and Canadians from attending in order to free up more spots for the immigrant community, who Tonkin believed required the services much more.<sup>50</sup> Miss Tonkin wanted to reach as many of the newly arrived immigrants as possible through the programmes offered at All Peoples'. She was not necessarily concerned with bettering the lives of those in need, but in reaching the 'strangers' that

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<sup>46</sup> Hart and Tonkin, "Notes From All Peoples', Winnipeg," *The Missionary Outlook*, February 1909.

<sup>47</sup> Tonkin and Hart, "Latest Tidings From Subjects for Prayer and Study for May: 'Strangers Within Our Gates'," *The Missionary Outlook*, May 1909.

<sup>48</sup> Hart and Tonkin, "Notes From All Peoples', Winnipeg," *The Missionary Outlook*, February 1909.

<sup>49</sup> Hart and Tonkin, "Notes From All Peoples', Winnipeg," *The Missionary Outlook*, February 1909.

<sup>50</sup> Tonkin and Hart, "Latest Tidings From Subjects for Prayer and Study for May: 'Strangers Within Our Gates'," *The Missionary Outlook*, May 1909.

were flooding into her city and changing the moral character of her home. Miss Tonkin was not primarily concerned with improving the conditions of those living in the North End, but was more interested in reforming the foreign element. Her sense of service developed more out of the moral panic surrounding the arrival of foreigners, rather than a desire to serve individuals in need or her denominational beliefs.

In accordance with her belief that assimilation was paramount Tonkin stated in a speech made at the Broadway Methodist Church in Winnipeg, that "...the English language and Canadian customs and ideals..." were the main focus of the educating mission at All Peoples'.<sup>51</sup> Her interpretation of what these customs entailed can be seen in her incorporation of a Gospel service at the end of the Mothers' Meetings that she ran.<sup>52</sup> (See Figure 10) Grace Tonkin's understanding of her reasons for serving those in the North End are a blend of the religious motivation of converting those strangers to Christianity, while simultaneously creating good Canadian citizens – Tonkin's interpretation of the goal of All Peoples' Mission is that it is an institution designed to create good Christian Canadians, while still placing an emphasis on nationality and not religious denomination.

The women who worked at All Peoples' represented, in general, the moderate element of the Social Gospel. They embraced their new role in industrialized society and expanded their traditional involvement in evangelism quite logically into the field of social welfare. These women did not subscribe to radical notions of social regulation,

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<sup>51</sup> Anon. "Sunday Services: Tell of Mission Work," *The Free Press*, April 8, 1909.

<sup>52</sup> Anon. "Sunday Services: Tell of Mission Work," *The Free Press*, April 8, 1909.



(Figure 10 - Mothers' Meeting)

but toiled for their own, deeply personal reasons. This role that woman held at All Peoples' was in keeping with the role that women were enjoying across the Anglo-protestant world. In fact, in Canada women played a central role in establishing the system of social settlements that slowly crept across the landscape. One in particular, an American, established the first social settlement in Canada – Sara Libby Carson should invariably be treated as the mother of social settlements in Canada.

Sara Libby Carson began to leave her mark on the Social Gospel in 1897 when she founded her first settlement house in Manhattan, Christodora House. She was attempting to fill a hole in the social aid offered to those in need. It maintained a strong evangelical tone and was an attempt by Carson to respond to the “secular failings” of the current social settlements in New York City.<sup>53</sup> Her success at this settlement got the attention of the YWCA in Toronto and she was recruited to come to Canada and help reorganize their social aid programmes. Her main objective was to replace the top-down philosophy of social aid that had dominated at the YWCA, with programming that was more geared to the needs and experiences of those working in the community. An

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<sup>53</sup> Parsons and Bellamy, p. 8.

example of this approach was her attitude to the “self-governing girls’ clubs” that she hoped would be more adaptable to the needs and demands of the membership by limiting the input the central organization held over the clubs. The programming at the YWCA was becoming more decentralized, and therefore more reliant on a well-organized leader who was aware of all the conditions instead of a missionary board that rarely saw the lived conditions of those they were attempting to help.<sup>54</sup> This was a move away from the traditional forms of Christian aid but Carson kept the religious overtones and evangelical aims. In 1902, however, the YWCA and Carson parted company over differing religious views. The YWCA attempted in that year to establish a traditional settlement house along the Bay street slums, but it failed miserably due to poor leadership and organization.<sup>55</sup>

It was at this time that Sara Libby Carson established the first social settlement in Canada. With help from her Montreal colleague, Mary Lawson Bell, Evangelia House was opened in 1902 in Toronto’s East End.<sup>56</sup> While it was the first instance of middle-class workers living side by side with the poor, it did not move very far from the evangelical traditions of the Social Gospel.<sup>57</sup> At this point, Canada had just joined the *settlement idea* when the United States had over 100 settlements and Toynbee Hall was nearly two decades old.<sup>58</sup> Evangelia House was a three storey building in one of the poorest Anglo-Protestant neighbourhoods in Toronto.<sup>59</sup> The ground floor was reserved for books, community activities and was open to all those interested. The upper floors

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<sup>54</sup> Parsons and Bellamy, p. 25-26.

<sup>55</sup> Parsons et al., p. 31.

<sup>56</sup> Parsons and Bellamy, p. 3.

<sup>57</sup> Parsons and Bellamy, p. 8

<sup>58</sup> James, “Women, The Settlement Movement...” in *Framing Our Past*, p. 223.

<sup>59</sup> James, “Reforming Reform...” in *Canadian Historical Review*, p. 66-67.

of the plant were reserved for the accommodations of those working at the House.<sup>60</sup>

Here, within the poor district, workers would get front row seats to the problems caused by capitalism, and therefore, it was hoped they would have a better grasp on the issues facing poor, urban Canadians and have a better idea how best to overcome them.<sup>61</sup>

By 1904, Evangelia House was outfitted with “...a gymnasium, library, reading-room and assembly hall.” It boasted a staff of five teachers who lived in the plant, two university educated workers, and volunteers whose numbers constantly fluctuated. Programmes included five clubs with average attendances of 50 members each. Clubs were offered to both boys and girls aged 6-14, and had extremely gendered notions of social roles.<sup>62</sup>

By 1906 Evangelia House began to develop its connections with local universities and colleges, a defining feature of the settlement house. Victoria College, Trinity College, and the Association of Graduate Nurses of Toronto all formed close connections with Carson’s work. The Association of Nurses went as far as to offer two week terms for their students to go and live at Evangelia House in order to enrich their learning and improve the lives of Evangelia’s membership.<sup>63</sup>

Funding also went through a transformation at this time as well. After the 1902 break with the YWCA funding had come from the Toronto schools affiliated with the house, private donations, and programmes run by the settlement. By 1906, philanthropists had become attracted to the idea of supporting Carson’s brand of social

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<sup>60</sup> Parsons et al., p. 26-27.

<sup>61</sup> Parsons et al., p. 27-28.

<sup>62</sup> Parsons et al., p. 27

<sup>63</sup> Parsons et al., *Neighbours*, p. 28.

aid. Edmund Boyd Osler was the chief philanthropist to Evangelia House and his increased funding necessitated a reorganization of the House; it was incorporated and a Board of directors was formed.<sup>64</sup>

Demand for the services provided by Evangelia House forced it to relocate to larger facilities in 1907. It moved into a larger gabled Victorian mansion where it could accommodate the new free clinic and a much larger gymnasium. By 1909, the expanded and reorganized Evangelia House was debt free and fully equipped to work for better living conditions among its membership.<sup>65</sup>

Evangelia House largely served as an educational facility. In one sense those being educated were the poor Anglo-Protestants who were being trained in middle-class Victorian values, while at the same time it served to train the middle-class social reformers how best to approach the problems. The main target of these programmes were women and children as they were seen to be the most vulnerable and, for the purposes of creating and continuing an Anglo-Protestant Canada, they were the most important as they represented the coming generations.<sup>66</sup> The programmes offered to the membership maintained strong moral overtones and were always divided by gender. The message that was being delivered to these members of society was that men and women had separate, clearly defined spheres.<sup>67</sup>

Evangelia House also sought to teach those preaching the Social Gospel in the ways of this new approach to social aid. Benefitting from its close ties with various

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 28-29.

<sup>66</sup> James, "Reforming Reform..." in *Canadian Historical Review*, p. 61.

<sup>67</sup> James, "Women, The Settlement Movement..." in *Framing Our Past*, p. 224.

institutions, the settlement offered reformers a chance to gain an intimate understanding of the neighbourhood and the community. It was a training ground for these individuals to understand the need for flexibility, adaptability and the need for constant innovation.<sup>68</sup> Evangelia House taught its settlers how to offer programmes that would be attractive to its membership, and the need to tailor programmes to such a diverse group. Its goal was to provide “services for the less fortunate” and to this end Evangelia House developed most of the programmes that came to typify the social settlement, prior to Woodsworth’s efforts in Winnipeg.<sup>69</sup>

In 1908, Carson left the settlement house she had founded, returning to her home in the United States. In just six years Sara Libby Carson had left an indelible mark on the Canadian social welfare system. She had brought the settlement idea from Great Britain, blended it with her own American experiences, and established the first social settlement in Canada. By the time she left Evangelia House it had a “program of clubs, classes, clinic, social events and neighbourly visiting, that set the basic pattern for all future settlements in Canada.”<sup>70</sup> Though her role in Canadian social welfare is severely glossed over by the current histories, Sara Libby Carson was definitely one of the most important women in the movement in Canada. After only six years of involvement Carson had changed the way Victorian Canadians were approaching social aid, and her imprint on Canada did not end there.

Sara Libby Carson returned to Canada in 1912 at the request of the Presbyterian Church. In 1911, the church had decided that it would establish a string of social

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<sup>68</sup> James, “Reforming Reform...” in *Canadian Historical Review*, p. 61

<sup>69</sup> Parsons et al., p. 27-28.

<sup>70</sup> Parsons et al., p. 28-29.

settlements across Canada to help cope with the increasing demand being placed on its parishes for social aid. It was decided to recruit Carson to establish the first settlement because of her unique experience; she was perfectly suited for the task.<sup>71</sup> In 1912 St. Christopher House opened in the poor and ethnically diverse neighbourhood of Kensington Market, it specifically targeted the predominantly Jewish and Italian communities.<sup>72</sup> It was located in a “cultured, middle-class Toronto home,” that featured flowers, luxurious curtains, a clean painted exterior and pictures covering most of the walls.<sup>73</sup> It was not only a place where the poor could come for a middle-class education, but also a middle-class lifestyle and values.

The programmes at St. Christopher House included 28 clubs, various recreational activities, with each club tailoring its content and activities to the age group and gender of its membership. It ran a free library that included five storytelling hours on Sundays. It offered advice on raising and caring for children to new mothers at its Well-baby clinic.<sup>74</sup> St. Christopher House came to represent a common social settlement of the era and became the blueprint and training ground for the rest of the settlements that would be established by the Presbyterian Church over the next decade.<sup>75</sup> Sara Libby Carson, a woman from the United States, had left an important mark on the Canadian Social Gospel, playing an integral role in not only bringing the *settlement idea* to Canada, but expanding it across the country. Carson is overlooked by the biographers of Woodsworth, who provide him with credit for bringing social settlements to Canada, an honour which should fall to Sara Libby Carson.

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<sup>71</sup> Parsons and Bellamy, p. 23.

<sup>72</sup> James, “Reforming Reform...” in *Canadian Historical Review*, p. 67-68.

<sup>73</sup> Parsons et al., p. 78.

<sup>74</sup> Parsons et al., p. 80.

<sup>75</sup> James, “Reforming Reform...” in *Canadian Historical Review*, p. 67-68.

The social settlement movement in Canada offered women a means by that they could be involved in the nation-building process. Carson, and those women working at All Peoples' Mission, played an important role in the development of a national character and imparting these values to Canada's newest citizens. Woodsworth was not an innovator when it came to the employment of educated women in settlement work in Canada. Woodsworth's efforts in the North End, instead, represented a continuation of the ideas and values of the wider settlement movement that had been developed in Great Britain and the United States. The Canadian context was not unique, but instead represented a hybrid of philosophies common among social gospellers.

## Chapter Five – Peoples' Forum

In 1910, J. S. Woodsworth introduced one of his most lauded reforms at All Peoples' Mission: the Peoples' Forum. Its main goal was to act as a meeting place for 'newcomers' who were not attracted to traditional religious services, or saw no meaning in religious beliefs.<sup>1</sup> Historians have framed the Peoples' Forum as a revolutionary form of public theatre and community discussion that unified the diverse peoples of the North End. The format of the forum was later expanded and adapted to other Methodist institutions across Canada, and was continued by the Woodsworth Memorial Foundation after his death in 1939.<sup>2</sup> The reality of the Peoples' Forum is that it offered very little opportunity for immigrants to showcase their cultural identity, and its innovative use of moving pictures and other multimedia was in fact not the first instance of this technology at a Canadian social settlement.

The presenters at the Peoples' Forum shared several characteristics that help illuminate the true nature of the forum. They shared three things in common; they were all men, well educated, and predominantly Protestant Anglo-Saxon. These features meant that the Peoples' Forum was not as inclusive as Woodsworth's biographers would have us believe.

The first meeting of the Peoples' Forum was held on October 2, 1910 at the Grand Opera House in downtown Winnipeg, as well as other locations within the plant. It was broken into two events, an afternoon address at 3 pm and an evening full of

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<sup>1</sup> All Peoples' Mission, *North Ender*, Sept 29, 1910. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>2</sup> McMaster University, The William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections. Woodsworth Memorial Foundation Fonds, 1950-1968.

activities and entertainment at 8 pm. The afternoon meeting was opened with a speech made by J. S. Woodsworth on the goals and methods of the Peoples Forum.

Woodsworth said that “this innovation will establish the fact All Peoples’ Mission, as its name signifies, does not stand solely for one church or for one people, but is, in the fullest sense, for ‘all’. It is the friend of all and the enemy of none.”<sup>3</sup> Woodsworth also highlighted the goals of the forum as not only being a place where people could meet and listen to educational speeches, but also a place for open discussion. At the end of each lecture, Woodsworth envisioned a lively debate between attendees, addressing the issues that were raised by the lecturer. The first lecture was presented by Rev. J. L. Gordon, the pastor at Central Congregation Church, who received a private education, was born in Philadelphia but had moved to Winnipeg.<sup>4</sup> He spoke on the ‘Social Evil’ – prostitution – in Winnipeg and how it should be overcome.<sup>5</sup> He lambasted the policy of segregating the problem into districts within the city as it did nothing to improve policing and protection of those in the industry, but contributed to the isolation and stigmatization of those involved. This point was well received by the audience who largely supported Gordon’s theories.<sup>6</sup>

The evening portion of the first Peoples’ Forum consisted of many performances as well as a lecture by Mr. Riley on “The Poisoned Apple” at the Stella Ave Branch. Attendance at the first evening lecture approached 150 individuals, and a lively discussion followed.<sup>7</sup> Music was also an important part of the evening’s activities as

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<sup>3</sup> All Peoples’ Mission, *North Ender*, Sept 29, 1910.

<sup>4</sup> *Who’s Who in Western Canada, vol. 1.* ed C. W. Parker, (Vancouver: Canadian Press Association, 1911), p. 188.

<sup>5</sup> All Peoples’ Mission, *North Ender*, Sept 29, 1910.

<sup>6</sup> Peoples’ Mass Meeting, *North Ender*, n.d.

<sup>7</sup> All Peoples’ Mission, *North Ender*, Sept 29, 1910.

Woodsworth hoped the event “...was to make it as much like a social evening in the private home of cultured people as possible.”<sup>8</sup> St. John’s Band performed, with an intermission filled with socializing and discussion,<sup>9</sup> and Mr. Weidman from the Broadway Methodist Church was the soloist. The children of All Peoples’ Mission performed “Beulah Land” and “Deeds of Kindness”. At the Bethlehem Methodist Church an evening of singing and special music was arranged and closed with a social hour where those attending could not only interact with their neighbours, but the Anglo-protestant volunteers and workers who helped Woodsworth host the event.<sup>10</sup> The day’s events were a huge success, and were all very well attended.<sup>11</sup>

Woodsworth, and the “...promoters [were] anxious to provide a meeting place, where the problems of life, and the various reforms that are advocated as remedies for the ills of humanity, may be discussed.”<sup>12</sup> The focus was initially meant to be on social and economic subjects that affected the lives of all citizens of Winnipeg, but it quickly turned into a mouthpiece for the social gospellers of Winnipeg – addressing subjects which varied from food safety and the danger of maggots, to volcanoes and the evolution of the planet. The selection of speakers was made by Woodsworth in conjunction with a committee made up of previous presenters.<sup>13</sup> This in effect caused the Peoples’ Forum to become a platform for that likeminded social gospellers could voice their opinions and remedies to the social problems facing Winnipeg. Woodsworth

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<sup>8</sup> The Peoples’ Forum, c. 1911.

<sup>9</sup> Peoples’ Mass Meeting, *North Ender*, n.d.

<sup>10</sup> All Peoples’ Mission, *North Ender*, Sept 29, 1910. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>11</sup> Peoples’ Mass Meeting, *North Ender*, n.d.

<sup>12</sup> Peoples’ Forum, c. 1911

<sup>13</sup> The Peoples’ Forum, c. 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

wanted the evening discussions to be free and open, so offered little guidance but to maintain the lively debates. By allowing all to speak, he hoped that all sides of the debate would be raised,<sup>14</sup> and he remained true to his belief that “this meeting is for the people. A pleasant and profitable Sunday evening hour.”<sup>15</sup>

It was hoped that a community atmosphere would be fostered among the residents of the North End in an attempt to break down the barriers caused by the socio-cultural diversity of the neighbourhood. Resulting from this diversity it was “...essential that the people have a common meeting place where opinions can be freely expressed, and where movements could be initiated for the general welfare.”<sup>16</sup> Woodsworth believed that “it is our business to weld these peoples into one strong nation, and it would seem that the division of different languages, different religions, and different views, would constitute enough differences to make the problem a serious one.”<sup>17</sup> Not only was the Anglo-protestant population charged with assimilating these ‘newcomers,’ but also in overcoming the conflicts and feuds that these people brought from the old world.<sup>18</sup> Woodsworth hoped that the Peoples’ Forum would create a new unified Canadian identity.

J. S. Woodsworth viewed education as the best means of doing this. Education to the customs and ways of Canada was so important because “men must think right before they can vote right. These meetings at the Peoples’ Forum are being held to

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<sup>14</sup> The Peoples’ Forum, c. 1911.

<sup>15</sup> Grand Opera Meetings, c. 1910. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>16</sup> Peoples’ Forum, *North Ender*, November 24, 1910.

<sup>17</sup> The Peoples’ Forum, c. 1911

<sup>18</sup> The Peoples’ Forum, c. 1911

educate the people to their duties and responsibilities of citizenship.”<sup>19</sup> Emphasising this priority, “at these meetings addresses were given by leaders in scientific, economic, and social subjects. No prayers were offered but carefully selected hymns, hymns appealing to the patriotic sentiments, and religious (in the common interpretation of that word) only in so far as they acknowledge some great power over all, were sung, to well-known tunes.”<sup>20</sup> Religion took a back seat at the Peoples’ Forum to issues that Woodsworth viewed as more pertinent and universal. “When asked whether these meetings would be religious Mr. Woodsworth said that as far as attempting to propagate any creed was regarded as religious they would lack religion, and as far as a form of worship was considered necessary to a religious service they would not be religious, but they would be on a basis on that the ultimate religion must be, a religion broad enough to take in all men.”<sup>21</sup> Woodsworth and those who helped bring the Peoples’ Forum together articulated the more radical belief among some social gossellers that religion had lost its meaning in modern society, and must be adapted to be more inclusive and accepting.

By the end of the first season the Peoples’ Forum had become a resounding success. Boasting an average attendance of 800 people, those attending represented a cross-section of Winnipeg and included residents of all ages, nearly one third being children.<sup>22</sup> Woodsworth’s closing address, “The New Social Revolution”, addressed the role of the churches in Canada. He advocated action on the part of Canada’s religious institutions for the “general good” of all citizens, moving away from a more denominational approach to social aid. He also provided a review of all the lectures

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<sup>19</sup> The Peoples’ Forum, c. 1911

<sup>20</sup> Laurie, Lillian, Religious Men Not Working the Church, *Free Press*, May 27, 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>21</sup> Laurie, Lillian, Religious Men Not Working the Church, *Free Press*, May 27, 1911

<sup>22</sup> The Peoples’ Forum, c. 1911.

presented in the inaugural season of the Peoples' Forum, highlighting the unifying message that hard work towards the 'greater good' is what is needed in Winnipeg to solve the problems that the city was faced with. The last meeting closed with a spontaneous 'thank you' to Woodsworth by the crowd, and a call that this should be "series no. 1" of the Peoples' Forum.<sup>23</sup> It had become a success at the close of its first year.

While Woodsworth's innovation had wide appeal among the residents of the North End, criticisms were laid against it by the more conservative elements within the Church. Some Methodists believed that it did not maintain enough religious evangelism, and that it had merely become a secular activity that failed to further the interests of the Methodist Church.<sup>24</sup> It was feared by other churches that these meetings would steal attendance away from the various denominations in favour of this secular form of social interaction. However, the three groups that were primarily targeted by the Peoples' Forum were those who saw no religious significance on Sunday; Roman and Greek Catholics who had no commitments Sunday evenings; and the socialist labour element in Winnipeg, the majority of whom were Anglo-protestants<sup>25</sup> The Peoples' Forum targeted the element in Winnipeg that traditional churches were failing to appeal to, "the people who attend these meetings are not the ordinary church goers, but the

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<sup>23</sup> The New Revolution, *North Ender*, March 23, 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>24</sup> Emery, p. 94-95.

<sup>25</sup> The Peoples' Forum, c. 1911.

people who are seeking a common platform amid many creeds, and are anxious to help on any project that aims at the betterment of the people.”<sup>26</sup>

A new form of social activism was being promoted by Woodsworth at the Peoples’ Forum. One article stated that “We are living in an age of transition, and to Mr. Woodsworth has fallen the task of stating the purpose of the religious life in modern phraseology. His gospel is practical rather than theological; and economic facts and forces play a conspicuous part in his outlook in life.”<sup>27</sup> This new philosophy of social service that Woodsworth was advocating at the Peoples’ Forum was made more appealing to the crowd by the incorporation of modern media and entertainment into the lectures.

The use of modern multi-media at the Peoples’ Forum has been identified by historians as one of the key innovations that Woodsworth brought to the social settlement. Only a few months after the opening of the Peoples’ Forum Woodsworth purchased the materials necessary to include moving pictures in the lectures. In December the first film was played at the Peoples’ Forum. No admission was charged, but a collection plate was passed around to help defray the costs of the entertainment.<sup>28</sup> The films were a great draw to the Peoples Forum, one attendee stating that it was “a good place to spend the evenings.”<sup>29</sup> Most evenings now consisted of a moving picture and music as well as the normal educational lectures.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> All Peoples` Meetings, *North Ender*, Oct 20, 1910. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>27</sup> All Peoples` Meetings, *North Ender*, Oct 20, 1910.

<sup>28</sup> Peoples’ Meeting, Dec 1, 1910. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>29</sup> Grand Opera Meeting, 1910.

<sup>30</sup> The Peoples’ Sunday Meetings, c. 1911.

An attempt was made early on to present only movies that held some religious significance, but these were so poorly received that Woodsworth decided to focus on the more popular topics of industrial manufacturing and the natural environment.<sup>31</sup> During Christmas the movies played were religious in honour of the season;<sup>32</sup> however, they were quickly replaced by the more popular moving pictures that addressed how things were made, health issues, and films documenting the natural environment.<sup>33</sup> Some of the more popular films addressed issues of sanitation and the evolutions of the planet and the cosmos.<sup>34</sup> J. S. Woodsworth presented a lecture on the ills of capitalism with the aid of moving picture in that he illustrated the importance of the individual over the priorities of industrial capitalism. The film addressed the issues of housing and consumer goods.<sup>35</sup> Movies were an important innovation made by Woodsworth in an attempt to appeal to all cultural and religious denominations. It was an easy way to break through the barriers of language and religion because it appealed to all.

Entertainment did not stop with motion pictures, music and hymns were another way that Woodsworth hoped to draw in ‘newcomers’. One attendee stated that “at these meetings there was always good music, the singing of hymns, some addresses, and moving pictures.”<sup>36</sup> The music that was selected was usually secular in nature, and the hymns were selected based on their appeal to all, and not their religious significance.<sup>37</sup> The evening’s music usually included one soloist and a band or choir who performed

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<sup>31</sup> The Peoples’ Forum, c. 1911.

<sup>32</sup> Grand Opera Meeting, c. 1910.

<sup>33</sup> The Peoples’ Sunday Meeting, c. 1910. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>34</sup> Peoples’ Forum, December 7, 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>35</sup> Life Saving, *North Ender*, Dec 8, 1910. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>36</sup> The Peoples’ Forum, c. 1911.

<sup>37</sup> Laurie, Lillian, “Religious Men Not Working the Church”, *Free Press*, May 27, 1911.

music that was appropriate for all attending.<sup>38</sup> The musical performances also presented Woodsworth with the opportunity to showcase the progress being made at All Peoples' Mission; "...it was the mission that was in the limelight all the time and the programme was featured with the drills and folk songs of the different nationalities."<sup>39</sup>

Woodsworth's attempt to include cultural displays by other nationalities, however, was not as successful as historians have made it seem. Usually performances were made by other Methodist churches, notably the St. John's Band or the Broadway Orchestra.<sup>40</sup>

The multiculturalism that Woodsworth hoped would be fostered by this form of sharing did not develop, but instead the Peoples' Forum became a platform for the Methodist churches to showcase an ideal Canadian identity; one based on religious denominationalism and an Anglo-Saxon cultural identity.

The lectures that were featured at the Peoples' Forum carried clear messages about Canadian identity. There were five topics that came to dominate the discourse at the meetings; municipal issues that faced Winnipeg and how they can be overcome; scientific beliefs versus religious dogma; labour issues and how to reform capitalism; the role of the state; and notions and responsibilities of citizenship. These themes became common among lecturers because of the selection process that ensured that like-minded individuals would be showcased by the Peoples' Forum.<sup>41</sup> The message was clear; religious dogma and evangelical beliefs needed to give way to rationalism and a scientific understanding of the issues facing modern Canada.

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<sup>38</sup> The Peoples' Forum, c. 1911.

<sup>39</sup> Methodist Rally at Grace Church, *Free Press*, Jan 3, 1910. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>40</sup> "Life Saving", *North Ender*, Dec 8, 1910.

<sup>41</sup> "The Peoples' Forum", c. 1911.

Winnipeg at this time represented an excellent case study for Woodsworth and his compatriots because of its massive influx of immigrants that encouraged the growth of business and industry at an alarming pace. The industrial ills that were facing Canada as a whole were being played out on a local scale in the North End. A general call was made by the lecturers for major social reforms. A. W. Puttee, in his lecture titled “How to Socialize Winnipeg”, argued that local measures must be undertaken by the municipal government to improve living conditions in the poorest areas of Winnipeg – the government had a responsibility to improve those living in deplorable conditions, not religious institutions.<sup>42</sup> Rev. A. A. Shaw and F. A. Osborn spoke on “Winnipeg White, not Whitewashed” in that they argued that the policies dealing with segregation, prostitution, and the appalling living conditions were doing little to improve the city and actually contributed to the problems.<sup>43</sup>

In December of the second season Woodsworth secured the mayor of Winnipeg, William Sanford Evans, to address the Peoples’ Forum. Evans was born in Spencerville, Ontario in 1869, and died at Winnipeg, MN in 1949. He received an early education from public school and collegiate in Hamilton, Ontario, then moved on to Victoria University, in Cobourg, Ontario, and later Columbia University, New York City.<sup>44</sup> Evans, a journalist first in Toronto, moved to Winnipeg where he became the editor-in-chief of the *Winnipeg Telegram* from 1901-1905.<sup>45</sup> He served as mayor of Winnipeg

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<sup>42</sup> “How to Socialize Winnipeg”, c. 1910. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>43</sup> Life Saving, *North Ender*, Dec 8, 1910.

<sup>44</sup> Parker, p. 171.

<sup>45</sup> *The MacMillan Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. ed. W. Stewart Wallace, (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1978), p. 247.

from 1905-1911.<sup>46</sup> In a speech entitled “City Planning” Evans outlined the evolution of urban planning and how it could be used to improve the living conditions in Winnipeg. Developing out of concern over sanitation, urban planning included municipal regulation of rail access, street breadth, social conditions, river frontage, and property management. These measures, Evans argued, should fall under the control of Winnipeg’s citizens and not private interests. He encouraged greater action on the part of Winnipeg’s citizens, and hoped that a common project would help improve the living conditions in the North End. For his lecture Evans did not use film, but instead presented lantern slides on the beauty of Paris, and how those citizens have worked towards improving their conditions.<sup>47</sup> The message at the Peoples’ Forum regarding urban planning and overcoming local issues was clear; the citizens of Winnipeg must take the responsibility, not private companies and wealthy individuals. The city was the responsibility of its citizens at large, not the wealthiest members Winnipeg.

The second theme that became very common, and well received by those attending, was the conflict between science and religion. Stemming from the beliefs raised in the Social Gospel, Woodsworth and his co-lecturers promoted a more scientific and rational approach to understanding the world, hosting many lecturers who presented on topics contrary to religious beliefs. Astronomy and truths about cosmology were well received as it presented a view of the earth different from traditional dogma. Prof. Neil B. Maclean spoke on “Astronomical Discoveries” and traced the history of

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<sup>46</sup> *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, Bumsted, J. M. (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999), p. 78.

<sup>47</sup> “Town Planning, Dec 18, 1911”. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935).

Astronomy and human thought from Ptolemy to the modern era.<sup>48</sup> He attempted to dispel the myths surrounding cosmology that have been propagated by the churches.<sup>49</sup>

The history of the development of the earth was also raised in these lectures. Robert C. Wallace, a Presbyterian,<sup>50</sup> speaking on “The Story of the Earth” argued that the earth came into being over millennia and the natural environment only came into being several thousand years ago. Wallace was from Orkney Islands, Great Britain, and received an education from Edinburgh University (M.A. 1901, B.Sc. 1906, D.Sc. 1912) and the University of Göttingen (PhD 1909). He immigrated to Canada in 1910, and became a lecturer at the University of Manitoba on geology and mineralogy. He was appointed the president of the University of Alberta in 1928, and in 1936 became the principal of Queen’s University. He was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1921, and was its president from 1941-1942. He received honorary degrees from twenty universities in Canada, the United States and the British Isles. Published three books from 1932-1952.<sup>51</sup> Wallace’s lecture was well received as he made use of moving pictures in describing the development of the earth.<sup>52</sup>

Prof. Frank Allen, of the University of Manitoba, delivered a successful lecture on the approximate age of the earth and the evolution of human beings over the past 200,000 – 300,000 years.<sup>53</sup> Allen graduated with an MA in 1897 from the University of

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<sup>48</sup> “The Popular Astronomy”, *Free Press*, Jan 23, 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>49</sup> “Illustrated Lecture”, *Free Press*, Dec 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>50</sup> Parker, p. 373.

<sup>51</sup> Wallace, p. 869.

<sup>52</sup> “The Story of the Earth”, c. 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>53</sup> “Calculations on the Age of the Earth”, *Free Press*, Jan 8, 1912. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

New Brunswick, and then became the principal of a local grammar school. He later received a PhD in 1902 from Cornell University, where he taught physics until being appointed to the University of Manitoba in 1904.<sup>54</sup> Allen had published over 300 articles, papers, and books. In 1944 was inducted into the Royal Society of Canada.<sup>55</sup> These lectures were widely attended and produced an understanding of our natural environment that was in direct contrast to religious beliefs. These lectures proved to be very popular and brought the "...University to the people and may lead some of the sons of the people to the University."<sup>56</sup> They did much to dispel the myths propagated by religion, and illustrated the shift away from the traditional teachings of the church.

Many of the lectures included an element of criticism of religious conviction. Frank Allen outlined in his speech "Liberty," the ways in that religion has always been in conflict with logic and reason.<sup>57</sup> In a speech entitled "My Religion," Woodsworth advocated his radical break with the church. He believed that a rejection of traditional beliefs can be viewed more as an attempt to find a truer religion, more relevant to today's lived experience, than a complete rejection of religious faith. Woodsworth was advocating a new form of religious experience, "religion in the final analysis, he said, had to be based upon truth. In the past, religion, in the conflict with science, had too often been afraid of the truth. Many doctrines of the past had been based on external authority, but a progressive evolution had touched theology. The essential unity of life was coming to be understood, and the fatal dualism between the sacred and the secular

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<sup>54</sup> Wallace, p. 11.

<sup>55</sup> Bumsted, p. 5.

<sup>56</sup> "The Story of the Earth", c. 1911.

<sup>57</sup> "Liberty", c. 1910. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

was passing away.”<sup>58</sup> At the Peoples’ Forum, both Woodsworth and his compatriots were advocating a new form of religious experience that would not be based on centuries old orthodoxy, but instead on the teachings of Jesus Christ and a practical application of his philosophy.

Issues of Labour organization, reform, and legislation were also commonly raised by lecturers at the Peoples’ Forum. These speeches criticised the industrial-capitalist system, and identified ways in that the system could be modified on a local level, as well as a more general scale.

W. C. Turnock’s “The Coming Tide,” outlined the failures of the industrial world. He argued that the process of industrialization has resulted in a world system that benefits the few, and should be reformed to improve the conditions of those who work the hardest.<sup>59</sup> W. J. Bartlett, ex-president of the Trades and Labour Council, addressed the crowd on “The Battle of the Age, The Fight for Existence of the Labouring Class,” in that he argued that labouring men must work towards their own salvation. He believed that working men and their employers needed to co-operate together to ensure that the conditions were safe and sanitary.<sup>60</sup> These lectures on labour all highlighted the need for change to the system, and advocated an active role for the labouring class.

R. A. Rigg provided the clearest understanding of the conflict between the labouring class and those with capital and power. Rigg was consistently employed since

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<sup>58</sup> “Peoples’ Forum F...”, *Voice*, March 18, 1913. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>59</sup> “The Peoples’ Sunday Meetings”, c. 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>60</sup> “Direct Legislation Hope of Labouring Man”, c. 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

the age of 12. He began theological studies in the Methodist ministry in 1881, but abandoned the church in 1903 when he arrived in Canada. By 1909, he was a representative of the Bookbinders' Union. He won a seat on the Winnipeg city council in 1913, with the support of the Labour Representation Committee. He was elected representative of Winnipeg North in the provincial legislature in 1915. In 1917, he abandoned his position to join the army, where he insisted on being sent overseas. He ran in the 1917 election for Winnipeg North under the Canadian Labour Party. He was not active in the Winnipeg General Strike because he opposed the One Big Union.<sup>61</sup> In his speech entitled "The Dream of Labor," Rigg traces the evolution of the conflict between labour and capital ever since resources surpassed population. He argued that the system has been based on systemic robbery of the lower classes by the wealthy; "We are naturally ambitious to progress, but we make the progress of the few depend on the ruin of the many."<sup>62</sup> To resolve this imbalance, Rigg stated that "The ideal of the worker is co-operation – mutual helpfulness. And this scheme must be international in scope."<sup>63</sup> Not only did Rigg feel that organization on the part of labour was the goal, but that this co-operation should cut across international boundaries and be based on a common identity as labourers, not citizens of competing nations. Only after labour presented a unified front could his ideal be realized that involved "...the breaking down of class hatreds, with its fatal consequence of the best interests of the race." This ideal could be realized, argued Rigg, through peaceful means, opting for the ballot over the bullet. "It is more important to think straight than to shoot straight. Ideas are more

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<sup>61</sup> *Dictionary of Manitoba Biography*, Bumsted, J. M. (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999), p. 209-210.

<sup>62</sup> "The Dream of Labor", *North Ender*, Feb 9, 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum* (Scrapbook). LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>63</sup> "The Dream of Labor", *North Ender*, Feb 9, 1911

potent than bullets. The revolution achieved by the bullet is often temporary; that achieved by ideas permanent.”<sup>64</sup>

The call for equality was again echoed in W. W. Buchanan’s speech on the “High Cost of Living, or What Crow Said to his Mate.” He addressed the means of production and issues of fairness in the market. He argues that the problem in today’s society is that those who produce the necessities of life are greatly outnumbered by those who don’t. He states that the necessities of life can be produced by six or seven days of labour per year if the system was organized fairly. This organization he felt could be found in religious beliefs, “the main-spring of political freedom and the proper distribution of wealth was to be found in the idea of God, as the father of all, a bountiful Providence supplying freely the needs of all His children, and demanding social justice.” A religious understanding of the world would result in a fair system in that those working would reap the benefits of their labour. “He said the social problem was essentially religious and that progress toward an ideal condition would largely depend upon the religious ideals of the people.”<sup>65</sup> If the people had a solid religious understanding of the world, then a sound political science could be based on those morals. This system would be characterized by equal share in natural resources and social production. Buchanan championed a new socio-economic system based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, not on profit-driven interests.

The Peoples’ Forum hosted many speakers on the issues of Labour. The underlying feature of these speeches was a call for reform and an emphasis on

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> “The Artificial Conditions and Restrictive Laws That Are Accountable”, *Voice*, March 9, 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

cooperation. Buchannan's inclusion of religious beliefs illustrates the centrality of the Social Gospel in the labour movement's demands, and furthers the evidence that the Peoples' Forum was merely a mouthpiece for the social gossellers of Winnipeg. Lectures on the role of labour, and the means by that the system should be altered, closely related to the next common theme: the role of the state.

Since many of the lecturers were also reformers, the issues of the role of the state in modern society became a common topic. Those individuals who lectured on parliamentary reform and government involvement championed state intervention in fields as diverse as war and food safety. The commonality of the lectures rested in their call for increased government involvement in the day to day lives of its citizens, and the belief that government action should follow moral lines, not political pragmatism.

F. J. Dixon and Rev. A. G. Sinclair gave a combined address on the "Blessing of Peace" and "The Horrors of War." Dixon apprenticed in England as gardener, he moved to Winnipeg in 1903, where he trained as a draftsman and engraver. "Although a social reformer, Dixon was highly critical of socialism because collective ownership would mean tyranny over the individual, whose rights he always held to be paramount." Supported Henry George and the single tax. In 1915, Dixon was elected to the Manitoba Legislature as a labour member for Winnipeg Centre. "...His platform including direct legislation (initiative, referendum, recall), home rule for Winnipeg, women's suffrage, public ownership of public utilities, opposition to subsidies for private enterprise, and a referendum on temperance." Dixon became the first president of the Dominion Labour Party. Charged with seditious libel in 1920, for his involvement in printing an alternate strike paper after the Strike Bulletin was suppressed, he defended himself and the

charges were dropped. He was elected to the Manitoba Legislature in 1920, and became the leader of the House for the Independent Labour Party.<sup>66</sup> Rev. Sinclair was born December 31, 1875 in Victoria, N.W.T. Educated at Knox College, University of Toronto, and completed post-graduate work University of Edinburgh, Scotland. He was a Presbyterian Pastor who came to St. Andrews's Church, Winnipeg in 1909. He Spent more than three years studying abroad in London, Berlin, and Heidelberg.<sup>67</sup>

Together Dixon and Sinclair argued that governments were far too willing to spend monies on the cost of dying, rather than the cost of living. Dixon and Sinclair feared that war only served to rob a nation of a generation of its youth and talent, and that it did little to advance the nation forward. More important to the government should be the pursuance of industrial peace. While diplomatic peace did much to save lives, little effort was invested by the government in preventing deaths due to industrial accidents of poor working conditions. They believed that more people die from industrial incidents than do in war, so industrial peace should be a greater priority to the government than military peace.<sup>68</sup> Not only did the government have a moral responsibility to protect the lives of its citizen's in war, but also to protect the lives of its labouring class. Dixon and Sinclair imagine the role of the state being more involved in the lives of its citizens.

W. W. Buchannan returned to the Peoples' Forum in January 1912 to address the crowd on the "Problem of the Bar." His talk was widely attended, boasting an attendance of close to 1,000 individuals, largely due to the fact that the debate over

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<sup>66</sup> Bumsted, p. 69.

<sup>67</sup> Parker, p. 343.

<sup>68</sup> "Blessing of Peace and Horrors of War", *Free Press*, Dec 23, 1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

prohibition was coming to the forefront of popular politics. Buchanan argued that the state should not be legislating men's rights to imbibe, and that the debate surrounding prohibition had more to do with "personal liberty, vested rights, compensation, private hospitality, and constitutional powers" than with issues of public discord. Using the stereopticon, Buchanan illustrated to the gathering the lessons of industry, sobriety, and patriotism. While he believed that alcohol and the bar tempted men to drink, encouraged idleness, promoted disorder and disregard for the public sphere, he still did not think that the arguments for closing the bars in Winnipeg were justified. He also did not support the arguments of anti-prohibitionists because they were based on myths rather than rational facts.<sup>69</sup> Instead Buchanan believed that the role of the state was to take care of its citizens, not regulate their actions.

S. J. Farmer, Secretary of the Manitoba Federation For Direct Legislation and a member of the Manitoba Association for the Taxation of Land Values, spoke on the issues of land ownership and how the government should be involved in ensuring the equitable distribution of land value. In his speech "The Bible and Land Question" Farmer argued that natural resources, and the profits derived from them, belong to the people and not a privileged view. He understood that land and labour were the sole two elements that created the necessities of life, and so both should be under the supervision of our government. He advocated the application of a single tax on land values. This tax would rectify the disparities in land use by putting a tax on those who had wealth, for the benefit of those who don't. The goal of this tax, Farmer posited, would make it more

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<sup>69</sup> "Record Crowd In Forum To Hear Problem Debated", *Tribune*, Jan 29, 1912. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

affordable for the land owner to develop the land and make it useful for a greater number of people instead of profiting from the unearned increment.<sup>70</sup>

F. J. Dixon echoed Farmers' support for the single tax in his speech "The Single Tax." Dixon believes that "all wealth was produced from the land, considering land embracing all natural resources." Capital was simply wealth being applied to achieve greater wealth, but it was labour that ultimately made this possible. In this view, labour was at the heart of the system, not capital. He called for a single tax that would "...abolish all taxation upon food, clothing, and shelter. It would abolish the customs, tariffs and all taxes upon the products of business and labor. All revenue, municipal, provincial, and federal would be raised by the one tax on the land values." Capital would be taxed to serve the needs of Canada's labouring class. Dixon believed that "everyone had to use the land, and it was a fundamental principle of justice that all monies paid for the use of land should go to the people." Both Farmer and Dixon advocated a system by that the government would be instrumental in the redistribution of capital for the welfare of its citizens.

Closely linked to the theme of the role of the state was an analysis of the roles and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship. Lecturers who address the attendees on the topic of citizenship had a common call for action by the individual. In James Simpson's speech "New Citizenship" he called on Canada's citizens to use the peaceful power of the ballot to bring about social change.<sup>71</sup> He believes that every citizen has an obligation to use the ballot to affect the changes in society they want, not open conflict. While the

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<sup>70</sup> "S. J. Farmer Speaks On The Single Tax", c.1911. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>71</sup> "New Citizenship", c. 1910. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

system may be slow to change; this method will have beneficial and lasting effects.

Prof. W. F. Osborne, educated at the University of Toronto (B.A. 1893, M.A. 1901), was professor of French Language and Literature at the University of Manitoba.<sup>72</sup> He presented on “Canadian Ideals” and outlined characteristics of citizenship that he felt would be advantageous to the nation.<sup>73</sup> Frank E. Coulter, an American traveling from Portland Oregon to address the Peoples’ Forum, argued that ‘government by heart’ always overrules ‘government by head’ and that “...if trust were placed on the hearts of the common people, substantial justice has always been the result.”

At the period that these men presented their lectures there had yet to be a clearly defined sense of Canadian national identity. During this period many people still identified with their mother countries, the dominant groups being British Canadians and French Canadians. Religion also played a central role in defining individual identity. The division between Catholic and Protestant faiths was one of the most prevalent, however, distinctions were made among these groups as well as many other religions brought here with the increased immigration. While not yet fully established in the Canadian dialogue, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist faiths were all present. A clearly defined sense of Canadian national identity would develop in the following decades, however these lectures covering Canadian identity represent the nascent debate developing among thinkers in Canada.

Rev. S. G. Bland presented the most comprehensive speech on Canadian citizenship, entitled “Wanted: A National Ideal for Canada.” He received a B.A. from McGill University in 1877, and was ordained a minister in the Methodist Church in

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<sup>72</sup> Wallace, p. 633.

<sup>73</sup> “How to Socialize Winnipeg”, c. 1910.

1884. In 1927, he became a special writer for the Toronto *Daily Star* and penned several books (*The New Christianity*, 1920 and *James Henderson*, 1927).<sup>74</sup> He taught at Wesley College in Winnipeg from 1903-1917, when he was dismissed for holding and promoting unorthodox philosophies. “An influential populariser of the linkage between liberal theology and socialism, he urged a constant battle against slums, monopolies, and unearned profits. He was an exponent of Henry George’s single tax ideology and was an influential teacher of J. S. Woodsworth, William Ivens, and other social gospellers.”<sup>75</sup>

In his presentation he outlined the new national character that is coming to typify Canadians. He believed that “in the past every great people had had a national consciousness, a sense of worth and of a mission to the rest of the world” and that “...the great national need of Canada was an inspiring ideal.” Over the first fifty years of Canadian Confederation, Canada had developed into primarily an economic and geographic entity. For the first half-century of Canadian history, its citizens were unified merely by the common project and ideal of developing the natural environment into a viable nation. Other nations were defined by inspiring ideals such as the Scottish intelligence, thrift and ambition, or the French fluidity of thought, social culture, and artistic sense. Bland called for Canada to be the first nation dominated by the ideal that “...Canada for the common people, the one country since the world began where all the resources of government and all the resources that God has put into the land, shall be used intelligently and scientifically to make life good for the crowd.”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Wallace, p. 73.

<sup>75</sup> Bumsted, p. 27.

<sup>76</sup> “Proclaims A National Ideal For Canada”, *Free Press*, March 11, 1912

While older nations had their identities clearly developed over centuries, Canada needed to develop a common purpose quickly in order to prosper as a nation. He believed that this identity must come from within Canadians.<sup>77</sup> It cannot be inferred by the commonalities observed by globetrotters, but by a common perception of citizenship developed out of deep introspection and personal understanding. The Peoples' Forum presented the unique opportunity for the citizens of Winnipeg to come together and discuss openly what the Canadian ideal should be. The result of these discussions was an agreement that ideals of Canadian citizenship would be based on an amalgam of the characteristics of its members, notably the multi-cultural heritage of the population.

Henry Beattie, with extensive experience working with steamship service along the Owen Sound-Prince Arthur (Thunder Bay) Corridor. Began work with the Northwest Transportation Company, that later merged with the C.P.R. He is considered the father of the steamship services provided by C.P.R. "His name was known in every corner of the country and respected for that a man of admirable personal qualities and great business ability."<sup>78</sup> Beattie presided over a discussion of the characteristics of Canada's newcomers that was far more vocal and engaging than previous lectures. The floor was opened up to members of the various immigrant communities, who spoke on their nationality's contributions to Canadian citizenship. Herman Telke, representing the German element, believed that the German community has contributed greatly to the betterment of Canada. He closed his address by saying that "...all the nationalities represented in Canada were an enrichment of the Dominion." Joseph Bernier, an M.P.P.

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> *A Standard Dictionary of Canadian Biography Vol. 2.* eds. Roberts, Sir Charles G. D. and Arthur L. Tunnell, (Toronto: Murray Printing Company, 1938), p. 24-25.

for the French-Canadians living in St. Boniface, believed that the French presence has always been loyal to the British flag, "...let us remember that we can all unite under the great British flag, that is certainly wide enough to protect the interests, the rights, the liberties of any people wherever they may come from." While believing in retaining the language and traditions of French-Canada, Bernier still believed that the British model of government developed in Canada represented the best protection for its citizens. Speaking on behalf of the Jewish community in Winnipeg, Max Finklestein described the unifying power of the natural environment and argued that the history of Canada meant that all but the Natives were foreign to Canada, a fact that unified the diverse peoples. Louis Kon, of the Polish community, described the contribution of the Eastern Europeans to the construction of Canada's infrastructure, stating that they have "...supplied very largely the muscle of the Country."<sup>79</sup>

All the presenters were unified in their belief that their communities have contributed to the development of the nation; Canada is an amalgam of its diverse people, but these people have made Canada their home, complete with a new identity unified under the British tradition. At this meeting "Canadian-born, Englishmen, Scotchmen, French-Canadian, German, Pole and Hebrew vied one with another in sentiments of national good will, tolerance, and a desire to build up a great nation, great not only in material wealth but in intellectual and moral worth."<sup>80</sup>

One year later J. S. Woodsworth presided over another similarly themed evening where he hosted speakers from different nationalities. Woodsworth fostered a sharing of

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<sup>79</sup> "Unanimous For Peace and Goodwill", *Free Press*, Jan 2, 1912. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples' Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

<sup>80</sup> "Unanimous For Peace and Goodwill", *Free Press*, Jan 2, 1912

cultural displays and “speeches, in English, were made by representatives of the French-Canadian, the Scandinavian, the Polish, The Hebrew, the Lettish, and the English speaking peoples.” The general message of these presenters was again that their nationalities have enriched Canada, and that these communities hoped that their countrymen would give their very best to their new homes. To this end, “the different speakers gave historical sketches, descriptions of national characteristics, and appreciations of distinguished countrymen.”

Dr. F. Lachance, on behalf of the French-Canadians, reiterated Joseph Bernier’s claim that the French have always remained loyal to the British flag because individual rights and liberties were protected, enabling French-Canadians to retain their culture and identity. Lachance received an education at University of Manitoba, Winnipeg and Laval University, Montreal. After working as a House Surgeon in Montreal and France, he returned to Manitoba in 1907. He worked at the St. Boniface Hospital and Winnipeg Free Dispensary.<sup>81</sup> Lachance called for Canadians to “let Canada take from her different nationalities the rich talents and gifts they offered her. Let Canada assimilate all that was best in the older countries, their culture, their art, their ideals and aspirations. Canada was richer for her different nationalities and for her different languages.”<sup>82</sup>

Language was a difficult issue for many of the presenters as it represented one of the closest links ‘newcomers’ had to their mother country and their native identity. H. F. M. Ross, speaking for English-Canadians, argued that “...different nationalities living in Canada must unite under the dominance of the English language and become

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<sup>81</sup> Parker, p. 231.

<sup>82</sup> “Many Speakers At Peoples’ Forum”, *Free Press*, Jan 6, 1913. Woodsworth, J. S. *The Peoples’ Forum (Scrapbook)*. LAC: H2280 27 35 (1915-1917, 1929-1935)

Canadians.” In contrast, J. Jacobson of the Scandinavian community hoped that the immigrant community should assimilate to an Anglo-Protestant way of life but retain their language as a link to their past. He argued that the Scandinavian community did not arrive on the shores of Canada because of internal strife or persecution, but because of their adventurous Viking spirit, and because of this they should not be forced to give up their identity and language. Instead Scandinavians were strong workers who supported greater government involvement in education, and this character would only enhance Canada. F. Abrahamson, speaking for the Jewish population, believed that the character and identity of Canada’s citizens could not be determined at a lecture, but would only become apparent after Canada had fully developed as a nation; the dominion was still too nascent to have a meaningful national character.<sup>83</sup>

J. S. Woodsworth feared that these lectures were doing more to stress the differences among Canada’s people instead of highlighting their similarities. He believed that “...the chief object of the Peoples’ Forum was to overcome the barriers of language, race, religion, politics, and social position that separated Canada’s different nationalities.” To this end, he fostered cultural sharing and displays by the different communities at this lecture. The Lettish Choir performed at the afternoon meeting some of their folk songs and dances. However, this was the only cultural sharing event described by the sources for that day. While Woodsworth hoped to promote a multi-cultural identity, the Peoples’ Forum did little in facilitating the immigrant communities to share their cultural traditions.

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

The Peoples' Forum was a resounding success in the eyes of Woodsworth. The high attendance and popularity of the event rested on three points. First, Woodsworth organized a sophisticated advertising plan for the Forum. Ads were placed in community and local papers. Invite cards were handed out on the day of the event with the information of that evenings topic, as well as directions to the Forum. Woodsworth also distributed index cards that had the titles of coming lectures and their dates so that people could plan their attendance ahead of time. This campaign of advertising helped to make the Peoples' Forum to bring in all those that were interested and curious about the event.

Secondly, the non-religious nature of the event meant that there was no pressure on the attendees to forsake their religious beliefs. This also helped to promote the event because there was a wide range of topics that could be covered. Instead of focussing on religious dogma, the Peoples' Forum offered a diverse number of themes and topics. This closely fed into the third reason for its popularity.

Finally, the Peoples' Forum enjoyed such popularity because it offered an entertaining evening that responded to the interests of the crowd. When Woodsworth discovered that the Christian themed evenings were not being well received he altered the programme to include more of the things that the crowd was interested in, namely their new country and how their new home functioned as a society. The educational goal of the Forum remained intact, however the themes leaned towards educating newcomers on the traditions and society of Canada instead of those of the church.

While the many lecture topics identified above did not form a cohesive theme, there can be one overall message taken away from the Peoples' Forum: Canada is a diverse and accepting culture, however, it must and will be unified under a Anglo-Saxon identity. The fact that all the presenters were male alludes to a belief that society had been divided into social spheres based on gender. Their education also indicated that a traditional approach to education was the only way to advance in society. The overall theme of the Peoples' Forum was that the disparate communities in Canada had to assimilate to a narrow, nativist understanding of Canadian identity. Woodsworth belief in assimilation and integration can be clearly seen in his establishment of the Forum. It was not the cultural sharing institution that has been identified by his biographers, but another tool of assimilation. It highlighted the existing debate over segregation, assimilation and integration.

## Chapter Six – The True Ideology Of J. S. Woodsworth

There are two other sources that can help illuminate the activities and philosophies of Woodsworth during his time as superintendent; the first, published in 1909, was a cultural survey entitled *Strangers Within Our Gates*; two years later Woodsworth followed this with an manual on urban issues called *My Neighbor*. Both books were widely read and became important texts for those interested in the Social Gospel in Canada. While both texts were not entirely original, Woodsworth relied heavily on long quotes from other prominent social gospellers, they did represent an important step in a Canadian understanding of the problems that were arising from the rapid modernization and peopling of the nation.

*Strangers Within Our Gates* represented the first major examination of the newcomers to the Dominion. Woodsworth's aim was to introduce the immigrant community to Canadians and he accomplished this by identifying the cultural, racial, and religious traits of the major immigrant communities. Woodsworth examined each racial group and identified their strengths and weaknesses, both physical and cultural, and outlined how they could best benefit the nation, ranking them based on the level of assimilation Woodsworth felt was possible. His ranking clearly indicates a belief that immigrants from Northern European countries was the most sought after. He then ranked Eastern and Southern Europeans farmers as their labour was needed to develop the fertile West. The 'oriental' community, Chinese, Japanese, and Indian, were classed as a whole slightly above the African American and Native American because of the cheap wages and lower living conditions that they were willing to accept. The African American and indigenous peoples were viewed by Woodsworth as compatriots of

Canada's Immigrants because they failed to assimilate completely to a narrow Anglo-Protestant interpretation of what a Canadian should be. Woodsworth believed that "essentially non-assimilable elements are clearly detrimental to our highest national development, and hence should be vigorously excluded."<sup>1</sup>

J. S. Woodsworth identified immigration as one of the most important aspects of our national development, stating that "immigration and transportation are the two questions of great importance to Canada. From the situation, extent and character of the country, transportation must always be one of the leading factors in industrial and commercial development. But as men are greater than things, so immigration is greater than transportation."<sup>2</sup> The massive influx of newcomers, that Woodsworth believed resulted from stricter limitations on immigration in the United States, and the active recruitment policies of the Canadian government,<sup>3</sup> presented Woodsworth with a clear problem that threatened the social, economic and political advancement of Canada. "English and Russians, French and Germans, Austrians and Italians, Japanese and Hindu – a mixed multitude, they are being dumped into Canada by a kind of endless chain. They sort themselves out after a fashion, and each seeks to find a corner somewhere. But how shall we weld these heterogeneous mass into one people? That is our problem."<sup>4</sup>

Woodsworth's understanding of the effects of this wave of newcomers relied heavily on the work by Prescott F. Hall entitled *Immigration and Its Effects Upon The*

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<sup>1</sup> Woodsworth, James Shaver. *Strangers Within Our Gates*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1909), p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 201.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 203.

*United States*. From this book Woodsworth quotes four principle effects that immigration has on its native born population. The first is racial effects. While it would be entirely possible for the various races to remain distinct it is more likely that the races would mix together and form a distinct Canadian race comprised of elements of all its composite parts.<sup>5</sup> “We get the strength of the North, the beauty of the South, and the wisdom of the East”<sup>6</sup> The second effect was economic, cheap labour not only drove out the higher-priced, higher-skilled labour but also decreased the standard of living.<sup>7</sup> While labour was good for the economy, its effects on wages and living standards greatly reduced the quality of life of Canadians.

The third way that immigration affected the nation was through social implications. The influx of immigrant labour also meant a large influx of pauperism because of low wages that placed a strain on charitable institutions.<sup>8</sup> It also has an impact on the physical condition of the city, becoming the foci of epidemics, and accounting for a higher proportion of insane and sick individuals.<sup>9</sup> Illiteracy, much more common among immigrants, was another way that Immigration affected Canada, because it isolated the newcomers from the rest of the community because of the language barrier and a lack of education from their home country.<sup>10</sup> The final social impact that immigration caused was an increase in crime rates, as they composed approximately twice as many criminals, two and a half times as many insane individuals,

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 218.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 219-202.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 222.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 227.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

and three times the number of paupers on the street.<sup>11</sup> The final impact of immigration was identified as the political ramifications. As the immigrant communities settled in ‘colonies’ across the Canadian West, these enclaves would hold the balance of power and provide them with the ability to influence decision making on not only a local, but national scale. To that end Woodsworth stated that “our democratic institutions are the outcome of centuries of conflict by that to some extent we have been fitted for self-government. It is as absurd as it is dangerous to grant to every newly arrived immigrant the full privilege of citizenship. Just what qualifications should be required cannot be discussed here. The next reform should look to the restriction rather than the extension of the franchise.”<sup>12</sup>

Woodsworth, however, opted to focus on the effects that this immigration is having on Canada’s urban centres. “Already we have our foreign-quarters, ‘wards,’ ‘shacktowns,’ ‘China towns,’ ‘ghettos,’ ‘east-end,’ and ‘slum districts.’ Silently, almost unnoticed, a change is taking place. Canada is leaving the country for the city.”<sup>13</sup> This rapid pace of development and settlement has had a negative impact on Canada’s cities, “ignorance of the language, high rents, low standards of living, incompetence, drunkenness and other evils are already producing conditions as bad as are to be found in the slums of the great cities.”<sup>14</sup> Woodsworth believed that these changes were presenting a real threat to Canadian survival, he argued that the character, morality and very ideals of the nation were at stake.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 288.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 255-256.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 259.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 263.

Woodsworth also offered two main avenues that Canada should pursue in an effort to safeguard our national character. The first was increasing restrictions on immigration. These included, but were not limited to stricter selection standards,<sup>16</sup> a redesigned bonus system for encouraging desirable labour,<sup>17</sup> an increase to the degree and effectiveness of medical screenings,<sup>18</sup> and a new system for screening out prostitutes and criminals.<sup>19</sup> These measures would ideally taking place in the immigrants' home country before making the crossing, to prevent undesirables from entering Canada at the source.<sup>20</sup>

The second path that Woodsworth encouraged was assimilation. He identified six majors avenues that assimilation could be achieved. The first tool of assimilation was to scatter and fragment the foreign populations so as to prevent the formation of solid, unified communities, or 'colonies,' that could have political influence.<sup>21</sup> The second was the promotion and expansion of the public school system.<sup>22</sup> Schools not only kept children off the streets and out of mischief, but it also taught newcomers the values and ideals of Canada.<sup>23</sup> The third method, closely linked to public education, is the provision of Night Schools for the older populations to learn Canadian customs, language and culture.<sup>24</sup> Labour Unions offered access to these communities by breaking down language and national barriers, and provided for a central project that creates a

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 265.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 266.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 273.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 274.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 280.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 281.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 283.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 284.

sense of unity among this heterogeneous community.<sup>25</sup> The press also offered an opportunity to assimilate the newcomers, as this was usually the first English that they would be exposed to.<sup>26</sup> The final process of assimilation was through political clubs and organizations. The political parties in Canada discovered early on the power of the immigrant vote and organized programmes to incorporate this element into their party's strength.<sup>27</sup> It was this political power that Woodsworth felt must be overcome by Canadians to ensure the continuance of our ideals and customs, because "people emerging from serfdom, accustomed to despotism, untrained in the principles of representative government, without patriotism – such peoples are utterly unfit to be trusted with the ballot."<sup>28</sup> They represented a real threat to Canadian democracy in Woodsworth's eyes because "...the vote of one of these foreigners 'kills' the vote of the most intelligent Canadian!"<sup>29</sup>

Ultimately Woodsworth saw assimilation as a process that affected both newcomer and Canadian, it was a process that would see these immigrants accept many of our customs, but retain some of their identity and language, as a complete abandonment "...would show only weakness of character. Loyalty to the old is the best guarantee of loyalty to the new."<sup>30</sup> Woodsworth's understanding of assimilation was far closer to integration than the traditional definition. He saw a compact between newcomer and established communities which would see a blending and mixing of the best of all national characters. In Woodsworth's mind the new Canadians were faced

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 285.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 285.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 286.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 287.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 287.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 289.

with the tightrope of assimilating to the local culture while maintaining those traits and characteristics that were deemed desirable by the native-born majority.

J. S. Woodsworth closed his social analysis by presenting a challenge to the churches of Canada. Woodsworth stated that Protestant religions are faced with the difficulty of overcoming the religious diversity in order to unite and assimilate everyone to a Canadian way of life. Woodsworth saw this as a long process as “it is not possible to change in a year, or even in fifty years, the ‘*mentalite*’ of a people, especially when it is under the control of a church who does her best to prevent assimilation or any close union with other peoples.”<sup>31</sup> Protestantism in Woodsworth’s eyes needed to “...be patient, work and pray, and believe in the power of the truth and of holy lives to overthrow error and dispel darkness.”<sup>32</sup> This, and the task of overcoming the deplorable urban conditions are what Woodsworth believed that Protestant churches should focus on in the new century.

In 1911, following the success of *Stranger Within Our Gates*, Woodsworth penned a second book on social problems facing Canada. This social study of the urban conditions in Canada represented a shift away from a focus on ethnic and religious challenges, toward an understanding of the ills of capitalism and its effects on urban living and moral standards. Again, Woodsworth relied heavily on large quotations from other contemporaries making this work not entirely original, but more a textbook of the common beliefs of other social gossippers. *My Neighbor* offers a greater look into how Woodsworth understood the challenges facing Canada in the early national period, and

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 294-295.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 295.

provides a good resource on how Woodsworth organized his activities in Winnipeg at the turn of the century.

By 1911, after spending four years as superintendent at All Peoples` Mission, Woodsworth had refined his understanding of what challenges faced Canada, stating that “the large immigration to this country and the rapid growth of our cities are two of the most important developments in our Canadian national life.”<sup>33</sup> These two pressures fell directly in the hands of each citizen in Woodsworth’s eyes and were no longer the responsibility of the churches; he declared that “someone is responsible! Every unjustly-treated man, every defenceless woman, every neglected child has a neighbour somewhere. Am I that neighbour?”<sup>34</sup> As the neighbour to the less fortunate elements of the city Woodsworth felt that “not only do we need to learn who our neighbour is, but how we can help him.”<sup>35</sup> The means by that we should help those in need is what Woodsworth addressed in this monograph.

Woodsworth began in *My Neighbour* to articulate his belief in what the responsibilities of citizenship were. After working in the North End, his views shifted away from the centrality of religion, and focused instead on a civic ideal of providing aid to those in need. He stated that “... [Canadians] are more or less responsible for the welfare or degradation of our fellow citizens.”<sup>36</sup> This responsibility went far beyond simply providing social programmes in Woodsworth’s eyes and he argued that “we as individuals cannot help them as individuals. The whole system must be reckoned with –

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<sup>33</sup> Woodsworth, *My Neighbor*, p. 11.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

possibly completely changed.”<sup>37</sup> He saw this change first in the cities, the areas of Canada that were under the most pressure from the rapid settlement and modernization of the nation. He believed that “whatever the lines of future development, the importance of the city cannot well be over-estimated. It is destined to exercise a dominating influence over the whole country.”<sup>38</sup>

First, Woodsworth established that the city is more than just a geographic space. After being exposed to the diverse social, moral, and physical conditions of Winnipeg, Woodsworth began to view the city as “...a certain type of social organism, so the physical city must be considered as a whole and the various parts must be subordinate to the whole – yes, that their highest welfare is dependent on that of the whole.”<sup>39</sup> Following this belief in the collective welfare of the city, and its organic nature, Woodsworth argued that many of the developments of the city should rest in the hands of the government and not private interests. He believed that private companies who developed railway lines have given little thought to their impacts on the urban environment. For the betterment of the city, planning of railway lines and stations should rest in the hands of the municipality.<sup>40</sup> The municipality should also have sole planning authority for the operation of local transit lines. This would entail planning of adequate streetcar lines from the core to the suburbs with good quality, consistent service and fair, affordable pricing.<sup>41</sup> Woodsworth understood that the streets belonged to the citizens, and not to companies such as street rail, lighting, telephone, etc. Priority in planning of streets should go to how it will improve the conditions of its residents,

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 37-38.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 45-46.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p.54.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 54-55.

and not simply be spaces for economic exploitation by private interests. The central authority of the municipality in planning decisions would ensure that all developments would be in the best interests and welfare of its citizens.

As to the organization of the city, Woodsworth saw a greater division of wealth and resources and believed that “...almost unconsciously we have in Canada entered upon a completely new era.”<sup>42</sup> This era was marked by the rapid intensification of wealth and power in a few men who control the great business houses, railway systems and financial institutions, leaving the majority of citizens to work long hours, in deplorable conditions, for minimal wage compensation.<sup>43</sup> Woodsworth boldly stated that the conditions of the poor are “...probably worse, since at no time of that we know has the working class received a smaller portion of the goods it produced than right now.”<sup>44</sup> These conditions led to the rise in organization of this class and the increasing strength of unionism. Unions in Canada led to better working hours, standard rates of wages, and factory acts, greatly improving the conditions of the poorest residents of the city.<sup>45</sup> This organization had been a positive development for the city, and so Woodsworth foretold the commerce and financial industry facing a similar period of greater organization.<sup>46</sup> He hoped that this organization would provide for all citizens and would benefit the nation, instead of a few wealthy men.

Woodsworth did not claim that he could see all the answers to the problems facing Canada, but he did believe that the industrial strife could only be overcome

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 78-79.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 79-80.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

through six measures. First he believed that society must be organized into a cooperative effort. Instead of profits being funnelled to a privileged few, surplus would be redistributed back to the workers and to the reduction of prices on consumer goods. The next measure was a policy of public ownership. Important institutions that were already controlled by the government illustrated the early successes of state control over key industry. This policy, Woodsworth felt, needed to be extended to ensure the general welfare of all Canadians.<sup>47</sup> Thirdly Woodsworth advocated the Single Tax. He believed that the unearned increment, land value gained from municipal development,<sup>48</sup> was one of the central causes of unwise and immoral land use. To rectify this, all government revenue would be raised through one tax on property values that would make it more cost effective to develop and use the land.<sup>49</sup> The forth measure that Woodsworth advocated was more government control and involvement in the lives of Canadians. He believed that the government should be involved in legislation and supervision of the daily economic activities of its citizen's. Ultimately he argued that the capitalist system was too broken to mend, and a complete revolution of the system was needed to closely represent a socialist model. His final call to reform fell on the citizens of Canada. He believed that a spiritual renewal was needed because as long as the people of Canada were immoral and selfish a terrible system would be propagated in this country.<sup>50</sup>

It was this immorality that Woodsworth then documented. He closely examined the moral character of the home, the social and religious lives of those living in the poorest areas of Canada, and the ways in that government, philanthropy, and religious

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 191-193.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 86-87.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

institutions were dealing with the challenges. His first concern was to the conditions of the home, as this environment was where new Canadians were being raised in. An examination of family economics revealed to Woodsworth that a family cannot live on the earnings of one man working to support the household, so wives and children were forced to secure jobs. This led to the moral degradation of the home because mothers were at work, neglecting their children. The youngest suffered from malnutrition and the eldest were left without discipline and guidance, that Woodsworth believed suited them for little more than a life of crime. He argued that “it ought to be a fixed rule with social workers that such arrangements should be made as would leave the mother free to care for her home and children.”<sup>51</sup>

As for the children, Woodsworth believed that “laws providing for compulsory education and forbidding child labour ought to be enacted in every Province in Canada. Every boy and girl should have a chance in life.”<sup>52</sup> Woodsworth feared that if these children were not trained and prepared for life, they would not only lead terrible lives, but they would go on to raise families stricken with malnutrition, filthy conditions, debt, etc. He believed that “unhappy home life, infant mortality, disease, selfishness, poverty, the unmanagableness of children and their consequent evil careers, much of all this could be avoided if girls – yes, and boys – could be given a good, common-sense training in the duties of home-making.”<sup>53</sup>

Woodsworth believed that there was a moral responsibility to help these people, and improve their living and moral conditions. “The fact is that in our city life we are

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 103-104.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 107.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 110.

facing conditions that are undermining the home. So little is this understood and yet so important are the consequences...” These consequences Woodsworth hoped could be avoided by improving the services that were provided to these communities.

The social life of those living in the worst parts of the city was characterized by tradition; traditional folk dances and music from their home countries were a common form of social gathering. This kept the community close together and insulated from the Anglo-protestant population. Woodsworth stated that “among the immigrants there are many societies and clubs, some national, some political, some educational or social. These frequently give concerts, theatrical dances and play quite an important part in the life of the foreign community.”<sup>54</sup> He believed that these traditions were not all bad, and “...under proper safeguards many customs that at first glance might be condemned may be found to be a valuable addition to the variety and richness of our social life.”<sup>55</sup> While Woodsworth was not tolerant of all these traditions, he did believe that the Anglo-protestant majority had something to gain from its newest citizens. By 1911, Woodsworth was becoming less a proponent of assimilation and was seeing the value in Canada’s developing diversity.

As for the religious disposition of Canada’s poorest class, Woodsworth divided them into three categories; Protestant, Catholic and Jewish. He characterized these religious denominations by ethnicity, believing that “the home tongue often binds the immigrants closely to one another and to the church in that are conserved many of the associations of the home land.”<sup>56</sup> While the churches did hold some control over their

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 166.

congregation, "...the Church, as an organization, does not exercise the predominating influence in the lives of its members that it once did."<sup>57</sup> Woodsworth believed that it was the duty of the Protestant churches to convert and assimilate these 'newcomers' to an Anglo-protestant way of life.<sup>58</sup> But first the protestant churches were faced with the challenge of understanding the foreign element, because "...it should be borne in mind that until we do really understand the religions of these peoples we can hardly hope to influence them greatly."<sup>59</sup> Woodsworth believed that the churches were faced with the challenge of assimilation as much as the government was. Religion remained a key aspect of Woodsworth's world view, and while becoming more accepting of multiculturalism, he still advocated a narrow Anglo-protestant interpretation of Canadian identity.

The organization of the municipal government was another area that Woodsworth felt faced challenges in the modern world. He believed that the tools of municipal government were becoming more important to the everyday lives of its citizens because more and more power was being invested in the hands of municipal governments. This was viewed as a detriment to the general welfare of its citizens because power was centralized in the hands of a few private interests who had little expertise or understanding of the trials facing Canada's cities.<sup>60</sup> He believed that "of greater importance than the perfection of the machine is the character of the people who operate it."<sup>61</sup> Those in charge of the municipal governments ought to adapt and change with the needs of the city. As the urban environment was faced with mass immigration

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 159.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 169.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 165-166.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 177.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

and industrialization it was the responsibility of municipal governments, in Woodsworth's mind, to provide new services and enterprises that will contribute to the general welfare of its citizens.<sup>62</sup> Woodsworth believed that all were responsible for the welfare of their city, "unless we as Canadian citizens awake to the sense of our responsibilities and are willing to sacrifice our personal interests for the public welfare, we cannot hope to escape the disastrous experiences through that other cities have passed."<sup>63</sup>

Moving from the role of the municipality, Woodsworth itemized the various charitable institutions contributing to the welfare of Winnipeg's citizens. "There are state and municipal institutions, of all kinds; public societies for the relief of all sorts and conditions; church and private charities innumerable and with the most extensive ramifications."<sup>64</sup> Woodsworth believed that these charities needed to be organized in a meaningful way in order to avoid overlap and wasted resources.<sup>65</sup> The work done by the Associated Charities was later undertaken by Woodsworth in 1912 when he became director of the Winnipeg Associated Charities. Woodsworth's breakdown of the different forms of charitable organizations in Winnipeg left much for him to organize at the Associated Charities. This work was his first opportunity at large scale logistics, a task that he was exceptionally qualified for.

His work as Superintendent at all Peoples' Mission offered Woodsworth a social laboratory for his experiments in social reform. At the mission, Woodsworth enacted many reforms that he felt improved the general welfare of Winnipeg's citizenry. All

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 201.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 251.

Peoples' Mission was Woodsworth's response to "...the needs of the city ... calling for fresh efforts. The older institutions are gradually adapting themselves to the altered environment, and many new organizations are being created to meet the new conditions."<sup>66</sup> One innovation that Woodsworth identified with was the social settlement, "in the American cities, with their mixed population, their rapid industrial development, their corrupt politics, and the general apathy of the public, the social settlements have been one of the foremost agencies in bringing about better conditions."<sup>67</sup> All Peoples' Mission was Woodsworth's experiment in social settlements, and he transformed the Mission into a community centre that housed those working within the district itself. *My Neighbor* closes with a detailed account of Woodsworth's activities at All Peoples' Mission, providing an intimate look into the lives of its members.

Woodsworth final message was one of action. He implored the reader to take action in any form. "Begin by trying to meet the nearest need. That need reveals one still deeper and soon you reach a great social problem. Work at that and the whole field of social service opens up to you. Help effectively one man and you lift the world."<sup>68</sup> Woodsworth believed that action on the part of the individual was not to be self-motivated, but was an obligation, stating that "the majority of our citizens do not yet realize the opportunities or feel the responsibilities of citizenship."<sup>69</sup>

The church also had a role to play in this new social movement. Woodsworth thought that any work towards a better society would be temporary, "... the needs will

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 280

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 297.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 332.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 333.

remain until the community at large is dominated by the social ideal. This surely is the mission of the Church, and yet the Church itself is hardly awake to the situation, much less fitted to meet it.”<sup>70</sup> The church was faced with the challenge of regaining its central role in society, a place that they had lost with rapid modernization.<sup>71</sup> At All Peoples’ Mission Woodsworth was uniting the secular and sacred together. He retained some of his core religious beliefs while embracing this new form of social aid; the social settlement. *My Neighbor* traced the difficulties facing modern Canada. Woodsworth outlined the roots of the problem and identified the most effective ways of reforming the system. His ultimate conclusion was that a blend of religious and secular techniques – co-operation – was the best means of attaining better conditions for Canadians.

J. S. Woodsworth’s ideology during this period became clearer in the many newspaper articles he published in community papers as well as under his *nom de plume*, Pastor Newbottle. In these articles Woodsworth continued to espouse the effective work of social settlements, and a culture of action among Canada’s citizens. He called on a sense of Christian patriotism for all good thinking Christians to pledge two years social service, just as many modern countries require military service.<sup>72</sup> He believed that religious men and social workers have much in common, “...very rapidly evolution is revolutionizing society, of how the Gospel is leavening society, of the need of personal service in ministering to the needs of others, of the gradual and yet final triumph of truth and righteousness. Among social workers we find similar aims and ideas. They work toward the establishment of ideal social conditions. They believe that these must be

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 334.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 334-336.

<sup>72</sup> Woodsworth, “Two Years’ Service for God and Country – An Appeal to Christian Patriotism”, *Christian Guardian*, Sept 27, 1911.

gained step by step, that recent progress has been encouraging and that the outlook is bright.”<sup>73</sup> Social reform can only be achieved through the collective efforts of its citizens. This was central to Woodsworth’s ideology, and instrumental in how he ran All Peoples’ Mission. He believed that even though the church was losing power within society, it still had an obligation to overcome the challenges facing Canada.<sup>74</sup>

Woodsworth again articulated his beliefs in social reform on a detailed scale. Itemizing the path in six steps, Woodsworth argues that reform can be achieved if his roadmap is followed. First, temperance, thrift and increased efficiency would improve the standards of the labouring class, and provide for a more virile society. Second, Organization of labour was required to safeguard the gains made by early labour movements and push for better conditions. The third measure that Woodsworth believed could salvage the system was a legal minimum wage that would ensure a good life for labourers and so increase production in general. Forth, Woodsworth advocated for tariff reform with an aim at removing the protective tariff system, something that he believed put the tax burden on poor families who could not afford it. The next reform was to land tenure; a system that benefitted few at the expense of the poorest elements in society. The final measure that Woodsworth identified was an increase in community control. He believed that “probably it will be found that there is no satisfactory way of protecting the poor and the less able against the exploitation of the rich and the clever except public ownership, and only through community ownership can there be secured to the poor all

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<sup>73</sup> Newbottle, “Keep Cheerful,” *The Voice*. Woodsworth, J. S. *Sermons Delivered During This Period (Diaries and Notebooks)*. LAC: H2277, 11 6 (1903-1907).

<sup>74</sup> Newbottle, “Usefulness,” *The Voice*, September 25, 1909. Woodsworth, J. S. *Sermons Delivered During This Period (Diaries and Notebooks)*. LAC: H2277, 11 6 (1903-1907).

things necessary to a proper, healthful and happy human life at cost price.”<sup>75</sup> His opinions had changed little in the two years following *My Neighbor*; Woodsworth still championed a system of reform that was characterized by government intervention in the lives of Canadians.

Immigration to Canada was central to Woodsworth’s ideology as he witnessed the flow of newcomers to the West. He identified that “language is a great barrier; religion a wall of separation; social customs provocative of misunderstandings, at yet at the bottom Slav and German and Jew and Canadian have most things in common. One of our greatest needs is to get beneath the superficial differences to great, common human needs and aspirations.”<sup>76</sup> He promoted assimilation but recognized that “these people will be none the less worthy citizens because of their inability, after a few days’ journey, to forget their native land and all that hitherto they have held dear.”<sup>77</sup> Woodsworth hoped that these new Canadians would become citizens, but retain some of their traditions in order to enrich the Canadian nation.

The time that Woodsowrth spent in the North End clearly reinforced his nativist beliefs. His writings during the period are dominated with rhetoric addressing crises facing the development of Canada and not the development of the Methodist Church. While Woodsworth’s mind was dealing with ideas of social assimilation and building a strong Canadian society, it is clear that many of the other workers didn’t share this belief. While Woodsowrth was an adept Superintendent, he did not force his beliefs on

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<sup>75</sup> Woodsworth, “A Programme of Social Reform,” *Christian Guardian*, August 27, 1913.

<sup>76</sup> Woodsworth, “How to Help Our European Immigrants,” *Missionary Outlook*, July 1913.

<sup>77</sup> Woodsworth, “On Transplanting Men – Feeling After a Policy,” *Christian Guardian*, January 4, 1911, Woodsworth, J. S. *Sermons Delivered During This Period (Diaries and Notebooks)*. LAC: H2277, 11 6 (1903-1907).

others. The individual beliefs of those social gospellers who invested their time and energy in the North End indicate that this period in Canadian history was not marked by a clear shift in socio-religious beliefs, but instead was a period of gradual dissemination of new ideas and the moderate approach dominated the minds of these Canadians.

## Conclusion

The legacy of J.S. Woodsworth has been interpreted and reinterpreted over the past eighty years. It began long before his death with Olive Ziegler's account of his rise to Parliament. It was amplified by the biased, yet well respected, version portrayed by his daughter, Grace MacInnis, as well as Kenneth McNaught, and culminated in the intellectual biography of Allen Mills. The accounts of Woodsworth have created the impression of a messianic character, who represented all the hopes and ideals of the nascent Canadian political left, a man deeply inspired by his religious beliefs, but torn between dogma and his developing understanding of the place of religion.

This portrayal would have been met with disapproval from J. S. Woodsworth, as he hoped that people would follow in his footsteps, instead of glorify his actions from behind a desk. This is why he attempted to burn many of his documents, in order to prevent historians from creating a hagiography of his life. He hoped to inspire action, not more words. As Machievelli stated in his *Discourses*, "I notice that what history has to say about highly virtuous actions performed by ancient kingdoms and republics, by their kings, their generals, their citizens, their legislators, and by others who have gone to the trouble of serving their country, is rather admired than imitated." This admiration of Woodsworth by his biographers has morphed into exultation and exaggeration. The focus has moved away from historical accuracy and instead has been placed on creating a more compelling character for the period, and a more captivating story. Ziegler, McNaught, MacInnis and Mills, have all used the historical evidence to generalize about his life at All Peoples' Mission, assigning credit to Woodsworth, instead of those

working under him or those working elsewhere in Canada. Canadians who did move to action, the men and women who followed Woodsworth deserve as much praise and credit as Woodsworth's biographers have bestowed upon him.

When a sustained examination is done on the lives of those working alongside Woodsworth at All Peoples', it becomes clear that he did not micro-manage the Mission into a revolutionary organization, but instead relied on a decentralized approach to management, allowing for a diversity of approaches to handle the diversity of problems. I believe that in order to create a more compelling story of Woodsworth's life, his biographers have used the activities and efforts of those working under him as evidence that he was an innovative, altruistic leader. They have drawn parallels between his time in Winnipeg with his time in Ottawa, in order to create a story of predestination. They have said that Woodsworth toiled in the North End, working with the poor. It becomes apparent, when examining the documents left behind instead of the Annual Reports written for the Methodist Church, that Woodsworth acted primarily as an administrator, not in the trenches alongside those in need.

The theory that Woodsworth was a unifying radical of the Social Gospel Movement is betrayed by the evidence which remains. Instead, a multitude of approaches were encouraged by Woodsworth. He did not unify the opinions of those who worked under him, but rather harmonized their efforts. Woodsworth's strength at the mission did not rely on convincing those of his beliefs, but instead rested with his ability to create cooperation within the diversity. He was not the charismatic leader who reformed the Mission but was a charismatic leader who allowed those to work within

their optimal conditions, for their own reasons, but toward a common goal. He was a consensus builder, not a lightning rod of the Social Gospel Movement.

Where his ideology is more apparent was within the framework of the Peoples' Forum, an institution where Woodsworth exercised more control as head, and only permanent member, of the selection committee. While a diversity of opinions was welcomed when providing aid at the Mission, the provisions of intellectual guidance for the newcomers was held closer under Woodsworth's control. This leaves us with a more comprehensive understanding of Woodsworth's ideology that does not necessarily coincide with the beliefs of the radical Social Gospel Movement. Instead, the emphasis of these lectures indicates a more nationalist and nativist ideology.

Woodsworth did not perform his great actions of social improvement for the religiously inspired reasons of personal salvation, purported by the Social Gospel Movement, but instead on a narrow interpretation of Canadian identity which was based on a British-Canadian Protestant framework. While the biographers have portrayed Woodsworth at the cutting edge of Canada's transition from a religiously minded nation to a social welfare state, his true philosophies during this period would seem to reflect a more tumultuous intellectual journey from Methodist Minister to founder of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation. Instead of the mission being understood as an institution which forced him from his religious beliefs into the secular leftist movement, it must instead be viewed as the institution where Woodsworth developed his skills of creating compromise and cooperation among a diverse group. It is this skill which would aid him later in unifying the diverse views of the Canadian political left when creating the CCF. All Peoples' Mission was not some sort of transformative, eye

opening experience which would move Woodsworth into federal politics, but was one of many steps which took Woodsworth to the House of Commons.



(Figure 11 – A political cartoon saved by Woodsworth)

These nativist beliefs were laid out by Woodsworth in his two books, written during the period. *Strangers Within Our Gates* and *My Neighbor*, both emphasized his belief that “English and Russians, French and Germans, Austrians and Italians, Japanese and Hindu – a mixed multitude, they are being dumped into Canada by a kind of endless chain. They sort themselves out after a fashion, and each seeks to find a corner somewhere. But how shall we weld these heterogeneous mass into one people? That is our problem.”<sup>1</sup> Canada was being threatened by the massive influx of immigration, and it is this moral panic which moulded Woodsworth’s ideology during this period. He

<sup>1</sup> Woodsworth, *Strangers*, p. 203.

viewed the immigrant as a threat to his narrow understanding of the Canadian character. Woodsworth identified *his* majority as the ideal for Canada, and worked toward creating a Protestant, British Canadian nation. His ideology would continue to change as his experiences moved him across the country, however, during his time at All Peoples' Mission Woodsworth's ideology did not represent a radical Social Gospeller, instead it represented a man torn between various beliefs. Woodsworth had not clearly laid out an intellectual course for himself in Winnipeg between 1908 and 1913. He had deep personal questions about the teaching of Jesus, the role of religion in society, the identity of Canada, and the development of the nation, to only name a few. But during this period of his life, Woodsworth seemed to envisage his work as superintendent as that of a paternalistic teacher. He desired nothing more than to assimilate and incorporate the mass of newcomers into what he perceived as the Canadian nation.

Biographers of James Shaver Woodsworth have embellished and glossed over this period in his life to create a more compelling narrative. Each biographer has moulded Woodsworth's life into a story more fitting of the era in which they wrote. When examining the years 1908-1913 within a micro-historical framework the philosophies and motivations of those working at All People's Mission appears more kaleidoscopic than unified under Woodsworth. While Woodsworth's daughter, Grace MacInnis, stated that "between his coming to the Mission and his leaving it were six of the most vital and decisive years in J. S. Woodsworth's life, years which must be understood if one is to understand what came after,"<sup>2</sup> the historical evidence points to this period being one defined by gradual change, and Woodsworth's adaptation of new

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<sup>2</sup> MacInnis, *A Man to Remember*, p. 62.

and differing philosophies. All Peoples' Mission was not a watershed moment in the life of J. S. Woodsworth. His life is not the great meta-narrative of Canada's Left, as traditional interpretations have put forth. Woodsworth did not guide the Social Gospel Movement in Winnipeg during this period, but instead identified the common goals of individuals present, and crafted a co-operative institution. He acted during these years with a mind to helping people, not creating a reputation that he would eventually be elected for to represent the people of Winnipeg North in the House of Commons.

Woodsworth's actions were not motivated by a great story of predestination, but instead tell a story of a man who felt very strongly about a lot of new ideas that were becoming popularized at the time. His opportunity to work at All Peoples' Mission did not come from Woodsworth, but instead was offered to him by the Methodist Church as a means to keep him within the church's domain. He had a chance to apply the methods he had witnessed years earlier during his university days in England, and experiment with his burgeoning nativist ideology. His approach to the North End, in his writings and speeches, was that he had a mission to transform the immigrant community forced into the Canadian west; to assimilate and integrate them into a Protestant English Canada. His notions of social aid were, as with the Social Gospel, aimed at uplifting those deemed less desirable to the socio-cultural standards of the dominant community. While Woodsworth had lost much of his zeal for evangelism, his approach to Canadian identity and culture followed a similar pattern. Woodsworth applied the paradigm which he was familiar with from his time with the Church, to the social and economic system of early-national Canada. This philosophy is an example of the more moderate Social Gospel Movement. Woodsworth was not a radical reformer, but was instead an

individual who was still sifting through the differing dialogues. He examined and experimented with different approaches during this period, and his philosophical standpoint changed and adapted with it.

While traditional biographies point to these years as an important step in Woodsworth's life, his great shift from the realm of sacred to the secular sphere, the historical reality would appear to be less glamorous. He would not resign from the Methodist Church until 1915, and he would continue to experiment with different ideologies following his tenure as Superintendent. Woodsworth would later add to his resume a brief career as a social statistician, dock labourer, and promoter of the One Big Union. Woodsworth took from each profession a different view of Canada and a more vivid understanding of the socio-economic system which dictated so much of his life. He would again use his skills as a consensus builder to articulate these ideas into a seat in Parliament, and later to create a communion of leftist political interests known as the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. By 1919, when he found himself in the middle of the largest strike in Canadian history, Woodsworth was not destined to make it through the crisis, but was prepared for the situation through all his life experiences to date.

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