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THE ONTARIO WAFFLE AND THE STRUGGLE  
FOR AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST CANADA:

A STUDY IN RADICAL NATIONALISM

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*Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate  
Studies of the University of Ottawa in  
partial fulfilment of the requirements  
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## PREFACE

In mid 1969 a left-wing splinter group led by graduate student James Laxer and political economist Melville Watkins emerged from within the ranks of the New Democratic Party. This radical collection of party activists, which eventually became known as the Waffle, believed that the NDP was not responding in a forceful enough manner to the social and political imperatives which confronted Canada on the verge of the 1970s. According to the Waffle, the most critical issue of the times was American control of the Canadian economy. The pervasive nature of American investment, the left-wing faction claimed, permeated all facets of domestic society and directly threatened Canada's political independence. The Waffle believed that only government-controlled investment, full-scale nationalization of major industries and a democratic redistribution of decision-making powers could guarantee Canada's survival and lead to a more equitable and progressive society. The Waffle hoped to transform the NDP into the radical political agent which would spearhead the struggle for an independent socialist Canada.

In September of 1969 the Waffle publicly unfolded its plans for the building of the national socialist state. One month later it attempted to have its Manifesto adopted by the NDP at the party's federal convention held in Winnipeg. Although the Waffle programme was rejected by a two-thirds majority, the radical group ignited a fiery and furious debate over party principles which raged for the next three years. Following the convention the Waffle met regularly as an organized caucus,

sponsored public rallies, demonstrations and seminars, published independent policy papers and involved itself in social activities hoping to gain support for its cause inside and outside of the NDP. In April of 1971 James Laxer finished second to David Lewis for the federal leadership of the party in an election which required four ballots to determine the winner. The group attracted so much controversial publicity and caused the party establishment such consternation that its Ontario wing was threatened with expulsion in June of 1972 if it did not dismantle its structure and cease its independent activities. The Ontario Waffle voluntarily withdrew from the party and continued to pursue its goals as an extra-parliamentary movement but was eventually crushed under the weight of its own internal difficulties. Despite its brief existence the group exerted a perceptible influence on NDP policy and practices and profoundly contributed to the understanding of nationalism and socialism in Canada through its efforts at public education.

Only minimally informative accounts of the Waffle are presently available. These are contained in Ivan Avacumovic's *Socialism in Canada*, Desmond Morton's *Social Democracy in Canada*, Norman Penner's *The Canadian Left* and Bruce Wilson's unpublished Ph.D. thesis from the New School for Social Research (New York) "The New Democratic Party of Canada: An Example of a Third Party Movement." All four of these authors treat the group as an appendage of the NDP and describe its exploits only in so far as they affect the proceedings of the larger organization. In an unpublished B.A. thesis entitled "The CCF, the NDP, and the Waffle: Toward an Interpretation," Nixon Apple of Carleton University explores the independent activities of the Waffle in greater detail but remains within a political science context which examines the group in relation

to the party-movement thesis first put forward by Walter Young, in *The Anatomy of a Party: The National CCF 1932-1961*. Brief critical evaluations of the political programme of the Waffle are found in *Canadian Political Parties: Origin, Character, Impact* by Frederick C. Engelmann and Mildred A. Schwartz, *Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada* by William Christian and Colin Campbell, *Party Politics in Canada* edited by G.H. Thornburn and *Political Parties in Canada* edited by C. Winn and J. McMenemy.

The present study is the first dissertation to place the Waffle into an historical framework. This thesis explains the social and intellectual forces which created the Waffle and demonstrates how the group's response to its environment further affected the society within which it operated. Such an approach aptly reveals the manifold difficulties encountered by small movements which seek radical changes in traditional political practices. Secondary sources, government publications, periodicals and newspapers have been used extensively to describe the basis of the group's formation and its participation in public activities. The official CCF/NDP records as well as private collections, including correspondence, policy papers, directives, minutes of meetings and personal monographs have been consulted to determine the internal affairs of the group. Valuable information has also been obtained through the electronic media and oral history.

The particular nature of the Waffle was determined by the environment out of which the movement grew. The group fully embodied the radical social and political undercurrents of the 1960s. In this sense, it was a product of its generation. At the same time, it followed in the tradition of internal party dissent which had always been a

predominant feature of the New Democratic Party and its predecessor, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. Although the Waffle created the greatest schism within party ranks that the CCF/NDP had ever experienced, left-wing protest had afflicted the party since its foundation in the early 1930s. To appreciate fully the historical significance of the Waffle, a comprehensive study of the group must begin at that time.



## INTRODUCTION

### THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST TRADITION IN CANADA

All democratic societies claim to govern themselves according to the political consensus of the majority of their members. To the defenders of the liberal-democratic state, this approach to government allows the populace to function in an atmosphere of maximum political freedom and equality and a minimum of autocratic regulation. In modern society, however, a disproportionate quantity of real control inevitably falls into the hands of a small number of vested interests. This uneven distribution of decision-making powers frequently leads to the exploitation of certain sectors of the population. This in turn gives rise to popular movements which seek to ameliorate the disadvantaged conditions of the dominated factions and establish a more equitable balance of power. Such expressions of discontent frequently provoke the wrath of the ruling classes. Because parties of protest attract diverse elements of society who possess varying reasons for their dissatisfaction with the existing order, they are also faced with the problem of devising a strategy and policies which meet with the approval of a majority of their own members. The history of political protest in Canada attests to this observation and the story of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation/New Democratic Party provides a preeminent example.

In August of 1932 representatives of farm organizations, labour groups and western socialist parties met in Calgary to lay the

foundation of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (Farmer, Labour, Socialist). Although socialist parties had existed in Canada since 1902 and the western-based Progressive Party had experienced significant electoral success in the previous decade, the CCF was the first viable alternative party to become a permanent feature of the Canadian political scene. The purpose of the new movement, as outlined by the programme provisionally adopted by the Calgary conference, was "the establishment in Canada of a Co-operative Commonwealth in which the basic principle regulating production, distribution and exchange, will be the supplying of human needs instead of the making of profits."<sup>1</sup> The birth of the new political party was a direct response to the severe depression which had pervaded the early years of the 1930s. The depression led many observers to believe that capitalism had revealed its inability to provide social and financial stability and thus needed to be replaced by an alternative system. So great were the sufferings of different elements of society that individuals who formerly had little in common with one another were able to overcome serious differences in outlook and combine in an attempt to relieve their collective deprivation: "In the depression it was obvious that the several aspects of the economy were so interdependent that neither workingman nor farmer could regain prosperity unless the other did also."<sup>2</sup> This necessity of action led to "an uneasy alliance of people who ranged from communists to the most disgruntled liberals."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Calgary Programme. Reprinted in Michael S. Cross, *The Decline and Fall of a Good Idea* (Toronto, 1974), p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Dean E. McHenry, *The Third Force in Canada* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1950), p. 302.

<sup>3</sup> Michael S. Cross, Introduction to *The Decline and Fall of a Good Idea*, p. 8.

One year later in Regina, in August of 1933, the first national convention of the CCF endorsed a declaration of principles known as the Regina Manifesto. This document announced the intentions of the fledgling party to

replace the present capitalist system, with its inherent injustice and inhumanity, by a social order from which the domination and exploitation of one class by another will be eliminated, in which economic planning will supersede unregulated private enterprise and competition, and in which genuine democratic self-government, based upon economic equality will be possible..<sup>4</sup>

The Manifesto proposed a peaceful transition from an unrestricted free enterprise system to a controlled socialist state in which social and economic planning, the nationalization of financial institutions and public utilities, guarantees for agriculturalists and the extension of labour and welfare legislation would be dominating features.

The Regina Manifesto did not receive the unanimous support of all the CCFers. The left-wing faction of the party was disappointed that the statement did not advocate a more immediate and radical strategy while the more moderate section of the group was uneasy with the document's unrestrained attacks on the capitalist system and its institutions. To other CCFers, "socialism was just a general term that meant they were against the government and the existing economic system because it had reduced them to poverty."<sup>5</sup> With such diversity amongst its members, the organization would need to find its strength in the

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<sup>4</sup> Regina Manifesto. Reprinted in Cross, p. 19.

<sup>5</sup> Walter D. Young, *Democracy and Discontent* (Toronto, 1969), p. 57.

unity of its parts. In the end it was common grievances, not common ideology, that bound together the sundry elements of the new political movement.

A continuing debate between the organization's radical and moderate wings over policies and practices became a lasting characteristic of the CCF. Although all members of the party shared a common animosity to the existing state of affairs, arguments frequently arose over how best to reorganize the system. And because the organization claimed to represent the popular will of the people, an aspect of democracy which CCFers believed was an exclusive feature of their party, it was both legitimate and beneficial for the membership to be constantly monitoring and challenging policies presented by the leadership group. This political tradition is described by historian Ivan Avacumovic:

All democratic socialist parties are prone to serious differences of opinion over the tactics to be pursued in the struggle for the new society. When leaders are suspected of dragging their feet, of having little to show for their endeavours, questions, rhetorical or otherwise are raised. Alternative policies and different tactics are then examined, debated and gain<sup>6</sup> a certain amount of support.

While the democratic foundation of the CCF subjected the policies of the leadership caucus to the careful scrutiny of the general membership, the behaviour of the rank and file was similarly kept under the prudent observation of the party's leaders. Throughout the 1930s many CCFers were involved in extensive extra-parliamentary activity organizing unskilled workers and the unemployed. These exercises often brought the left wing of the CCF into contact with members of the Communist Party of

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<sup>6</sup> Ivan Avacumovic, *Socialism in Canada* (Toronto, 1978), p. 105.

Canada who were involved in similar work. Party watchdogs, believing that a too-close association with Communism would damage the public image of the CCF, frequently enacted measures designed to exorcize any such confusion from the public mind. In 1934 CCF national leader J.S. Woodsworth was forced to dissolve and reorganize the Ontario council of the party on account of its flirtations and collaboration with the Communists. Party leaders hoped that by dissociating itself from the extreme left-wing elements in society the CCF would improve upon its electoral standing, which had only amounted to seven elected Members of Parliament and nine per cent of the popular vote in the general election of 1935.

Within ten years of its first federal election the CCF almost doubled its number of supporters. The proven success of a government-controlled wartime economy and general public determination not to return to depression conditions bolstered the electoral appeal of the party. In 1943 E.B. Joliffe led the Ontario section to official opposition status and a year later Tommy Douglas and the Saskatchewan wing formed the first CCF provincial government in Canada. In the federal election of 1945 the CCF captured twenty-eight seats, an increase of twenty over the election of 1940.

Despite the party's growing popular appeal, the persistent left wing of the organization, gathering at successive biennial conventions of the CCF held throughout the 1940s, continued to criticize leadership policy for what it believed was a move away from the original socialist spirit of the Regina Manifesto. One such change, the radicals complained, was embodied in the Election Manifesto of 1944. To the distress of those CCFers who considered themselves authentic socialists, the

election programme revealed a decided de-emphasis on the principle of public ownership, a predominant element of the founding statement and the touchstone of leftist politics. "The socialization of large-scale enterprise," declared the Election Manifesto,

does not mean taking over every private business. Where private business shows no signs of becoming a monopoly, operates efficiently under decent working conditions, and does not operate to the detriment of the Canadian people, it will be given every opportunity to function, to earn a fair rate of return and to make its contribution to the public wealth:

A number of factors contributed to the modification of the original programme of the CCF. The economic boom created by the material demands of the war and its immediate aftermath allowed capitalism to recover fully from the depression, thus removing the CCF's main target of attack. Prime Minister Mackenzie King undermined the programme of the democratic socialists by proving flexible enough to implement many of the CCF's welfare proposals, such as family allowance and unemployment insurance. The development of Cold War politics, brought on by the growing polarization between the eastern and western bloc countries, discredited doctrinaire socialist movements and forced leftist-oriented parties in all parts of the western world to re-examine their founding principles. As early as 1950 prominent CCF activists such as M.J. Coldwell, the national leader, and David Lewis, the federal secretary, were calling for a revision of the policies of the party which would bring the CCF into alignment with post-war society. Referring to the original programme of the party, Lewis stated: "I respect the venerable Regina statement, but

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<sup>7</sup> Election Manifesto. Reprinted in Cross, p. 26.

it is not a sacrosanct Bible in every word and comma."<sup>8</sup> At the federal convention of 1950, National Chairman Frank Scott called for a re-interpretation of the founding principles of the party. Scott announced that the achievement of the ultimate objectives of the CCF "is not primarily dependent on the ownership of property, essential though it is to subject all forms of ownership to social controls" and "the profit motive, under proper control, is now and will be for a long time a most valuable stimulus to production...."<sup>9</sup> The vocal left-wing faction present at the convention convinced a majority of delegates to re-affirm their belief in the underlying principles of the Regina Manifesto but provisions were made to allow for policy changes in the near future. On a resolution criticizing Canada's participation in NATO and its involvement in the Korean war, however, the radicals were soundly defeated. On the outcome of this particular debate, the *Montreal Star* reported:

...there was a striking and most laudable change in the atmosphere of the CCF biennial convention just held at Vancouver. The determined purge of the party's extreme left wing has been apparently very effective.<sup>10</sup>

The worst fears of the CCF's left-wing members were realized in 1956 when a new party statement, in the form of the Winnipeg Declaration of Principles, finally emerged. This document, containing many of the ideas of David Lewis, reasserted the CCF's belief that capitalism was

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<sup>8</sup> Cited in Leo Zakuta, *A Protest Movement Becalmed* (Toronto, 1964), p. 92.

<sup>9</sup> *CCF News*, August 2 and 9, 1950. Cited in Avacumovic, p. 161.

<sup>10</sup> *Montreal Star*, 1950. Cited in Robert Chodos, Drummond Burgess and Margaret Davidson, "David: The Centre of His Party," *Last Post*, vol. 1 no. 7, April-May, 1971, p. 25.

basically immoral but revealed a willingness to work in conjunction with the free enterprise system to build a more equitable society:

The CCF has always recognized public ownership as the most effective means of breaking the stranglehold of private monopolies on the life of the nation and of facilitating the social planning necessary for economic security and advance. The CCF will, therefore, extend public ownership wherever it is necessary for the achievement of these objectives.

At the same time, the CCF also recognizes that in many fields there will be need for private enterprise which can make a useful contribution to the development of our economy. The Co-operative Commonwealth will, therefore, provide appropriate opportunities for private business,<sup>11</sup> as well as publicly-owned industry.

The CCF had once again reduced its reliance on public ownership as one of the tools to build the new society. Perhaps it was the influence of the brokerage politics of Mackenzie King, but the party now seemed to be saying: "Nationalization if necessary, but not necessarily nationalization."

In the election of 1957, the CCF, armed with its revised programme, gained two seats over its 1953 tally bringing the party's total up to twenty-five, although its share of the popular vote actually decreased. In March of 1958 the CCF parliamentary caucus was reduced to a mere eight members in the Diefenbaker landslide. This early spring disaster for the CCF added the final impetus to a move which had been underfoot for some time -- the coalition of the CCF and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) to form a new political party.

Although the Canadian Congress of Labour had endorsed the CCF as the political arm of labour in 1943 and various independent trade unions

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<sup>11</sup>Winnipeg Declaration of Principles. Reprinted in Cross, p. 31.



had affiliated with the party, an official alliance between the CCF and the CLC, which had been formed from a combination of the Trades and Labour Congress and the Canadian Congress of Labour in 1956, was a resolute and dynamic undertaking. At its conference in April of 1958 the CLC called for the creation of a new party and, in conjunction with CCF officials, plans were made to pursue the project immediately. A joint committee and a number of New Party clubs were set up to study and promote the coalition and to appeal to other "liberally-minded" individuals to join in the new alliance. The left element of the party, sceptical of the maneuver from the beginning, believed the CCF was once again sacrificing its principles in favour of electoral gains which party leaders hoped would materialize as a result of access to labour's organization, funds and membership. A group of Winnipeg leftists, led by Al Mackling, provincial chairman of the Manitoba CCF, and Howard Pawley, immediate past chairman, claimed that the over-representation of trade unionists in the new party would have a further moderating influence on official policy.<sup>12</sup> The Mackling-Pawley group was so obstreperous in its objections to the CCF-CLC coalition that Stanley Knowles, a member of the CCF leadership group and a major proponent of the new party, threatened the Winnipeg insurgents with a purge.<sup>13</sup> The provincial executives of the British Columbia and Alberta sections, where strong leftist elements existed, refused to endorse the formation of New Party clubs and the farm-oriented Saskatchewan wing expressed its

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<sup>12</sup> See Gad Horowitz, *Canadian Labour in Politics* (Toronto, 1968), pp. 219-223.

<sup>13</sup> Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 222.

intention to maintain identity with the old party. The advocates of the coalition, however, encouraged by New Party candidate Walter Pitman's victory in a 1960 by-election, overruled the objections of the leftist and other anti-union elements and proceeded undauntedly with the project.

At its founding convention in Ottawa in July of 1961, the nascent organization, christened the New Democratic Party, endorsed a programme which was more extensive and detailed than any statement the CCF had ever produced. The new policy paper called for an enormous increase in economic planning, market regulation, consumer guarantees and protection for small business. The exclusion of the principle of public ownership from the major policy proposals convinced many old-line CCFers that the new organization was not a socialist party, but simply a party of reform. One political observer described the transformation of the CCF to the NDP in the following terms:

...however moderate, the CCF had been disenchanted with the existing society, and it had sought to change the ground-rules on which that society operated; the NDP, however, accepted the fundamentals of existing society, and proposed only to make it operate somewhat more 14  
humanely and more efficiently.

As much as the new programme was a further modification of the original policies of the CCF, it did touch upon two important questions which would soon become critical issues in the eyes of the leftist group within the party -- foreign ownership and French Canada. The New Party Declaration recognized the threats to political and economic independence which accompanied foreign investment in Canada. To preserve Canadian autonomy in economic affairs, the NDP pledged to redirect corporate profits into areas best serving the national interest and

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<sup>14</sup>Michael S. Cross, Introduction, pp. 14-15.

force non-indigenous firms to abide by Canadian law and offer a greater percentage of company shares and directorships to Canadians. On the question of French Canada, the new party, cognizant of the growth of social democracy and nationalism in Quebec and hoping to make inroads into that province which the CCF had never established, recognized the existence of two nations within Canada.<sup>15</sup> The NDP promised to introduce measures which would guarantee the preservation of the French-Canadian identity within the federal system. The issues of foreign ownership and French Canada would be amplified as the 1960s matured and would partially form the criterion upon which the Waffle crisis would occur.

The left caucus of the infant movement expressed its discontent with new party formulas by backing Hazen Argue, the CCF House leader, in the party's first leadership contest. Argue's forces included disgruntled farmers, anti-union advocates, doctrinaire socialists and all others who did not fit comfortably into the new party mould. Despite Argue's popularity amongst the dissident factions, the personal charisma and electoral record of Tommy Douglas overwhelmed the majority of delegates who swept him to power by a margin of 1391 to 380. The Co-operative Commonwealth experiment, under the name New Democratic Party and the leadership of Tommy Douglas, entered its second phase.

The CCF had erupted in the early 1930s in response to an intolerable situation of economic depravity and social injustice. The party's founders had hoped to create a more humane and equitable society through

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<sup>15</sup> See Joseph Levitt, "The Federal NDP and Quebec," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, vol. 12, no. 3 (July, 1977), p. 118.

the formation of a socialist state. In the post-depression and post-war years, however, the party's leadership, despite objections from the organization's left-wing elements, found it necessary to modify continually the CCF's position on nationalization to maintain the party's electoral appeal to a society which had discovered methods of achieving social welfare and economic stability within the existing system. This continual shift in policy manifested itself in successive party programmes over the years and finally culminated in the creation of a new organization, the New Democratic Party, in 1961. But the 1960s were to pose even further complications for the new party.

The early years of the decade were characterized by a mild public shift to the left reflected by the growth of trade unionism and the expansion of social welfare measures such as health care and pension plans. Moreover, as indepth analyses of the economy gradually revealed the far-reaching effects of American investment on Canadian social and political affairs, a new interest in economic nationalism took firm hold of a number of concerned Canadians. Part of this group of emerging nationalists came to believe that only extensive public ownership of resource and manufacturing industries could repatriate the economy and guarantee Canada's political independence. On the university campuses groups of radical students were searching out methods of eliminating the undemocratic and oppressive practices of modern society and in Quebec reform-minded nationalists were calling for greater provincial control of their own affairs. These were the sentiments of the 1960s with which the NDP had to contend if it wished to remain the political expression of progressive social thought. It is within this context that the roots of the Waffle are discovered.

## CHAPTER I:

### NATIONALISM AND SOCIALISM IN THE 1960S

To suggest that the 1960s in Canada was a decade of tumultuous political debate would be only to repeat what has been said about several previous periods of the country's history. But each passing era has the right to claim to itself the particular issues which dominated political and public thought of the time and seemed most likely to determine future developments. The two predominant features of the decade of the 1960s in Canada were the Quiet Revolution of Quebec and the extent of American domination of the country's economic, political and social spheres. Although many Canadians initially believed that the Quebec situation posed a more immediate and pressing threat to the survival of the country, the question of foreign investment and influence, because it affected the political and economic autonomy of both English and French Canada, superseded the former problem and in many ways encompassed it. The two issues forced concerned Canadians to examine closely the tenets of their national identity and sovereignty as the centennial of the country approached. By the end of the decade a growing number of Canadians, French and English, desired to see their nationalism expressed in terms more tangible than EXPO 67 and a new maple-leaf flag.

Social, political and economic analyses of Canadian society conducted at the beginning of the 1960s portrayed the country, with the

exception of limited elements of French-Canadian culture, as a "miniature replica" of the United States.<sup>1</sup> The resemblance was most telling in the area of economic relations: Canada and the United States exchanged the world's greatest volume of bilateral trade and "the interaction between the two nations [had] reached an unprecedented magnitude."<sup>2</sup> Americans had more capital invested in Canada than in any other foreign country. One reason for this was that Canada had fewer restrictions on foreign investment than any other major nation in the world.<sup>3</sup> Despite the intensity of the economic association, there was absolutely no parity between the two countries:

There is literally no equivalent anywhere in the world, no economic and financial interrelationship between two national states that is so vast and so intricate. But the United States itself is so large and its interests now so ramified that it can carry on this continental activity with little awareness that a border is being crossed. By contrast, to Canadians it is the most important fact of economic life, but in it perils and prosperity are inextricably mixed. .

American capital had been present in Canada almost as early as British funds. British investment had traditionally taken the form of bond money or mortgage, commonly referred to as portfolio investment, which could be repayed or liquidated over time. Although the United

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<sup>1</sup>The term is borrowed from Kari Levitt, *Silent Surrender* (Toronto, 1970), p. 107.

<sup>2</sup>Gerald M. Craig, *The United States and Canada* (Cambridge, 1968), p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>Jacob Viner, "American Capital and the Canadian Economy," in M.H. Watkins and D.F. Forster eds., *Economics: Canada* (Toronto, 1963), p. 189.

<sup>4</sup>Craig, *The United States and Canada*, p. 6.

States had less absolute capital invested in Canada than had Great Britain in the early years of the twentieth century, American financial interests usually took the form of direct investment which provided for the ownership or control of industrial branch plants and subsidiaries. Unlike portfolio investment, direct investment does not diminish over time and eventually disappear. On the contrary, it allows for internal expansion of the original investment leading to further infiltration of the economy.

After the First World War Great Britain was forced to turn its attentions to rebuilding its own economy and the United States surpassed the mother country as the predominant external influence on Canada's economic affairs. On the surface it appeared to most Canadians that the technology and market accessibility which accompanied American investment added to the real wealth of the nation. Only a small group of intellectuals looked beyond the immediate economic gains. In 1926, an editorial in the *Canadian Forum* offered this forecast:

Accurate figures are nowhere obtainable, but there is no doubt that a large proportion of Canadian industry is owned or controlled by American capital and estimates have been made placing this percentage as high as forty or fifty per cent of the total... If this flow of capital from the United States to Canada continues at the same rate for another ten years, practically all of our manufacturing plants and the greater part of our mineral and timber limits will be owned or controlled by American capital. Under such a regime the successful Canadian will aspire to the position of branch manager of an American Corporation, while the less ambitious will become day-workers in a plant controlled by absentee owners. This picture may seem overdrawn and fantastic, but such an end is well on its way to consummation, and once American capital assumes a dominant position in our industrial life it is idle to imagine that we can retain<sup>5</sup> complete control over our political destiny.

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<sup>5</sup>Cited in Norman Penner, *The Canadian Left* (Toronto, 1977), p. 98.

The tremendous and costly damage heaped upon Great Britain and western European countries during and immediately following the Second World War pushed Canada towards closer economic association with the United States. American direct investment in Canada continued to grow at an expeditious rate, as is illustrated by the following table.

*Value of Foreign Direct Investments in  
Canada, Selected Year Ends, 1945-1962*

*(Millions of Dollars)*

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>United States</u> |
|-------------|--------------|----------------------|
| 1945        | 2,713        | 2,304                |
| 1950        | 3,975        | 3,426                |
| 1955        | 7,728        | 6,513                |
| 1958        | 10,880       | 9,045                |
| 1960        | 12,872       | 10,549               |
| 1961        | 13,737       | 11,284               |
| 1962        | 14,503       | 11,849               |

Source: Irving Brecher, *Capital Flows Between Canada and the United States* (Montreal, 1965), p. 18.

By 1959 foreign ownership, over eighty per cent of which was American, accounted for fifty-one per cent of Canadian manufacturing, sixty-three per cent of petroleum and natural gas industries and fifty-nine per cent of mining.<sup>6</sup> Increased American investment brought Canada into a continental market system dominated by the United States and lured it further and further away from the influence of Great Britain. At mid-point of the twentieth century "Canada had left one trading world forever; and, for good or ill, had committed itself irrevocably to another."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> H.I. Macdonald, "Problems for Canada in the World Economy," in Watkins and Forster, p. 174.

<sup>7</sup> Donald Creighton, *The Forked Road* (Toronto, 1976), p. 127.



The first audible voice to be raised in opposition to Canada's passive surrender of its resource and manufacturing industries to American interests belonged to a prominent chartered accountant by the name of Walter Gordon. In an article written in 1955, Gordon expressed his concern for Canadian economic independence and criticized the traditional Liberal open-door policies regarding foreign investment. A draft copy of the article was circulated amongst a handful of high-level government officials. At the request of the government representatives, Gordon withheld the piece from publication but accepted their offer to act as Chairman of the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects, a study which he had suggested in his article.<sup>8</sup> To assist him in his investigation, economists Irving Brecher and S.S. Reisman were assigned to produce a study dealing specifically with Canadian-American economic interaction.

The Brecher-Reisman report, entitled *Canada-United States Economic Relations*, asserted that the United States stood out "as the preponderant external influence shaping the course of Canada's economic affairs."<sup>9</sup> According to Brecher and Reisman, proximate Canadian-American economic relations were the inevitable result of historic and geographic determinants: "The existence of two separate nations on the North American continent would seem to be in defiance of the strong centripetal pull toward a single unit."<sup>10</sup> Basing its final assertions

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<sup>8</sup> See Walter L. Gordon, *A Political Memoir* (Toronto, 1977), pp. 59-60.

<sup>9</sup> Irving Brecher and S.S. Reisman, *Canada-United States Economic Relations*, Report Prepared for the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects (Ottawa, 1957), preface.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

partly on the information provided for it by the Brecher-Reisman study, the Gordon Commission concluded that Canada could look forward to continued prosperity as long as the economy of the United States remained stable. But to protect Canadian economic autonomy Gordon suggested that the government invoke legislation assuring Canadian ownership and control of financial institutions and encourage a greater amount of foreign capital to be placed into portfolio rather than direct investment. Gordon also recommended that foreign-owned firms be required to disclose their financial records, purchase supply materials from Canadian companies and offer more shares and high managerial positions to Canadians.

Walter Gordon could not raise much interest within the Liberal Party concerning the issue of American presence in the Canadian economy, but the leader of the Opposition, John Diefenbaker, capitalized on the lethargy of the government and led the Progressive Conservative Party to a minority victory in 1957 following a campaign which criticized the Liberal government for the enormous concessions it had extended to the American-financed Trans-Canada Pipeline Company in 1956. In the election campaign of 1958 Diefenbaker expanded upon his nationalist theme and stressed the need for Canada to resist the strong economic pull of the United States. The strength of his populist rhetoric led the Conservatives to a stupendous majority victory based upon several promises of economic adjustment, one of which was to divert fifteen per cent of Canada's trade from the United States to Great Britain. Despite Diefenbaker's pledge to replace Canada's continental dependency with traditional imperial affiliation, Canada's imports from the United States grew faster than imports from Great Britain over the next few years and outsiders significantly extended their control over Canadian enterprises.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Peter Newman, *Renegade in Power* (Toronto, 1963), p. 205.

The Conservatives remained in power, although as a minority, after the election of 1962 but were defeated the next year by the Liberal Party under the leadership of Lester Pearson which, however, also formed a minority government. The only member of Pearson's cabinet to display any solicitude over the infiltration of the Canadian economy by American capital was, not surprisingly, Walter Gordon, now Minister of Finance. In the budget of 1963 Gordon announced that Canadian equity interest in foreign-owned corporations should be no less than twenty-five per cent and that a thirty per cent takeover tax should be levied on foreign firms purchasing Canadian companies. The Canadian financial community reacted to Gordon's proposals with concentrated hostility and prominent economist and free trade advocate Harry G. Johnson called the budget "economic idiocy."<sup>12</sup> Facing criticism from many quarters, Gordon was forced to moderate his proposal of increased Canadian ownership and totally withdraw the takeover tax on the grounds that it was administratively unmanageable.<sup>13</sup>

In 1965, acting on the advice of Walter Gordon, Prime Minister Pearson called a general election. When the expected majority victory did not materialize and the Liberals had to be satisfied once again with leading a minority government, Gordon resigned from the cabinet. While out of office, he set down his nationalist ideas in a little book entitled *A Choice for Canada: Independence or Colonial Status*. In this tiny dissertation Gordon expressed concern for the survival of Canadian political sovereignty which he believed was slowly being eroded by

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<sup>12</sup> Cited in Dave Godfrey ed. with Mel Watkins, *Gordon to Watkins to You* (Toronto, 1970), p. 18.

<sup>13</sup> Craig, *The United States and Canada*, p. 266.

American direct investment. He called for a united effort from all Canadians to create an independent capitalist Canada. For Gordon, the means of production could remain in private hands as long as those hands were attached to Canadian arms. In a more radical mood than he had exhibited a decade earlier, Gordon called for a change in tax laws to encourage Canadian ownership of production, the creation of the Canada Development Corporation to regulate Canadian investment and tough new legislation to control American-owned multi-national corporations. Although Gordon sought voluntary public and corporative co-operation to aid in the achievement of his goals, he had deviated drastically from the traditional capitalist path by pointing out the necessity of governmental regulations to help keep the economy in Canadian hands.<sup>14</sup>

At mid-decade Canadian nationalists such as Walter Gordon were still small slivers in the social fabric of the country. The NDP had distinguished itself at its founding convention in 1961 as the only major political party to suggest that the government should place substantial restrictions on foreign investment. Although the CLC had occasionally issued statements in the late fifties and early sixties calling for greater Canadian control of the economy, particularly in the area of job creation, labour leaders spoke of nationalism with circumspection, not wanting to disturb their relationship with the heads of international unions located in the United States in the belief that a multi-national labour alliance was necessary to contend with a multi-national managerial hierarchy. A national poll conducted by *Maclean's* in June of 1964

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<sup>14</sup>Godfrey and Watkins, p. 22.

revealed that sixty-five per cent of Canadians favoured economic union with the United States and a surprising twenty-nine per cent approved of political union.<sup>15</sup> Members of the Canadian business elite who had prospered in their roles as managers of the branch-plant economy naturally had little objection to American investment in Canada. Other Canadian entrepreneurs were equally disinterested in measures designed to increase Canada's economic autonomy; as E.P. Taylor quipped: "Canadian nationalism: how old fashioned can you get!".<sup>16</sup> To those Canadians who were genuinely concerned about the effects of foreign investment and ownership, there still remained the question of whether the situation was reversible. In December of 1965 the *Globe and Mail* editorialized:

It is possible that we have already advanced too far along the road to economic union with the United States for turning back to be possible. They need our resources,<sup>17</sup> we want their standard of living.

Despite his inability to elicit immediate mass reaction, Walter Gordon had managed to pry open the Pandora's box of American infiltration of the Canadian economy. Out of that compartment in the latter half of the sixties would rise a variety of political views related to the question.

One of the first popular monographs on the question of American domination of Canada to appear in the mid 1960s was George Grant's

<sup>15</sup> Cited in Philip Resnick, *The Land of Cain* (Vancouver, 1977), p. 141.

<sup>16</sup> Cited in H. Milner with B.R. Lemoine, "The National Question in Canada," in Dimitrios I. Roussopoulos ed., *Canada and Radical Social Change* (Montreal, 1973), p. 186.

<sup>17</sup> Cited in Walter L. Gordon, *A Choice for Canada* (Toronto, 1966), p. x.

*Lament for a Nation.* Philosopher-theologian Grant was rigorously critical of the continental policies of the Canadian business class and successive Liberal governments whom he accused of sacrificing Canadian political autonomy in return for the material benefits of being an appendage of the American economic empire. The last expression of Canadian independence, according to Grant, had been the nationalist doctrines of John Diefenbaker; but even he had fallen under the force of the continental pull which had been so firmly established in Canada by previous ruling parties. Grant revealed a tinge of Red Toryism when he suggested that only extensive public ownership could salvage the Canadian identity; but this he quickly admitted was an impossibility in view of Canada's strongly-Americanized social and economic practices. Grant saw no other choice but to announce that Canada no longer existed as an independent nation.

No sooner had Grant announced the death of Canadian nationalism, however, than a new school of political commentators began to breathe life into the abused corpse. Left-wing reactions to Grant's pessimism appeared in the pages of *Canadian Dimension*, a nationalist journal which had begun publication in the autumn of 1963 and frequently featured articles on the ramifications of foreign investment in Canada. Representative of this new left-wing expression of nationalism were the contributions of political scientist Gad Horowitz. Horowitz shared Grant's disenchantment with Canada's drift into the American empire, but, unlike the philosopher, insisted that socialism provided a realistic answer to the problem. Horowitz claimed that the Canadian political tradition provided a strong base upon which nationalism and socialism

could develop simultaneously.<sup>18</sup>

In a subsequent issue of *Canadian Dimension*, a letter to the editor written by historian Ramsay Cook, who had previously declared his anti-nationalism through a series of historical essays,<sup>19</sup> challenged Horowitz's suggestion of the connection between nationalism and socialism. Cook's letter was characteristic of traditional intellectual thought which espoused that socialism should eschew nationalism because of the imperialistic and militaristic overtones of the latter. In Cook's opinion, Horowitz's advice that socialists should become nationalists was "bad tactically, and disastrous philosophically." According to Cook, "socialists . . . must always give precedence to the human, social, and economic over the national explanation of difficulties."<sup>20</sup>

Considered collectively, the ideas of Gordon, Grant, Horowitz and Cook provide an interesting overview of the emerging varieties of the new Canadian nationalism of the 1960s. Gordon, the Liberal-nationalist, believed that the Canadian identity could be preserved through government-sponsored initiatives and public pressure which would lead to a shifting of the Canadian economy out of private American hands into private Canadian hands without a disruption of the free market system. Grant, the Tory-nationalist, believed that successive Liberal governments and the Canadian business elite had jointly sacrificed the Canadian economy

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<sup>18</sup> Gad Horowitz, "Tories, Socialists and the Demise of Canada," *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 2, no. 4 May-June, 1965. See also Horowitz, *Canadian Labour in Politics*, Chapter 1.

<sup>19</sup> See Ramsay Cook, *The Maple Leaf Forever* (Toronto, 1971).

<sup>20</sup> Ramsay Cook, *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 2, no. 5, July-August, 1965, p. 31.

and therefore only the extensive application of public enterprise could rectify the situation. But since Grant believed that socialism was impossible to implement in the Canadian political climate, he acquiesced in the face of what he interpreted as historic reality. The socialist-nationalist Horowitz believed that Canadian colonialism had been caused by a continental application of capitalism which had been encouraged by Canadian governmental and business interests and therefore an application of socialism modelled on national lines was needed to repatriate the economy. And finally, Cook, the anti-nationalist, pointed out the ideological conundrum which would be created if socialism and nationalism were intertwined.

At its first few conventions held throughout the 1960s, the NDP, prodded by its left wing, was forced to respond to this growing concern over foreign investment in Canada as well as to the other political and social developments of the decade which affected both English and French Canada. In the general elections of 1962 and 1963 the new party had recovered from the decimation of the Diefenbaker landslide but still managed to attract only slightly higher than thirteen per cent of the popular vote. Pointing to these statistics and suggesting that any further modification of party policy would simply lead to irrelevance, the NDP's vocal left assemblage, at the 1963 national convention held in Regina, won support for strongly-worded resolutions dealing with social and economic planning, unemployment, the rights of native peoples and pensions. Although the radical representation was disappointed that the delegates did not adopt a more extreme stand on nationalization, it was pleased that the phrase "the principles of democratic socialism"



had reappeared in a general party statement.<sup>21</sup> The convention also reiterated the NDP's recognition of the national status of French Canada, approved of the principle of bilingualism and biculturalism, and voiced its support for Quebec's right to opt out of certain federal-provincial programmes without financial penalty.

At the 1965 convention held in Toronto, the party approved of a resolution stating that Quebec, due to its unique cultural and linguistic heritage, should be treated with a "special status" in normal provincial dealings with the federal government. The delegates also called for the protection of the rights of French-speaking minorities in other parts of Canada. An organized left-wing faction referring to itself as the Socialist Caucus called for massive nationalization of industry but the vast majority of delegates would only go as far as to support proposals asking for more comprehensive economic planning in the national interest. Twelve members of the Socialist Caucus, some of whom had been involved with the Trotskyite League for Social Action, were later expelled from the party by the Ontario executive on the grounds that they had violated the NDP's constitution by actively supporting another political organization. A committee formed in defence of the expelled, however, claimed that it was the radicals' strict adherence to socialism, not their connections with another political movement, which formed the real basis of the ejection.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Desmond Morton, *Social Democracy in Canada* (Toronto and Sarasota, 1977) p. 45.

<sup>22</sup> Committee to Defend the Expelled, "Stop Expulsions in the NDP! The Expulsions in the New Democratic Party," University of Ottawa Library, Special Collections.

Two years later at the 1967 national convention McGill University professor Charles Taylor presented a paper calling for the implementation of the traditional socialist tool of public ownership to repatriate the Canadian economy. Party leaders, however, uneasy with the increasing amount of socialist doctrine finding its way back into official policy, won support for a more moderate and less nationalistic position offered by MPs Colin Cameron and Max Saltzman outlining a more responsible method of managing Canada's branch-plant economy. At the same convention the delegates reaffirmed their belief in "special status" declaring that the province of Quebec should be allowed to maintain certain social controls which the other provinces would be encouraged to relegate to the federal powers. Although the NDP was not totally insensitive to the new radicalism of both English and French Canada in the 1960s, party vigilantes moved slowly and cautiously, keeping a careful eye on electoral polls not wanting to endanger the status of respectability for which the party had battled so long. At the 1967 convention, MP Andrew Brewin announced: "This party is approaching the responsibility of power. It has responsibility and great influence. If we are to be responsible we have to forego the luxury of extreme stands."<sup>23</sup>

Although they were far from arriving at an advocacy of economic nationalism, Canadian trade unionists also discovered reasons to re-examine the Canadian-American connection. Starting in January of 1966, American-based multi-national corporations began to shift the focus of their investments from Canada to the economically burgeoning countries

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<sup>23</sup> Cited in Evelyn Dumas and Edouard Smith, "The NDP Since its Founding," in Roussopoulos ed., *Canada and Radical Social Change*, p. 113.

of western Europe. This practice over the next four<sup>7</sup> years would lead to a gradual decrease in the proportion of manufacturing workers employed by American multinationals operating in Canada and increases in similar areas in countries such as the United Kingdom, Belgium-Luxembourg, France, West Germany, Mexico and Brazil.<sup>24</sup> In response to this development the executive council of the CLC in July of 1966 called for a Royal Commission to investigate the effect of American investment on the Canadian manufacturing sector. This concern did not provide the basis for a rabid nationalism amongst trade unionists, but it was indicative of the far-reaching effect of American investment in Canada.

Equally upset with the decisions of American corporations and their effect on the Canadian job market was Quebec Liberal cabinet minister Eric Kierans. Kierans addressed the Toronto Society of Financial Analysts in February of 1967 on the costs of foreign investment to Canadian economic growth. This was a radical transformation for the man who, as head of the Montreal Stock Exchange, had led the denunciations of the Gordon budget of 1963. Kierans was one more example of a growing number of Canadians who were turning to nationalism as a defence against the less beneficial side-effects of being an appendage of the American economic empire.

The 1960s in Canada produced a variety of expressions of nationalism in both the English and French sectors of the country. While the more popular French-Canadian nationalism focussed its attention on the position of Quebec within Confederation, English-Canadian nationalists examined Canada's international status especially as it related to the

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<sup>24</sup> See James Laxer and Robert Laxer, *The Liberal Idea of Canada* (Toronto, 1977), p. 41.

United States. As the long-term costs of foreign investment in Canada began to overshadow the immediate benefits, a small group of concerned Canadians such as Walter Gordon, Gad Horowitz, Eric Kierans and various members of the NDP and CLC offered a variety of nationalist suggestions which they hoped would lead to a more productive and independent Canada. These new interpretations of Canada's role in the world forced patriots Gordon and Kierans to alter their political philosophies considerably. But the events of the 1960s perhaps affected no one as much as they altered the life and views of political economist Melville H. Watkins.

In his own words, Mel Watkins moved from a "leftish Americanized liberal to a radical and nationalistic socialist."<sup>25</sup> His earliest academic writings reveal that his ideas as a young economist were completely in accordance with the traditional principles of free trade and the perpetuation of a North American economy dominated by continental production and exchange. As American involvement in Vietnam gradually revealed its imperialistic nature and the demands of modern corporate society led to increased domestic strife in America, Watkins expressed his desire to see Canada pursue a separate identity in North America by taking definitive steps to resist the political and social influences of the United States. Adding a knowledge of economics to a newly-discovered nationalism, Watkins came to believe that only Canadian control of resource and manufacturing industries could guarantee Canada's political and cultural sovereignty. After encountering opposition to his nationalist doctrines from the Canadian government and business elite he concluded that national economic autonomy could be achieved only through

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<sup>25</sup> Godfrey and Watkins, introduction.

public ownership of industry and national planning of investment. This metamorphosis led Watkins into a brief political career leading the Waffle crusade to transform the NDP into a radical socialist party which could pursue the double goal of independence and socialism for Canada. The changes in Watkins were definitive; but they occurred gradually in response to the environment in which he discovered himself in the dynamic days of the 1960s.

Mel Watkins was born in 1932 in the village of McKellar, outside of Parry Sound, Ontario. The first departure from his childhood environment occurred when he enrolled as a Commerce and Finance student at the University of Toronto, not a characteristic procedure for young people of his background. Although he adapted quickly to academic life, he retained his rural-based suspicions of intellectuals, experts, technocrats and power magnates.<sup>26</sup> At the University of Toronto Watkins was treated to a unique interpretation of Canadian economic history at the hands of Harold Innis. Innis had gained notable recognition for a thesis which claimed that geography had determined Canadian economic development.<sup>27</sup> Watkins was also exposed to insights on the relationship between modern technology and nationalism through his graduate studies with Marshall McLuhan. He would later acknowledge the influences of Innis for helping him discover "political economy as a defence against

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<sup>26</sup> Mel Watkins, "Learning to Move Left," *This Magazine is About Schools*, vol. 6 no. 1 (Spring, 1972), p. 69.

<sup>27</sup> See Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada* (Toronto, 1927). This treatise, which is known as the Laurentian thesis, was more fully articulated by Donald Creighton in *The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence* (Toronto, 1937).

Americanized economics" and the teachings of McLuhan for permitting him to abandon old ideas, challenge intellectual precedents and absolve "commitments you have to things that aren't worth having commitments to."<sup>28</sup> Watkins continued his studies between the years 1955 and 1958 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he received a graduate degree in economics. He admitted that the new environment of the United States transformed him from "a lukewarm Canadian nationalist" into "an American left-wing liberal."<sup>29</sup>

Upon returning to Canada, Watkins assumed a teaching position at the University of Toronto. In the early 1960s he displayed a concern for extra-institutional education through his involvement with the on-campus teach-in movement, a series of open seminars and lectures held on issues of current interest. His commitment to the teach-in seminars indicated his willingness to participate in activities he judged as valuable to social education, but he would later withdraw his services when he believed the movement "stopped doing radical things."<sup>30</sup>

Recalling the influence of Harold Innis, Watkins co-edited a textbook in 1963 entitled *Economics: Canada* in an attempt to inject Canadian content into the teaching of economics. This did not indicate, however, a rejection of traditional economics as it applied to North America. Reviewing a book entitled *The Canadian Quandary: Economic Problems and Politics* for the July 1964 edition of the *Canadian Forum*, Watkins displayed a strong sympathy with the anti-nationalist sentiments of the

<sup>28</sup> Watkins, "Learning to Move Left," p. 72. See also Watkins, "Technology and Nationalism," in Peter Russell, ed., *Nationalism in Canada* (Toronto, 1966).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72.

author, Harry G. Johnson. Watkins agreed with Johnson's severe criticisms of Walter Gordon's economic patriotism and expressed his disdain for nationalism in general:

. . . more empirical work is necessary on the nature and causes of Canadian economic nationalism in the hope that we can exorcize this devil from our midst without, hope-<sup>31</sup>fully, increasing our susceptibility to worse varieties.

Watkins reasserted his disapproval of economic nationalism a year later through the medium of the University League for Social Reform. The League had been founded as an intellectual society in October of 1962 at the University of Toronto following an address by Frank Scott and Charles Taylor of McGill University to the Toronto teaching staff. The group declared itself free from the influences of political parties but adopted a broad left-of-centre approach to current problems. In the first official publication of the League, *The Prospect of Change: Proposals for Canada's Future* edited by Abraham Rotstein, Watkins contributed an article entitled "Canadian Economic Policy: A Proposal." In this essay Watkins entreated Canadians to abandon narrow economic nationalism and reap the maximum benefits of international investment. He claimed that multi-national corporations located in Canada operated efficiently and provided jobs for Canadians at all levels of industry. In his estimation there was no substantial evidence to suggest that foreign ownership or control of industry posed a threat to Canadian sovereignty. Speaking from the point of view of the average Canadian

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<sup>31</sup> Melville H. Watkins, review of *The Canadian Quandary: Economic Problems and Politics* by Harry G. Johnson, *Canadian Forum*, vol. XLIV no. 522, July, 1964, p. 80.

economist, Watkins asserted:

Our overall conclusion is that we should stop harassing foreign owners until we have put our house in order; we shall then know whether there is anything left to<sup>32</sup> blame on the foreigners.

Although Watkins did not advocate an alteration in Canadian-American commercial relations at this time, elsewhere in the article he called for increased industrial activity in underdeveloped regions of Canada, a more equitable distribution of income and additional financial aid for the poverty-stricken countries of the third world. This genuine desire to see an improvement in the quality of life at least partially explains his willingness to participate in the activities of progressive social forces such as the teach-in movement and the University League for Social Reform, although it is clear that he was far from having arrived at a radical social analysis.

Excluding his brief studies with Harold Innis, the traditional training in economics which Watkins received, especially the ideas to which he was exposed in the United States, blinded him from perceiving the extent of American economic influence on Canadian life which was to be his main concern in the future. In fact, his first flirtation with Canadian nationalism occurred not as a result of economics, but in response to American foreign policy. In a *Canadian Forum* editorial of September 1965 Watkins expressed his disillusionment with American activities abroad:

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<sup>32</sup> Mel Watkins, "Canadian Economic Policy: A Proposal," in Abraham Rotstein ed., *The Prospect of Change: Proposals for Canada's Future* (Toronto, 1965), p. 78.



...in foreign policy, America remains the despair of its friends and the source of perverse satisfaction to its enemies -- the helpless mire of the war in Viet Nam, the ill-conceived intervention in the Dominican Republic, the now-muted obsession with Castro, and the blind spot on China.<sup>33</sup>

Watkins was especially sensitive to the War in Viet Nam which he believed was imperialistic and unjust. Responding to his inherent proclivity for action, he helped organize a teach-in on Viet Nam at the University of Toronto in October of 1965. His first expression of nationalism, then, reflected a desire to dissociate his country from the tarnished international image of the United States. This development in thought demanded that he re-examine his former analysis of Canadian-American economic relations. A new view emerged in a speech he delivered to the Seventh Annual Educational Conference of the Ontario Federation of Labour in February of 1966.

This speech marked a new and pivotal stage in the development of the political thought of Watkins. For the first time in public he revealed his belief that foreign investment undermined Canadian independence:

It has become clear that foreign ownership involves not simply the actions of a number of distinct and separate American firms but also the action of a single monolithic government, and the consequent threat to Canadian sovereignty is, in principle, of a different and more serious order<sup>34</sup> than economic analysis implies.

Elsewhere in the address Watkins pleaded with Canadians to stop following the materialistic and self-righteous practices of the United States and concentrate on the creation of a more humane and equitable

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<sup>33</sup> Melville H. Watkins and Abraham Rotstein, "The American Dilemma," *Canadian Forum*, vol. XLV no. 536 (September, 1965), p. 126.

<sup>34</sup> Melville Watkins, "The Bogey of Dependence," *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 3 no. 3-4 (March-April-May-June, 1966), p. 24.

society. In relation to this problem Watkins also revealed for the first time a leftist-oriented view of Canada's social structure:

[Canada's] preoccupation with collective economic welfare and with regional problems has inhibited the recognition of the existence of a class structure. To fail to recognize the latter is to preclude a serious commitment to the welfare state and to the achievement of equality of condition. What is ultimately ruled out is creative<sup>35</sup> right-left politics at the national level.

Writing once again for the University League for Social Reform, in a book edited by Peter Russell entitled *Nationalism in Canada*, Watkins further demonstrated the dramatic shift which had taken place in his view of Canadian-American relations in just over a year. In an article entitled "Technology and Nationalism" he declared that modern technology, emanating from the United States, had threatened Canada's separate identity. "Technology," Watkins asserted, "pervades our private and collective existence; it shapes our values and moulds our institutions."<sup>36</sup> He called upon the government to lower the tariff which he hoped would discourage American investment and along with it American technology which he believed was rendering obsolete Canadian "individualism and nationalism."<sup>37</sup> Displaying another slight shift to the left, Watkins implored the government to implement programmes which would improve the quality and protect the uniqueness of Canadian life by "educating top management, increasing social mobility and increasing the scope for public rather than private entrepreneurship."<sup>38</sup> As Watkins gradually rejected

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

<sup>36</sup>Watkins, "Technology and Nationalism," p. 284.

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

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 300.

the values of American society and their overflow effect on Canada, he subsequently began to reject the economic system which had created them.

Later in 1966 in a review of Walter Gordon's book, *A Choice for Canada: Independence or Colonial Status*, Watkins further expressed his chagrin with American infiltration of the Canadian economy and its accompanying evils:

American statesman have provided ample evidence of late of their view that American corporations are the instruments of American foreign policy, not only in the narrow sense of defenders of the American balance-of-payments but also in the broad sense of propagators of American ideology. 39

Having totally reversed his position on economic nationalism since the last time he had discussed the ideas of Walter Gordon in the pages of the *Canadian Forum* while reviewing Hardy Johnson's book *The Canadian Quandary* Watkins this time gently chastized Gordon for not going far enough in his recommendations to protect Canada from American economic and political influences. But, ironically, it was Walter Gordon who provided Mel Watkins with the vehicle through which he could further explore the detrimental effects of American companies in Canada and make his own proposals.

In 1966 Walter Gordon, upon returning to the Liberal cabinet, convinced Prime Minister Pearson to commission a Task Force "to analyze the causes and consequences of foreign investment, to assess actual benefits and costs, and to put forth proposals for legislative consideration."<sup>40</sup> Watkins was asked to head the Task Force and was assisted by

<sup>39</sup> Melville H. Watkins, "Is Gordon's Game Worth the Candle?" *Canadian Forum*, vol. XLVI, no. 546 (July, 1966), p. 77.

<sup>40</sup> *Foreign Ownership and the Structure of Canadian Industry*, Report of the Task Force on the Structure of Canadian Industry (Ottawa, 1968), p. 2.

Abraham Rotstein, Stephen Hymer, A.E. Safarian and four other regional representatives of the Canadian economic field. After a year of investigation and deliberation the report was published in January of 1968 under the title *Foreign Ownership and the Structure of Canadian Industry*; but it would be remembered as the Watkins Report.

The Report asserted that in most instances foreign investment, primarily American, had brought with it to Canada advanced technology and seasoned entrepreneurship not indigenous to the Canadian business climate. Yet foreign-owned companies in Canada operated at a level of efficiency discernibly lower than their parent corporations in the United States and not substantially higher than Canadian-owned institutions of equal magnitude. Furthermore, foreign-owned corporations adhered to restrictive marketing arrangements within international firms, placed few Canadians on their boards of directors, displayed a distinct disinclination to offer shares to the Canadian public and exhibited a susceptibility to the policy of their home government. In other words, branch plants and subsidiaries behaved in the best interests of their parent multinationals. The economic power of these firms also discouraged Canadians from entry into the competitive field.

Beyond the economic realm of foreign investment, the Task Force also examined the political ramifications of foreign control of industry. To the extent that governmental decision-making was eroded by the multinationals, national independence was undermined. This development was evident in the intrusion of American anti-trust laws into Canada, the behaviour of corporations in response to the demands of the American balance-of-payments accounts and the application of the Trading with

the Enemy Act to branch plants and subsidiaries in Canada. In no uncertain terms the Report emphasized the primacy of this issue: "The successful intrusion of foreign law constitutes a direct erosion of the sovereignty of the host country insofar as the legal capacity of the latter to make decisions is challenged or suspended."<sup>41</sup>

The Watkins Report proposed the creation of the Canada Development Corporation, a publicly-run organization which could regulate foreign as well as domestic investment in Canadian industry. The Report also recommended that the government persuade foreign-owned companies to offer common shares to Canadian buyers. The Canadian government was to train young businessmen in managerial skills and sponsor national research and development schemes. Tariff policy would have to be altered to create competition in the public interest and tax laws would have to be reformed to guarantee Canada its rightful share of branch plant and subsidiary corporate taxes. These recommendations, designed to increase the benefits of foreign investment while decreasing the costs, were to be the New National Policy for Canada.

Watkins believed that the proposals put forward by the Report were mild, typically liberal and void of socialist and nationalist jargon.<sup>42</sup> Political scientist H.G. Thorburn called the Report a "clear, sensible and moderate document"<sup>43</sup> and Red-Tory historian W.L. Morton labelled it "a set of reasonable and moderate proposals."<sup>44</sup> Although Watkins was now firmly convinced that some degree of governmental intervention in

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 311.

<sup>42</sup> Godfrey and Watkins, p. 84.

<sup>43</sup> H.G. Thorburn, "Mr. Gordon's Questions Answered," *Canadian Forum*, vol. XLVII, no. 566, March, 1968, p. 270.

<sup>44</sup> W.L. Morton, *The Kingdom of Canada* (Toronto, 1970), p. 553.

the economy was necessary to offset the threat of foreign-controlled multinationals, he had not yet arrived at a radical political strategy.

In one of the first articles he published discussing his work on the report, Watkins, sounding not unlike Walter Gordon, wrote:

Canada is committed to the capitalist path of development, and, in the final analysis, Canadians should prefer home-brewed capitalists over alien capitalists. If Canada is to be a capitalist country -- and the prospects for change in this respect are hardly part of the agenda for 1970 -- then a case can be made for a Canadian bourgeoisie whose competence and initiative are of a higher order. <sup>45</sup>

It was not the writing of the Report itself but the official reaction of government and business to the study which proved to be the crucial step in the radicalization of Mel Watkins. The *Financial Post* criticized the Report for what it termed its anti-American sentiments and Cabinet Ministers John Turner and Mitchell Sharp refused to endorse it fearing economic retaliation from the United States.<sup>46</sup> Although he was not the most articulate critic of the study, Ontario Conservative MPP Stanley Randall nonetheless had little difficulty in getting his point across when he called the Report "baloney disguised as food for thought"<sup>47</sup> and warned against "misleading allegations constantly dribbled into our newspapers by economic wierdos."<sup>48</sup> The business establishments

<sup>45</sup> Mel Watkins, "A New National Policy," in Trevor Lloyd and Jack McLeod eds., *Agenda 1970: Proposals for a Creative Politics* (Toronto, 1968), p. 175.

<sup>46</sup> Ken Wyman, "A Report From the Tip of the Ice-berg?," *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 5, no. 4 (April-May, 1968).

<sup>47</sup> Cited in Godfrey and Watkins, p. 187.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.

Watkins addressed in the year following the release of the Report greeted him with general hostility. Only the CLC and the NDP enthusiastically endorsed the Report, the latter welcoming Watkins with open arms, a gesture party leaders may have regretted in view of subsequent developments. The CLC claimed that the recommendations of the Report "would do much to increase Canada's control over the Canadian economy."<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, the radical left wing in Canada criticized the Report for its moderation. Writing in *Canadian Dimension*, Ken Wyman praised the Report for its condemnation of the quiet diplomacy practices of the Canadian government in relation to the intrusion of American law into Canada, but added that the cautious recommendations of the study illustrated quiet diplomacy of a different type.<sup>50</sup>

Events in the year following the release of the Report led Watkins to become more aware of the threat to Canadian sovereignty posed by foreign investment and the reluctance of the Canadian government to take remedial steps to guard against the intrusion of American law into Canada. Just prior to the publication of the Report, President Johnson of the United States placed on American subsidiaries operating outside of the United States new mandatory controls designed to appropriate more profits for the home country to help improve its balance-of-payments. The severity of these new measures was reduced for Canada only after the Minister of Finance, Mitchell Sharp, conferred with Mr. Fowles, the

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<sup>49</sup> *Canadian Labour*, May 1968, p. 37. Cited in Resnick, *The Land of Cain*, p. 180.

<sup>50</sup> See Ken Wyman, and George Lerner, "The Task Force Report: An Economist's Notebook," *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 5, no. 4, April-May, 1968.

United States Secretary of the Treasurer. Testifying before the House of Commons Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs in March of 1968, Watkins said: "It is clear that doubts as to which national policy applies to American subsidiaries in Canada can, in the final analysis, only be resolved in Washington."<sup>51</sup> In September of the same year Watkins recalled the event during a CBC radio interview: "Ottawa found it could communicate with Canadian incorporated firms only via Washington."<sup>52</sup>

Watkins discovered that his Report had proven to be too radical for the quiescent continental policies of the Liberal Party and he later expressed his belief that serious attempts were made to suppress and shelve the study.<sup>53</sup> He also stated his opinion that it was disowned by the government because it exposed the limitations of "liberalism -- and of Liberalism."<sup>54</sup> Frustrated in his attempts to impose national goals on the Canadian government and business elite, Watkins was pushed towards an alternative political strategy and a new view of society:

Working on the report on foreign ownership had made me into an economic nationalist and defending the report had pushed me towards socialism. It seemed clear to me that only through substantial nationalization could Canadians regain control of their economy. But it was equally obvious to me that the people interested in nationalization would not be the present business elite who in many cases were doing rather well as branch plant managers. A powerful transition towards socialism would mean that one had to appeal to the ordinary working people who had most to gain<sup>55</sup> if Canada became economically independent.

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<sup>51</sup> Godfrey and Watkins, p. 56.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>54</sup> Mel Watkins, "Education in the Branch-Plant Economy," *This Magazine is About Schools*, vol. 4, issue 1 (winter, 1970), p. 121.

<sup>55</sup> Watkins, "Learning to Move Left," p. 82.



Watkins combined his disenchantment with American foreign and domestic policies and their overflow effects on Canada with the empirical evidence of the Watkins Report which revealed the colonizing nature of foreign investment and arrived at an understanding of economic nationalism. His discovery of the colonial mentality of the Canadian business class and the timidity of the Liberal government forced him to construct a new political philosophy through which his redefined version of national policies could be pursued. By early 1969 the radicalization process was complete and Watkins announced his new stand in a letter to *Canadian Dimension*: "To implement the Watkins Report is decidedly second-best; the first-best solution is socialism, and a radical socialism at that."<sup>56</sup> Although Watkins had been active in politically-oriented movements at the University of Toronto and was familiar with the highest levels of Canadian government, he still lacked tactical political experience and awareness through which he could expound his newly-arrived-at philosophy. The opportunity for Watkins to become involved in direct political action arose when he made the acquaintance of James Laxer, a left-wing member of the NDP. Watkins was searching for some left-wing authors for a proposed University League for Social Reform publication when he met Laxer. Watkins and Laxer combined their separate experiences of the 1960s and formed the basis of the Waffle movement. Although Laxer had not undergone a process of radicalization in the same fashion as had Watkins, he brought with him to the Waffle a social education which in every way was pertinent to the mood of the 1960s.

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<sup>56</sup> Mel Watkins, *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 6, no. 1 (April-May, 1969).

James Laxer was born in Montreal in December of 1941 and had been an active member of the NDP since 1962. Unlike Mel Watkins, Laxer did not arrive at socialism slowly and gradually but had inherited at a young age the Marxist philosophy of his father, Robert Laxer, a prominent Canadian Communist. But events in the 1960s would have their effect on James Laxer as well. Laxer was subjected to a political education of a unique type as a result of his direct involvement with a new social formation which appeared simultaneously in various parts of the western world in the early years of the 1960s -- the New Left Movement.

The New Left Movement was the name given to the youth-oriented political expression of the 1960s which rejected the materialistic and militaristic values and hierarchical structures of modern corporate society. The imperialistic practices of the world's two major super powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, were equally subjected to the criticisms of the New Left. The movement was most visible and active in the United States and the industrialized countries of western Europe. American New Lefters, largely the product of middle-class families, had benefited greatly from the wide extension of higher education which characterized the post-war period. Having been born into a world of material opulence, unlike most of their parents who had witnessed both war and depression and had struggled to achieve a comfortable standard of living, New Lefters questioned the obvious decadence and wealth of post-war middle-class living and its command over the impoverished lower strata of society. They attacked society's entrenched institutions, including trade unions, as bulwarks of the status quo and totally renounced their faith in traditional politics as a vehicle for progressive social thought. In the words of New Left guru Herbert



Marcuse: "No party I can envisage today will not within a very short time fall victim to the general and totalitarian political corruption which characterizes the political universe."<sup>57</sup>

Having rejected the traditional modes of social protest, the New Left believed that the problems of modern society needed to be attacked at the most fundamental of levels -- in the factories, in the neighbourhoods, and on the streets. The movement hoped to achieve its goals through direct action:

The sterility of the traditional revolutionaries, encouraged the new left to open up the question of both theory and practice again, in a fresh undogmatic way. Radicalism was literally taken to mean going to the root of a problem.<sup>58</sup>

The New Left phenomenon in North America grew out of the civil rights movement which had originated in the southern United States in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The movement was especially prevalent on university campuses where students and professors alike proposed radical critiques of modern society. In the autumn of 1964 the Free Speech Movement was founded at the University of California Berkeley campus in defence of the propagation of radical ideas and in December of that year 800 students were arrested at a demonstration in support of this organization. After 1965, with the escalation of American involvement in the War in Viet Nam, New Lefters organized numerous anti-war and anti-draft demonstrations and eventually exerted enough pressure on President Lyndon Johnson through their criticism of his foreign policy to discourage him from seeking another term in office.

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<sup>57</sup> Herbert Marcuse, "Radical Perspectives 1969," *Our Generation*, vol. 6, no. 3, December-January, 1969, p. 13.

<sup>58</sup> Roussopoulos, *Canada and Radical Social Change*, preface, p. 7.

The New Left in Canada was represented by the Combined University Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CUCND), a moralistic single-issue protest organization which was founded in 1959. In the autumn of 1961 CUCND began publication of an educational journal called *Our Generation Against Nuclear War* to augment the numerous demonstrations and marches it had organized since its foundation. The first edition of this magazine, which coincided with the creation of the NDP, strongly criticized the party's founding convention for not taking a stronger stand against Canada's participation in NATO. In 1963, responding to Canada's acceptance of nuclear weaponry and recognizing the ineffectiveness of polite protest, CUCND adopted the true philosophy of the New Left and pledged to involve itself directly in non-violent social activities at the grassroots level. In the summer of 1964, fourteen CUCND members initiated and conducted a study of the possible disarmament of military installations in North Bay. In autumn of the same year CUCND transformed itself into the Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA), a more radical and strategy-oriented organization which, like its parent, was centred on university campuses.

It is not surprising that the universities played such an important role in social and political activities of the 1960s. Demographic statistics of the period reveal that a majority of Canadians in the 1960s were between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four, a result of the post-war "baby boom." University enrollment in Canada had almost doubled in the first five years of the 1960s and in Ontario alone twelve per cent of the population between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four were enrolled in post-secondary educational institutions as compared to 4.6

per cent of the same age group in the mid 1950s.<sup>59</sup> The universities provided the stimulation and the facilities for concentrated numbers of youth to gather and examine their collective future in the technological society. As sociologist Marcel Rioux observed in 1965:

The young are in no hurry to join the cut-throat war that adults wage among themselves. Confronted with all the techniques of industrial society, the great industrial and financial corporations, the big electoral machines, the<sup>60</sup> young feel deprived and powerless.

For the duration of its existence from 1964 to 1967, at which time it was replaced by the New Left Committee, SUPA was undoubtedly the centre of New Left activity in Canada. Like its counterparts in the United States, SUPA was sceptical of organized political parties and chose to make its contribution to society through direct social action at the community level. In the summer of 1965 it had eighty members working full-time on projects with Canada's poor and native peoples in places such as Kingston, the Kootenays, Saskatchewan and Quebec. It displayed its international character through its organization of demonstrations protesting the War in Viet Nam, the draft and the treatment of the American Negro. It encouraged radical activity on numerous campuses across Canada and influenced other student groups such as McGill's Students for a Democratic University.

As a member of SUPA, this was the environment to which James Laxer was exposed as a young man. From his earliest undergraduate days at the

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<sup>59</sup> Philip Resnick, "The New Left in Ontario," in Dimitrios I. Roussopoulos ed., *The New Left in Canada* (Montreal, 1970), p. 94.

<sup>60</sup> Marcel Rioux, "Youth in the Contemporary World and in Quebec," *Our Generation*, vol. 3, no. 4, vol. 4, no. 1, May, 1966, p. 12.

University of Toronto, Laxer had been involved in student politics. In 1963 he organized a demonstration at Queen's Park in support of "special status" for Quebec which attracted 2500 to 3000 participants. While at the University of Toronto Laxer also edited the campus newspaper, the *Varsity*, and in 1965 he was president of Canadian University Press. When he moved to Kingston to pursue a graduate degree in Canadian history at Queen's University, he remained active in student affairs through his continued participation in SUPA.

Although Laxer had been influenced by the philosophy of the New Left Movement, his studies in Canadian history made him more sensitive than most New Left advocates to the particular problems of Canada as a nation, especially in regard to American domination of the economy and French-English relations. He was undoubtedly influenced to a certain degree by the nationalist and reformist ideas of the subject of his Master's thesis, Henri Bourassa.<sup>61</sup> In 1966, Laxer, espousing a position not unlike the one Mel Watkins would arrive at two years later, offered this opinion on the question of the Canadian economy:

The reason why repatriation of the economy has not taken place is not because it cannot be done, but because it would not benefit those dominant in this country to do so. While there are no universally accepted plans for repatriation, many approaches have been developed. But such plans will lie dormant until an opposition movement motivated not to duplicate the American model, but to create a system without elites<sup>62</sup> becomes powerful in Canada.

Laxer believed that the Canadian New Left was not properly addressing itself to the crucial questions facing Canada. "From the early 1960s,"

<sup>61</sup> See Joseph Levitt, "Images of Bourassa," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1 (Spring, 1978).

<sup>62</sup> James Laxer and Arthur Pape, "Youth and Canadian Politics," in Roussopoulos ed., *Canada and Radical Social Change*, p. 53.

Laxer wrote, "the Canadian New Left derived much of its style and ideology from the United States, and American-centred issues filled its political agenda." This preoccupation with American issues, such as the draft and the question of civil rights, Laxer claimed, prevented the Canadian student movement from formulating "a political strategy relevant to Canadian society." "In general," Laxer concluded,

American radicalism tends to be an inappropriate guide for Canadian radicals because it is conceived out of the conditions of the heart of the empire rather than the conditions of a dependent country. <sup>63</sup>

Laxer believed that before the New Left could have a positive effect on Canadian society it would be necessary to break the stranglehold of the American empire over Canadian affairs:

Today, the issues of the war in Vietnam and internal racial violence combine with the American takeover of the Canadian economy to modify a traditional Canadian view of the United States as both a society to be emulated, and a powerful ally and protector against chimerical threats from abroad . . . for Canadians who wish to pursue the elusive goal of an egalitarian socialist society, American imperialism is the major enemy. <sup>64</sup>

Laxer also believed that the New Left's rejection of all the traditional agencies of protest was not applicable to the Canadian experience. A knowledge of the history of radicalism in Canada, as expressed through organizations such as the CCF and various industrial trade unions, along with an appreciation of political organizing which he had inherited from his Communist father, convinced Laxer that the New Left should be

<sup>63</sup> James Laxer, "The Americanization of the Canadian Student Movement," in Ian Lumsden ed., *Close the 49th Parallel etc: The Americanization of Canada* (Toronto, 1970), pp. 276-278.

<sup>64</sup> James Laxer and Gerald L. Caplan, "Perspectives on un-American Traditions in Canada," in Lumsden, pp. 308-310.

infiltrating the NDP. To some extent this had already happened, as is suggested by the New Democratic Youth convention of 1965. At this conference the left caucus of the group proposed and won significant support for a resolution calling for

Canada's withdrawal from NATO, the immediate nationalization of basic and key sectors of the economy, ultimate workers' control of factories, student and faculty representation on all governing bodies of the universities, and the recognition<sup>65</sup> of Quebec's right to self-determination.

Many of the young proponents of this programme would reiterate similar resolutions four years later as members of the Waffle.

Laxer was not the only political activist who desired to see a restructuring of the New Left in Canada along national lines. Cy Gonick, the editor of *Canadian Dimension*, also pleaded with the movement to abandon the isolationist attitudes of its American relative and become more relevant to the Canadian scene. The following passage expresses this conviction and, like the New Democratic Youth resolution, further anticipates Waffle philosophy:

A serious New Left, instead of isolating itself from "the establishment" by forming ghettoized communities, should be penetrating the major institutions where people are -- trade unions, churches, teachers' societies, student organizations, the NDP, to create within them constituencies which can be harnessed to a political movement aimed at national independence and socialism, to guard against elitism and to insist, in all of these activities on<sup>66</sup> member participation in decision-making.

Although Laxer had expressed his willingness to work within the structure of the NDP, he was not satisfied with the present state of

<sup>65</sup> Stanley Gray, "The New Democratic Youth Convention," *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 2, no. 6, September-October, 1965, p. 23.

<sup>66</sup> C.W. Gonick, "Strategies for Social Change," *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 4, no. 1, November-December, 1966, p. 39.



radicalism within the party. Laxer was one of many NDP leftists who believed the party had been "born at the end of a long ideological retreat on the part of its predecessor, the CCF."<sup>67</sup> He was disappointed that the NDP had not reacted in a more positive fashion to the new social and political undercurrents of the 1960s and believed that the moderating and anti-nationalist influence of international unionism prevented the party from devising a more radical strategy: "Hampered by American-dominated international unions and out to win a growing urban middle class electorate, the NDP is not likely to deal with basic issues in a new way."<sup>68</sup> Laxer hoped that the lead of the New Left would encourage the NDP to increase its involvement in extra-parliamentary activity: "It was the New Left," Laxer wrote, "which had to remind us that it is an abdication of responsibility to concentrate on electoral power at the expense of one's immediate community."<sup>69</sup>

Despite his criticisms, Laxer admitted that, in the final analysis, the NDP was the most logical vehicle through which Canadians could attempt to structure a new society:

The NDP is the most important institutional expression of the Canadian left. More than any other organization, it embodies the cultural and political traditions of the Anglo-Canadian working class . . . The NDP brings together the essential constituencies -- workers, farmers, students, intellectuals -- that are necessary in building a mass socialist movement.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Laxer and Caplan, p. 315.

<sup>68</sup>Laxer and Pape, p. 49.

<sup>69</sup>Laxer and Caplan, p. 317.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 314-315.

The challenge before Laxer was to persuade the NDP to accept the radicalism of a Canadianized New Left while simultaneously encouraging New Lefters to accept the structure of the NDP. The nature of the problem was best described by New Left observer Ian Lumsden:

The NDP has been obsessed with parliamentary politics and has allowed quasi-constitutional issues -- such as that of bilingualism and Quebec -- to distract its attention from the question of extra-parliamentary power, which is much more pertinent to the issue of the Americanization of Canada. The New Left, on the other hand, may have become so mesmerized by the dynamic revival of American radicalism that it, too, has been distracted from the need to devise strategies that are appropriate to Canadian institutions<sup>71</sup> and their cultural peculiarities.

To suggest that the NDP had been totally insensitive to the political undercurrents of the 1960s would be as unfair as it would be inaccurate. At its conventions held throughout the 1960s the party had voiced its opposition to increased foreign ownership and had approved of a policy of "special status" for the province of Quebec. During the 1968 federal election campaign the NDP attempted to include the findings of the Watkins Report amongst the major issues of debate, but the new and charismatic Liberal leader, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, mesmerized the electorate with the single issue of French-English relations. Trudeau, a strong federalist and adamant anti-nationalist, ridiculed the NDP's "two nations" theory and its accompanying implication of "special status" for Quebec. The Progressive Conservative Party, under the leadership of Robert Stanfield, had also expressed its belief that Canada was composed of two founding peoples and consequently suffered as well at the hands of Trudeau. The new Prime Minister's promise to English Canada to End

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<sup>71</sup>Ian Lumsden, "American Imperialism and Canadian Intellectuals," in Lumsden ed., *Close the 49th Parallel*, p. 326.

concessions to French-Canadian nationalists and his pledge to Quebecers to protect their interests through a strong and unified federal bloc led the Liberal Party to a majority victory. Future leaders of both major opposition parties would think carefully before expounding on extended privileges for the province of Quebec. Later in 1968 the NDP caucus gathered in Wakefield, Quebec, to hear addresses by Charles Taylor and Kari Levitt on the extent of corporate power and the effects of American investment on Canadian political and economic sovereignty. Early in 1969 MP Ed Broadbent researched and presented a paper outlining a socialist approach to industrial democracy. The NDP was clearly responding to the growth of nationalist and socialist sentiments which characterized the 1960s, but for James Laxer the response lacked immediacy and definition. In the spring of 1969 he initiated a move designed to instill the NDP with a more radical posture.

Laxer first began to articulate his discontent with the NDP in February of 1969 in conversation with his friend and fellow party member, Gerald Caplan. Caplan was a young but seasoned political activist who had managed campaigns for David Lewis in the early sixties. Laxer and Caplan appealed to other disgruntled NDPers, including MP Ed Broadbent, and a series of discussion sessions followed. On April 29, 1969, a group of eleven NDP members, including the recently radicalized and politicized Mel Watkins, met in Toronto and laid the foundation for an internal left caucus. At a subsequent meeting one of the attendants, Giles Endicott, responding to an uncertain position on the question of public ownership, uttered something to the effect of: "If we're going to waffle, I'd rather waffle to the left than waffle to the right," and the group was presented with its unfortunate but enduring name. After

several of these small informal gatherings the group arrived at a number of principles which it decided to submit to other party members for discussion and debate. These postulates were embodied in a statement, of which Laxer was the main author, entitled "For an Independent Socialist Canada," or the Waffle Manifesto.<sup>72</sup>

The Wafflers announced their primary goal in the first few lines of the Manifesto: "Our aim as democratic socialists is to build an independent socialist Canada. Our aim as supporters of the New Democratic Party is to make it a truly socialist party." The Waffle Manifesto implored the NDP to respond to the new movements of nationalism and socialism in Canada in order to co-ordinate the building of a mass socialist base which would lead to the creation of a new society. Of prime importance, the Waffle claimed, was the achievement of economic independence: "The major threat to Canadian survival today is American control of the Canadian economy. The major issue of our times is not national unity but national survival, and the fundamental threat is external, not internal." The profit-motivated operations of American-based multi-national corporations, the Waffle alleged, had reduced Canada to a "resource base and consumer market" of American commercial interests. Moreover, a too-close economic association with the United States had subjected Canada to the psychology of the American empire, an empire "characterized by militarism abroad and racism at home."

The solution to Canada's problems, according to the Waffle, was the implementation of socialism. The Canadian capitalist class, "junior partners" in the American-controlled continental system, could not be

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<sup>72</sup>See Appendix A.

depended on to repatriate the economy or redistribute wealth:

"Capitalism must be replaced by socialism, by national planning of investment and by the public ownership of the means of production in the interests of the Canadian people as a whole." The Waffle believed that independence and socialism were interdependent goals for Canada and that Canadian nationalism was a solid base upon which to build a mass socialist movement because of its historical anti-imperialist nature.

Turning to the country's internal problems, the Manifesto addressed itself to the question of national unity. The Waffle entreated the NDP to recognize the existence in Canada of two distinct nations. But the group believed that the unity of the two peoples could be maintained though a unity of purpose:

An English Canada concerned with its own national survival would create common aspirations that would help to tie the two nations together once more . . . Socialists in English Canada must ally themselves with socialists in Québec in this common cause.

The Waffle believed that American domination of Canada further aggravated the country's internal divisions. Although the group recognized the legitimacy of the national aspirations of French Canada, there was no mention in the Manifesto of self-determination or the need to dismantle the federal system: "A United Canada is of critical importance in pursuing a successful strategy against the reality of American imperialism."

If the NDP was to be the political arm of the new socialist society, the base of the movement was to be found at working-class level. Workers and trade unionists, the Waffle declared, were "central to the creation of an independent socialist Canada." But the plan, to succeed, must be based upon full participatory democracy:

The New Democratic Party must provide leadership in the struggle to extend working men's influence into every area of industrial decision-making. Those who work must have effective control in the determination of working conditions, and substantial power in determining the nature of the product, prices and so on. Democracy and socialism require nothing less.

The NDP was to tap the wealth of socialist sentiment wherever it could be found in society:

The New Democratic Party is the organization suited to bringing these activities into a common focus . . . The New Democratic Party must rise to that challenge or become irrelevant. Victory lies in joining the struggle.

The temptation is great to liken the Waffle statement to the Regina Manifesto, and many political pundits did just that, but a close examination of the two documents reveals some basic differences of time and strategy. The Regina statement had been born in the depths of depression in response to an economic system which had failed to provide sustenance for the majority of society. The Waffle paper, on the other hand, had been written in times of relative prosperity in response to a system which had created an over-emphasis on material production and had reduced Canada to the status of satellite of the American empire. The Regina statement defended the right of workers to organize but promised to concentrate planning in the hands of government-paid technocrats and spoke only briefly of worker participation in industry. The Waffle statement, reflecting the influence of New Leftism, desired to see a complete redistribution of power which would include the workingman in the process of managerial decision-making. On the question of national unity, the Regina Manifesto was silent while the Waffle statement emphasized the need to recognize the national status of French Canada. The older programme said nothing of foreign investment in Canada and blamed economic nationalism, as reflected by a high tariff, for the

deprivation of Canada's agricultural class. To the Waffle, the question of American investment was of preeminent importance and economic nationalism was inextricably linked with the achievement of socialism. The Regina paper briefly alluded to the problem of the inequality of the sexes in the work force whereas the Waffle statement oddly said nothing of this, although this issue would later become a predominant tenet of Waffle philosophy as feminism increased in popularity. Both documents were radical in tone and temperament and both called for the replacement of capitalism by socialism emphasizing the implementation of public ownership, but in the finer details, each statement was clearly an individual response to the problems of a particular generation.

The Waffle Manifesto was a reflection of the new radical political and social undercurrents of the 1960s. The statement combined a number of radical ideas, most of which had made their first appearance in the pages of *Canadian Dimension* through the writings of Cy Conick, Charles Taylor, Gad Horowitz and James Laxer. There were two especially notable passages in the document. First, the statement linked socialism with nationalism. Nationalism was a position infrequently associated with socialism because of its historical overtones of imperialism and militarism. In the case of Canada, however, the Waffle understood nationalism as the best defence against encroaching American imperialism and a necessary precursor to the achievement of socialism. Secondly, although the Waffle encompassed the philosophy of the New Left regarding the distribution of power in society, it totally contradicted that movement's attitude towards the usefulness of political parties. The New Left rejected all existing political organizations as "part of the establishment and

therefore too corrupt, authoritarian and manipulative to work within."<sup>73</sup>  
 This analysis may have been applicable to the United States which had been dominated by the two-party non-parliamentary system since its foundation, but Canada had a more radical political tradition which had been established by a number of militant trade unions and organizations such as the CCF/NDP which could be utilized in the building of the new society. The Waffle subscribed substantially to the New Left philosophy, but it was clearly a Canadian edition.

The Waffle Manifesto differed most radically from existing NDP policy in its endorsement of the traditional socialist tool of nationalization as a means to regain powers from American-owned multi-national corporations. Although the NDP had consistently called for greater Canadian control of the economy, it had suggested a number of regulatory measures other than public ownership to achieve this end. The Waffle also stressed the importance of NDP involvement in extra-parliamentary educational activity at the grassroots level of society, a suggestion which had not been treated as a priority by the party over the past decade. On the question of Quebec, the Waffle Manifesto did not differ drastically from official NDP policy. Both views recognized the existence in Canada of two identifiable nations although the Waffle position embraced English-Canadian nationalism to a greater degree. To the Waffle, the achievement of economic nationalism took precedence over the self-determination of the province of Quebec. Some months prior to the birth of the Waffle Manifesto, James Laxer had written:

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<sup>73</sup> Gonick, "Strategies for Social Change," p. 39.



Quebec separatists who wish to break all links with English Canada can offer their people little more than a formal sovereignty that would allow them to negotiate only the details of their dependency on the United States.<sup>74</sup>

This interpretation was less radical than the one offered by the Canadian Union of Students in 1968, a position which would later be adopted by Laxer and the Waffle:

Quebec must have the right of self-determination, and this does not include the idea that this choice is made by the English-speaking majority of Canada who have been oppressing and exploiting them.<sup>75</sup>

In June of 1969 the tiny Waffle group elected a five-member coordinating committee with Giles Endicott as secretary for the purpose of distributing and seeking support for the Manifesto amongst other members of the NDP. The document was sent to various individuals within the party and appeared with endorsement in *Canadian Dimension*. The slow emergence of the Waffle from the back rooms was described by Mel Watkins:

None of us who wrote the Waffle Manifesto, and certainly not myself, ever sat down and said: "Let's radicalize the NDP." It was much more of a spontaneous thing of a dozen or so people realizing they were in the Party and fed up with it. We never set out to do what we ended up doing ... Interest in what we were doing sort of snowballed until riding associations were endorsing our Manifesto . . . it was simply spontaneous combustion.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>74</sup> James Laxer, "The Search for Canadian Nationalism," *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 5, no. 7, December-January, 1968-1969, p. 41.

<sup>75</sup> Don I. Ray, *Political Thought of CUS* (Ottawa, 1968), p. 10. Cited in Resnick, *The Land of Cain*, p. 192.

<sup>76</sup> Godfrey and Watkins, p. 102.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid*, p. 109.

A significant number of NDPers voiced their support for the ideas of the Manifesto. Many of the party's younger members who had been radicalized through their experiences with New Leftism and student movements of the 1960s endorsed the statement. Some of the senior members of the party, who had never been pleased with the mere reformist policies of the NDP, saw in the document a return to the radical days of the CCF and added their approval. The mounting support for the Manifesto within the party "changed what had been an essentially intellectual endeavour into a potentially political one."<sup>78</sup>

On July 26, 1969, twenty-nine Waffle supporters, all residents of Kingston, Ottawa or Toronto, met in Kingston to discuss the newborn caucus. It was decided here that the group would attempt to have the Manifesto endorsed at the NDP federal convention planned for October in Winnipeg. The meeting also approved the idea of a press conference to publicize the Manifesto to be held some time prior to the convention. Giles Endicott, James Laxer and John Smart were assigned the task of searching out wider national support for the statement. The decision was also taken that the group would submit individual resolutions on specific topics for circulation and debate at the convention. A number of committees were set up to look into and prepare policy statements on Quebec, foreign ownership, industrial democracy, extra-parliamentary activities, internal party reform, the Americanization of Canadian Universities, the mass media, poverty, economic policies, regional disparity, women's liberation, foreign policy and agriculture. The

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<sup>78</sup> Milner and Lemoine, "The National Question in Canada," p. 185.

Waffle was quickly beginning to resemble an organized political structure and had even set up an "Information Expenses Fund" for the collection of money to cover its expenditures.<sup>79</sup>

In August of 1969 the germinating Waffle met in Toronto to discuss its progress to date. It was decided to send the minutes of the Kingston meeting and additional copies of the Manifesto to riding associations and federal council members. By September 2, ninety-four NDPers had endorsed the Waffle statement. Among those who approved of the programme were Jeremy Ackerman, leader of the Nova Scotia NDP, British Columbia MLA's Dave Barrett, Eileen Dailly, Gordon Dowding, Jim Lorimer and Alex MacDonald, and Manitoba MLA and editor of *Canadian Dimension*, Cy Gonick. Of the remaining supporters of the document eighteen held party positions or were party workers, seven held positions with the New Democratic Youth, and seven were associated in an official capacity with trade unions. Twenty-four signatories who were associated with post-secondary educational institutions comprised the largest single identifiable group of supporters of the Manifesto. These endorsers of the statement clearly did not represent the fringe element of the NDP. The influence they wielded within and outside of the organization was too great to be ignored by the party leaders.

On September 4, 1969, the Waffle introduced itself to the world at a press conference held in Ottawa. Speaking for the group, Mel Watkins presented the Manifesto and announced the intention of the group to rally support for the document at the NDP convention in October. The

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<sup>79</sup> Minutes, Kingston Meeting, July 26, 1969. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

immediate goal of the group, Watkins declared, was to reinfuse radicalism into the NDP, and the long-range objective was the creation of a mass socialist base at the working-class level of society.

The reaction of the press to the Waffle Manifesto was generally critical and in some cases hysterical. Journalist Charles Lynch asserted: "I do not believe they could elect a dog-catcher, anywhere in Canada, on such a platform."<sup>80</sup> Lynch also expressed his belief that the group could be seen as "acting in the interest of international communism."<sup>81</sup> Singling out Mel Watkins, because he was the only member of the group's centre core with an extensive public profile, Jack McArthur stated: "Watkins has cast off his mask of moderation. And who can blame him? Eventually a man must do his own thing, no matter how wildly socialist, anti-American or even anti-democratic it may sound."<sup>82</sup> Douglas Fisher and Harry Crowe in the *Toronto Telegram* expressed doubt that the Wafflers were bona fide members of the NDP and called the statement "a jumble of discarded slogans of the 1930s, a nostalgia of guild socialism and above all a frenzy of anti-Americanism."<sup>83</sup> Even the left-wing nationalist Abraham Rotstein in the pages of the *Canadian Forum* rejected the Manifesto for what he claimed was an overly-thirties approach to the problems of the seventies. Rotstein, like many others, disapproved of the Manifesto's

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<sup>80</sup> Cited in Godfrey and Watkins, p. 109.

<sup>81</sup> Cited in *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 6, no. 5, October-November, 1969, p. 4.

<sup>82</sup> Cited in Godfrey and Watkins, p. 109.

<sup>83</sup> Cited in *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 6, no. 5; October-November, 1969, p. 4.

pertinacious anti-American tone:

A Manifesto which pivots on a reaction to America at a low point in its history is in my view, not an enduring basis on which to construct the edifice of Canadian independence.<sup>84</sup>

The actions of the Waffle had caused a certain degree of discomfort within the ranks of the party as well. On September 3, Harold E. Thayer, a member of the NDP federal council and General vice-president for Canada of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, wrote to Waffle co-ordinating committee secretary Giles Endicott protesting that officers of the party had not been made aware of the early Waffle meetings which he implied had been held secretly.<sup>85</sup> Later in September Endicott received an unhappy letter from Catherine Allan, secretary of the Maillardville NDP club and Gerry Richardson, provincial council delegate of the Coquitlam Constituency in British Columbia. Allan and Richardson complained of the "adverse publicity" the group was attracting to itself which they believed was potentially damaging to the party's public image. The authors of this letter described the Manifesto as "five pages of virulent anti-Americanism" and called it "an emotional and critical propaganda statement with no constructive ideas, which leaves us wide open to the charge of extremism without offering solutions."<sup>86</sup> NDP Deputy Leader David Lewis, attempting to rationalize

<sup>84</sup> Abraham Rotstein, "The Search for Independence," *Canadian Forum*, vol. XLIX no. 585, October, 1969, p. 147.

<sup>85</sup> Harold E. Thayer to Giles Endicott, September 3, 1969. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>86</sup> Catherine Allan and Gerry Richardson to Giles Endicott, September 25, 1969. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

the appearance of the Waffle, asserted that a "lack of dialogue [had] precipitated a feeling of futility on behalf of those who differed with NDP policy." But the Waffle, Lewis charged, had expressed its discontent in language which was "blatantly offensive."<sup>87</sup>

Irrespective of the variety of negative responses it elicited within and outside of the NDP, the Waffle had begun to have its effect on party policy in Ontario as early as the autumn of 1969. The introduction to an Ontario NDP publication which appeared shortly after the Waffle statement was issued read:

A union of awareness and experience has brought a radicalism to the redefinition of the New Democratic Party in the Seventies which may astonish those who believed that we were drifting into the comfortable consensus.<sup>88</sup>

This statement can be interpreted as a direct response from the NDP hierarchy to the charges of individual Wafflers that the party was moderating itself out of existence. The booklet also contained a synopsis of the Waffle position written by Mel Watkins. The media responded to this pamphlet no differently than it had reacted to the Waffle Manifesto. In two separate editorials the *Globe and Mail* called the document simultaneously anti-American and anti-Canadian. In the *Toronto Telegram* Douglas Fisher implied that it would be wise for the NDP to keep the writers of this booklet in the back rooms folding leaflets.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Cited in Nixon Apple, "The CCF, the NDP, and the Waffle: Toward an Interpretation," unpublished B.A. thesis, Department of Political Science, Carleton University (Ottawa, 1976), p. 62.

<sup>88</sup> Cited in Desmond Morton, *Social Democracy in Canada*, p. 91.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

Although the Waffle position had not yet officially been debated within the party, it had clearly nudged the consciences of the Ontario leadership, although even in this capacity it continued to draw bad press.

The Waffle debate which would take place in Winnipeg was previewed in the September/October issue of the *New Democrat*, the official organ of the Ontario NDP. The entire Waffle Manifesto was reprinted along with the names of the original ninety-four signatories and Wafflers Mel Watkins and Ed Finn contributed articles on economic nationalism and American domination of Canadian unions respectively. Commenting on the Manifesto, John Harney feared that the Waffle's recognition of the national status of French Canada would be interpreted in the public mind as passive acceptance of the possibility of a divided Canada. Apparently he had forgotten that the NDP itself had officially recognized the existence of two nations in Canada. Deputy Leader David Lewis, who was quickly becoming identified as the primary anti-Waffle proponent, criticized the Manifesto for its "self-righteous" attitudes towards the United States and its over-emphasis on the need for public ownership: "In my view, it is a form of short-sighted thinking for a socialist to aim his shafts only against foreign-owned corporations . . . Our knowledge of the economy has progressed and there are many more tools available in addition to public ownership."<sup>90</sup> Prior to the October convention, the sides were clearly taking shape.

Mel Watkins had arrived at a radical political philosophy following his discovery of the total ramifications of American investment in Canada and the reluctance of the Canadian government and business elite

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<sup>90</sup> *New Democrat*, September-October, 1969.

to take the steps necessary to repatriate the economy. James Laxer desired to see the philosophy of the New Left applied to Canada's national needs. Through their separate experiences, both men came to believe that independence and socialism were desirable for Canada but neither was possible without the other. Watkins, the nationalist turned socialist, and Laxer, the socialist turned nationalist, agreed that the logical place to initiate a move towards the achievement of these goals was within the ranks of the traditionally protest-oriented and labour-based NDP. Gathering around them a coterie of like-thinking individuals, Laxer and Watkins proposed a set of principles which, upon adoption, would transform the NDP from a moderate reform party into a radical socialist party encompassing the nationalistic and socialistic undercurrents which had characterized the first nine years of the 1960s in Canada. Although original Wafflers Ed Broadbent and Charles Taylor, both prospective future leadership candidates, quickly retreated back to the moderate fold of the NDP when the group moved well beyond its original intentions, the Waffle managed to gain endorsement for its programme from ninety-four individuals, twenty-four riding associations and the New Democratic Youth. With a Manifesto outlining a new dream for Canada, Laxer and Watkins set off along a road they hoped would lead to independence and socialism for their country in the 1970s. The first stop along that road was the NDP federal convention in Winnipeg, October 28-31, 1969.

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## CHAPTER II:

### THE DREAM DENIED

"Socialism is on the agenda of the seventies."<sup>1</sup> The speaker of these words, Melville Watkins, had expressed his belief only a year earlier that Canada was committed to the capitalist path of development. Yet here he was at the NDP federal convention in Winnipeg imploring his fellow party members to endorse the Waffle Manifesto which would commit the NDP to the building of a national socialist state. The debate over the Waffle Manifesto was the most prominent feature of the four day convention held from October 28 to 31, 1969. The unchallenged Tommy Douglas had previously announced his intention to remain as leader of the NDP until 1971 and there were no other issues of principle importance on the agenda. This convenient void permitted the Waffle to steal the spotlight at the convention. The absence of other salient issues also allowed the group to monopolize almost totally all press reportage. The debate over policy initiated by the Waffle transformed a routine conference into an intense battle of words and strategy creating a gash in the party ranks which would fester over the next three years.

In response to the Waffle Manifesto and its growing number of supporters, Deputy Leader David Lewis and repentant Waffler Charles Taylor hurriedly amended a resolution on economic nationalism which the

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<sup>1</sup> Mel Watkins, Transcript of Winnipeg Debate. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

leadership group had planned to submit to the convention. By strengthening its own programme while avoiding the more offensive features of the Manifesto the NDP officary hoped to co-opt the radical Waffle proposal and simultaneously maintain the respectable public image of the party. This statement was entitled "For a United and Independent Canada," but became known as the Marshmallow Resolution.<sup>2</sup>

The Lewis-Taylor proposal spoke strongly in favour of economic independence for Canada but was more moderate in tone and temperament than the Waffle declaration. It called for "Canadian control of the economy, public control of investment and other priorities, and democratic social planning to use our resources for the enrichment of the human condition." The alternative programme recognized the threat to Canadian sovereignty posed by American multi-national corporations but chose to lay the bulk of the blame for the creation of this situation on past and present Canadian governments and business elites rather than on the Americans themselves. The Marshmallow Resolution stressed the number and variety of vehicles available to Canadians which would aid in the repatriation of the economy: "...expansion of public investment and public ownership, government planning, investment controls, a just tax system, purposeful monetary policies freed from the restraints of a fixed exchange rate, and necessary laws to limit and regulate foreign investment and subsidiaries in Canada." The Marshmallow statement asserted that the province of Quebec, along with other unfavoured regions of Canada, was entitled to a more prosperous and clearly defined role to play within the federal system. However, there was no mention of the

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<sup>2</sup>See Appendix B.

existence of "two nations" in Canada. The reduction of French Canada from one of the country's two founding nations to simply an important regional identity marked a discernible retreat from the NDP's former policy of "special status" for Quebec. This new and milder position consequently allowed the Waffle view of French Canada, originally identical to the NDP's earlier policy, to appear to be more radical than it actually was. The Marshmallow Resolution said nothing of extra-parliamentary activities or the need to create a mass socialist base at the grassroots level of society.

The Marshmallow statement was less dogmatic and all-encompassing than the Waffle Manifesto. Nevertheless, it was the most explicit and nationalistic position the party hierarchy had ever offered on the question of the Canadian economy. It was stricter in its approach than the 1967 position of readjustments and initiatives and included public ownership amongst the "policies of democratic socialism" to which the party adhered. Despite its success at having drawn this degree of radicalism out of the officary of the party, however, the Waffle chose to remain intransigent and insisted that party policy fully appropriate the spirit and conviction of the more radical resolution. Seconded by Dennis McDermott, Canadian Director of the United Auto Workers, David Lewis presented a motion asking for the adoption of the Marshmallow statement. But Mel Watkins, seconded by James Laxer, called for the Marshmallow paper to be referred back to the resolutions committee "to be rewritten to correspond in substance and principle"<sup>3</sup> to the Waffle Manifesto. Under the heat and glare of the television lights, the

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<sup>3</sup>Winnipeg Debate.

Waffle-Marshmallow debate began.

The argument attracted some of the party's most influential members and several aspirant leaders. Speaking for the party line were David Lewis, Dennis McDermott, John Harney, Ed Broadbent, Allan Blakeney, Sydney Green, Tommy Douglas, Charles Taylor, Evelyn Gigantes, Terry Morley and Donald MacDonald. Across the floor at a separate microphone Mel Watkins, Laurier Lapierre, Cy Gonick, Walter Smishek, Carol Gudmundsen, Gerald Caplan, Gordon Dowding, Irving Stowe, Paddy Neale and John Conway lined up to express their support for the Waffle position.

The Marshmallow Resolution, claimed the first speaker, David Lewis, squarely attacked the problem of foreign investment in Canada: "[it] is a strong statement because it doesn't put itself into any ideological straight-jacket." The Waffle paper, on the other hand, was overly-dogmatic and restrictive in its approach and spoke in an "incomprehensible language . . . foreign to the Canadian people" which would only serve to confuse the electorate. Responding to Lewis, Mel Watkins pointed out the growth in radicalism which had occurred in Canada during the 1960s and the need for the NDP to respond to this phenomenon in a relevant fashion: "The New Democratic Party must relate itself as a Party to these new undercurrents of radicalism. . . It must become the parliamentary wing of a broad social movement." The Marshmallow Resolution, Watkins continued, "speaks to independence and hardly at all to socialism." He accused the Marshmallow statement of being shy on the question of public ownership: "For to be a socialist is to know that the ownership of the means of production matters." The Waffle resolution, however,

speaks to socialism, to the building of a society of equality of condition by taking the leading sectors of our economy, and particularly our rich natural resources, under public ownership; by democratizing our places of work and our communities; by building a mass movement for which this party can then speak in Parliament.

Watkins denied the charges of anti-Americanism which had been levelled against the Waffle by the press. He also stated that the group was composed totally of loyal NDPers who were prepared to accept the democratic mandate of the convention.

Following Watkins, Dennis McDermott spoke against the Waffle statement in a manner which revealed in its simplicity the realistic fears of the party hierarchy. In his fumbling, bumbling way, McDermott called for an element of realism to be injected into the debate: "...the year is 1969. The place is Planet Earth. We are not living on Mars. We belong to a political party not a pseudo-intellectual debating society." McDermott's message was blatantly clear: the NDP would never achieve power on the radical Waffle platform. McDermott called the Waffle's critical statements of American society and foreign policy "How to be unpopular in one quick lesson."

Almost all of the remaining critics of the Waffle Manifesto expressed their disapproval of the negative and dogmatic tone in which the paper was cast. So much emphasis was placed upon the aggressive rhetoric of the statement that the more salient question of the paper's strong socialist position assumed secondary importance throughout the debate. Ed Broadbent asserted that the party "must talk to Canadians with a vocabulary that they understand." Party leader Tommy Douglas, receiving a standing ovation from the majority of the crowd, stated that the Waffle Manifesto was "ambiguous and ambivalent"; but the Marshmallow Resolution set out

"in specific and intelligible terms the means by which we propose to gain economic independence." Allan Blakeney and Sydney Green both objected to the upstart nature of the Waffle, implying that the group had violated party principles through its secretive meetings and overly-assertive approach.

The remaining advocates of the Waffle Manifesto pointed out the failure of the NDP to respond to the new social imperatives of the decade. Manitoba MLA Cy Gonick asserted: "The New Democratic Party has been more concerned with respectability than with social action." Waffler Carol Gudmundsen from Saskatchewan claimed that more radical policies were needed to aid Canada's farming community and Gerald Caplan contended that the Waffle programme would lead to a more effective and equitable foreign aid policy. Almost all of the debators, whether Marshmallow or Waffle, expressed the opinion that the vigorous and intense argument had been a healthy stimulant for the spirit and morale of the party. But the radical tone and alienating language of the Waffle Manifesto, its severe criticisms of what it termed the American empire and its over-emphasis on the single issue of public ownership encouraged a majority of the convention delegates to reject the Watkins referral motion by a vote of 499 to 268.

Although the Waffle lost the main bout at Winnipeg, its influence permeated a number of secondary issues which were discussed at the convention. The delegates approved of a Waffle-supported resolution stating that the NDP, upon forming a government, would withdraw from NATO, NORAD and joint Canadian-American military agreements. A resolution calling for increased female representation on the federal council received over fifty per cent of the vote but fell slightly short of the two-thirds

majority required for constitutional changes. On the question of multi-nationals in Canada, the convention endorsed a compromise programme calling for the creation of the Canada Development Corporation, complete informational disclosure of foreign-owned corporations, stoppage of the intrusion of American law into Canada, extension of public and co-operative ownership and the lowering of interest rates of financial institutions. A resolution endorsing increased extra-parliamentary activity submitted by Wafflers from the Kingston riding association never reached the floor for debate but was approved in principle by the convention and passed on to the federal council. Although the Waffle Manifesto itself did not mention Quebec's exclusive right to decide its own future, Mel Watkins proposed a resolution blaming English-Canadian and American capitalists for Quebec's subservient position within Canada and calling for that province's right to complete self-determination. The majority of delegates, however, recalling the criticisms to which the party's Quebec policy had been subjected during the 1968 election campaign, followed the advice of their leaders and endorsed a resolution allowing the federal council to re-examine and possibly totally withdraw the NDP's former position of "special status" for Quebec. Although it was not solely the interests and efforts of the Waffle which determined the passage of a number of progressive resolutions at the convention, the constant lobbying and campaigning of the group throughout the conference clearly brought a greater focus upon the issues of foreign policy, economic nationalism and extra-parliamentary activity.

Wafflers also displayed a respectable showing in the internal party elections which took place at the convention. Mel Watkins attracted 455 votes which were enough to give him the last available position of

vice-president of the party. In addition, Wafflers Eileen Dailly, Cy Gonick, Richard Comber, Jack Shapiro, Jackie Larkin Brown, John Conway, Una Decter and Giles Endicott were elected to positions on the federal council. Toronto alderman and Waffle supporter Karl Jaffary and James Laxer were appointed to co-chair a committee set up to investigate the possibility of the NDP working in conjunction with various municipal community organizations.

The Waffle had seriously challenged the cautious and restrained radicalism of the NDP of the 1960s. It had gathered together in one sweeping statement several major issues of contention which had arisen in Canadian society in the previous decade. The assertive approach of the group appealed mainly to the educated youth of the party and to the veteran CCFers who welcomed the return to radicalism. Although its approach was too zealous for the majority of the democratic socialists in the NDP, the Waffle had nonetheless managed to bring to centre-stage the questions which it believed were most relevant to present-day Canadian society. Reacting to the impetus provided by the Waffle, the NDP was forced to reassert and clarify its position on Canadian control of the economy. The result was the Marshmallow statement and a number of strongly-worded individual resolutions.

The controversial events and results of the convention did not go unnoticed by the Canadian press. Although the *Winnipeg Free Press* was pleased that "the stridently anti-American call-to-arms of Professor Melville Watkins and his associates was beaten back," it criticized the nationalist tone of the Marshmallow statement fearing that it would discourage foreign investment in Canada. It was an especially odd policy, reasoned the *Free Press*, in view of the fact that Manitoba NDP



Premier Edward Schreyer and Finance Minister Cherniack had just completed trips abroad designed to attract investment capital from both the United States and Japan.<sup>4</sup> The *Globe and Mail* pointed out the immense anti-Waffle sentiment prevalent amongst union leaders, such as CLC secretary-treasurer William Dodge who termed the policies of the group "dangerous nonsense." Dodge feared that the anti-American comments of the Waffle would disrupt Canadian-American relations to the detriment of the Canadian economy.<sup>5</sup> This negative reaction of the union brass to the Waffle was a sign of things to come. The *Toronto Star*, one of the few mainstream Canadian papers that had ever expressed an editorial concern about Canada's economic autonomy, offered a more positive assessment of the results of the convention:

The Canadian people have been provided with a more distinct political alternative and, of even more importance, an alternative that is more strongly nationalist. A convention that can make a claim like that can't have been a complete bust.<sup>6</sup>

The Waffle had survived its first major battle with the NDP's moderate wing. Laxer and Watkins were both surprised and pleased with the substantial support the group had received during the Manifesto debate, policy discussions and party elections. Reflecting on the defeat of the major Waffle position, Watkins later admitted that the Manifesto was "too academic, too elitist" and "too rhetorical."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Winnipeg Free Press*, November 3, 1969.

<sup>5</sup> *Globe and Mail*, October 29, 1969.

<sup>6</sup> *Toronto Star*, November 3, 1969.

<sup>7</sup> Mel Watkins, *Waffle News*, edition 4, November, 1969.

However, he did not reveal a changed attitude toward the principles of the paper. Cy Gonick suggested that the charisma and emotional appeal of Tommy Douglas alone had drawn 100 votes to the Marshmallow Resolution.

Although Tommy Douglas disapproved of the Waffle programme, he respected the CCF/NDP tradition of internal party dissent and had earned a reputation of his own for outspoken radicalism. Consequently, he declined to initiate disciplinary action against the group. Although the debate at the convention had induced a certain degree of polarization and name-calling, most members of the NDP left Winnipeg feeling refreshed and revitalized. Neither the Waffle nor the NDP leadership group believed that a split would occur within the party as a result of the discussion which had taken place at the convention. But the die had been cast, and the radical political expression which had been set in motion by the appearance of the Waffle in Winnipeg would dilate over the next few months.

Although Mel Watkins had announced at the convention that the Waffle was prepared to accept the democratic mandate of the delegates, the interest in the group which had been created within and outside of the party during the four day conference convinced him and Laxer to continue working with the clique as a permanent left caucus within the NDP. Shortly after the convention a nine-member national housekeeping committee was established and assigned the task of bringing local Waffle groups into existence. The members of the original committee, all chosen from Ontario to facilitate communications, were Mel Watkins, James Laxer, Giles Endicott, Danny Drache, Andre Beckerman, Lorne Brown, Regula Modlich, Dan Nicholls and John Smart. At a meeting in Toronto on November 16 the housekeeping committee decided to hire Jackie Larkin

Brown as a full-time organizer to plan a national Waffle convention for sometime in mid 1970. On November 17 a Waffle group in Ottawa was officially formed and on December 11 a group of Toronto NDPers declared themselves the official Waffle spokesmen for that city. Later the same month the housekeeping committee devised a scheme allowing for representation on a national steering committee from Waffle groups all across Canada. Early in 1970, responding to a suggestion that it strike out independently, the Waffle reasserted its intention to pursue its goals from within the NDP. All of these activities were reported in a Waffle newsletter printed by Laxer's wife Krista Maeots and Tracy Morey. By January of 1970 the newsletter was being regularly distributed to approximately 400 interested NDP members across Canada. In only two months the Waffle had set up a self-financed internal party structure with functioning governing bodies and an exclusive mailing list. The sustained existence and clearly recognizable structure of the group distinguished the Waffle from its radical predecessors within the CCF/NDP, and in the future would form the basis of its most important struggle within the party.

Over the first few weeks of 1970 the separate identity of the Waffle became more apparent both within the ranks of the NDP and in the public eye. In an attempt to resolve the growing split in the party, the NDP federal council on February 1 appointed an eleven-member commission to examine the question of economic nationalism in the hope of arriving at a policy which would satisfy a greater number of party members. Once again the presence and pressure of the Waffle had forced the NDP to critically reassess its stand on this vital issue. Included

on the council were Mel Watkins and Waffle adversary David Lewis. To some political observers the creation of this committee and the inclusion of Watkins represented a peace-seeking compromise between the Waffle and the NDP leadership. To eliminate the impression that any Waffle acquiescence had taken place, however, Watkins wrote a letter to the editor of the *Globe and Mail* which appeared on February 6 claiming that the group had not abandoned its role as a permanent left caucus within the party and that his position on the committee was specifically as the spokesman for the Waffle viewpoint. Furthermore, Watkins wrote, the policy review committee to which he had been named was "an elitist group that takes no cognizance of the rival grassroots of the party and the sources of the new radicalism."<sup>8</sup>

The indiscreet and apolitical actions of Watkins sent minor shock waves through the NDP hierarchy. His real sin was not his announcements on the state of the Waffle but his public criticism of the operations of the internal bodies of the party. His misbehaviour elicited an immediate response from NDP federal secretary Clifford Scotton. Scotton wrote personally and privately to Watkins and other federal councillors expressing the need for party members to keep internal criticisms out of the press. The federal secretary also denied the charges that the review committee was unrepresentative.<sup>9</sup> But the damage had been done and Watkins had caused an enormous escalation in the NDP-Waffle controversy. It was no longer simply a question of policy. The leadership

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<sup>8</sup> *Globe and Mail*, February 6, 1970.

<sup>9</sup> Clifford Scotton to Mel Watkins and federal officers, February 6, 1970. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

practices of the NDP had been brought under direct and public attack by the spokesman of the insurgents.

Numerous other public statements and articles by prominent Wafflers soon established the group as the paramount nationalist organization in Canada. Criticism of Canada's ties with the United States was foremost in all Waffle statements, especially in the area of energy resource development. The Waffle objected heatedly to Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources J.J. Greene's announcement at a Washington press conference late in 1969 that Canada and the United States should pursue a common energy policy based upon the assumed wealth of Canadian resources. In February of 1970 the Waffle condemned the assertions of the American Schultz Report which outlined the need for the United States to acquire greater access to Canadian resources for domestic and military purposes. Later in 1970 Mel Watkins would write an introduction to Kari Levitt's book entitled *Silent Surrender*, a leftist monograph outlining the political, economic and social detriments created in Canada by American investment. The public statements and articles of the Wafflers attracted attention on both sides of the international border. In the February 9 edition of *The Nation*, Edward Cowan, Canadian correspondent for the *New York Times*, credited the Waffle for the creation of a growing nationalist sentiment in Canada even amongst non-leftists.<sup>10</sup> The wide publicity the Waffle attracted to itself marked the beginnings of a serious dilemma for the NDP. Over the next couple of years the carefree nature of the group's public statements would make it extremely difficult for the average Canadian voter to distinguish Waffle policy from the

<sup>10</sup> Edward Cowan, *The Nation*, February 9, 1970.

NDP's official programmes. Having clearly established itself in print, the Waffle, whose mailing list now boasted 500 names from all provinces in Canada except Prince Edward Island, organized its first major public activity.

On March 6 and 7 of 1970, in conjunction with the University of Toronto NDP club, the Waffle sponsored a public seminar on the Americanization of Canada. The main speakers on the first day of the conference were Walter Gordon, Mel Watkins and Cy Conick. Gordon repeated his belief that the Canadian economy could be repatriated by private Canadian enterprise with the help of government initiatives. Watkins and Conick both expounded the Waffle doctrine that independence could be achieved only through socialism. Other guests of the conference spoke on the pervasive influence of the United States on Canadian unionism, education and foreign policy. But the most important statement of the two-day conference was that made by James Laxer on the Waffle view of Quebec.

Laxer clarified the uncertain Waffle position on Quebec which had revealed itself at the Winnipeg convention and unabashedly announced the group's commitment to French Canada's exclusive right to decide its own future:

English Canadian socialists must recognize that Quebec is a nation, in the full sense of the word and that Quebecers must have the right to self-determination up to and including the right to form an independent Quebec state.<sup>11</sup>

This revised stand diametrically contradicted the revisions of the NDP's official Quebec policy which were simultaneously taking place. The

<sup>11</sup> James Laxer, "English Canada and Quebec," Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

party's leadership group was in the process of slowly reneging on its former endorsement of "special status" for Quebec in the hope of improving the NDP's federalist image in the eyes of English Canadians. Support for the right of self-determination, however, was the only possible alternative for the Waffle considering the ultra-democratic tenets upon which the movement was theoretically based. Laxer, however, emphasized the Waffle's belief in total Canadian independence and repeated his desire to see French and English-speaking socialists come together in a freely-determined alliance to fight off the imperialism of the United States. He criticized René Lévesque and the separatists for not clearly defining the political scope of the problems in Quebec:

...the PQ is ignoring the necessity for Quebeckers to struggle for independence from the American Empire if they are to achieve true mastery in their own house... Only when a working class socialist movement becomes the dominant force in the national struggle in Quebec will Quebec politics become fully anti-imperialist.<sup>12</sup>

Having successfully sponsored its first major public seminar, the Waffle turned inward to restructure its expanding membership. On March 28, 1970, the Ontario section of the Waffle was officially incorporated. The original steering committee of Gord Cleveland, Kelly Crichton and John Smart was expanded to include four Waffle representatives from Toronto, two from Ottawa and one from each of Kingston, Oshawa and St. Catharines. In addition, each city group elected a governing council to deal with local problems. Once organized as a regional unit, the Ontario Waffle issued a provincial Manifesto entitled "For a Socialist Ontario in an Independent Socialist Canada."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix C.

The Ontario statement was bitingly critical of past and present provincial governments for the ease with which they had allowed American corporations to dominate industry and resources in the province. This practice, the Manifesto claimed, had led to under-development, an unequal distribution of industry and wealth, the destruction of the environment and the advent of a branch-plant culture and mentality. Like its parent, the Waffle Manifesto, the Ontario statement contended that extensive public ownership was needed to serve the immediate and long-range interests of the residents of Ontario. The NDP was to use its organizing powers to bring about the creation of a new social movement. But there were some fine differences between the Ontario Manifesto and the original Waffle statement which had appeared half a year earlier.

The Ontario paper wisely attempted to dodge the accusation of anti-Americanism which had been hurled at the original statement. Being as specific as possible, it stated:

Our complaint is not against the American people and the progressive movements in that country, but against the American corporate, political and cultural domination of Canada.

The Ontario Manifesto placed greater emphasis on the role that the trade unions and the wage earners would play in the development of the new society. More significantly, the Ontario document blamed the American-based international unions in part for the fragmentation of the Canadian working class. By following the American model, Canadian workers, drastically fewer in number than their brothers and sisters in the United States, found themselves within small, relatively weak and depoliticized trade unions. The Ontario Waffle demanded full autonomy for Canadian unions which would allow them to expand in size and strength



and pursue goals particularly relevant to the Canadian worker. Understandably, these comments only widened the already severe division between the Waffle and the Canadian representatives of international unions such as Dennis McDermott and Harold E. Thayer. Furthermore, if a mass socialist base was to be created amongst wage earners, the NDP would need to dedicate itself to the achievement of progressive labour measures, such as workers' control of industry. But the Waffle shortly discovered what perplexing problems intervention in the affairs of labour could create.

In early April of 1970, Dunlop Canada, a British-based multinational corporation, announced plans to close its Toronto plant on May 1. The closure would put approximately 600 men out of work mid-way through a two-year collective agreement. Phil Japp, President of Local 132 of the United Rubber Workers of America, to which 300 of the men belonged, appealed to the Ontario government to block Dunlop's unilateral decision. Premier Robarts replied negatively: "We think that industry should be free to go where it thinks it should go . . . we don't think that it is possible for us to dictate to industry."<sup>14</sup> Although Japp received no official support from the central office of the International Rubber Workers and only nominal support from local Toronto labour organizations, he and his men initiated a public canvass to advertise and gain support for their plight.

Shortly into the campaign Japp and the workers appealed to the Waffle for assistance and support. The Waffle enthusiastically agreed to become involved and the consequent escalation of the project created

<sup>14</sup> Cited in Steve Penner, "A Case History of Dunlop: How the Workers were Sold Out," *Waffle News*, May, 1970.

by the presence of the group drew the rest of the NDP and the Toronto Labour Council into the exercise as well. Volunteers canvassed 20,000 homes in the area of the plant and collected between 27,000 and 30,000 signatures on a petition imploring the Ontario government to force Dunlop to open its books to allow a feasibility study which would consider the possibility and profitableness of the plant remaining operational under worker control. Nearing the announced date of closure, and having experienced no positive progress, the area NDP MPP James Renwick and the provincial caucus persuaded Japp to abandon plans for further demonstrations and concentrate on increased legal action to assure the men substantive severance pay. On May 1 the plant closed.

The involvement of the Waffle and the NDP in the Dunlop affair displayed the dangerous impact with which ideologies could clash. Writing in an edition of the *Waffle News*, Steve Penner, one of the most active Waffle members throughout the campaign, severely criticized both the Robarts government and the representatives of the International United Rubber Workers for their lack of response to the pleas of the Dunlop workers. Penner also censured MPP James Renwick and Local 132 president Phil Japp for having abandoned plans for a factory sit-in in favour of increased legal action. Penner accused Japp of being out of touch with his own constituency. The Waffle, Penner concluded, "had made the mistake of working with a politician and a union leader who were social democrats rather than directly with the men themselves."<sup>15</sup> Mel Watkins, who had also been involved with the project, added:

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

...after the event one cannot help but see that in this particular case the leadership sold out, with the help of the NDP caucus, and we ourselves did not propose alternatives in a forceful enough way.<sup>16</sup>

Objecting to Penner's criticisms, Michael Prue of Scarborough, Ontario, wrote to the Waffle defending the actions of Phil Japp and James Renwick. Prue reminded Penner that Japp and the workers had started the campaign themselves and had contributed an enormous number of hours to canvassing and demonstrating: "To state that militancy was missing resulting in a misguided and incoherent effort is absurd." Prue pointed out that the average age of the workers was forty-eight and the majority of them belonged to an era which did not easily lend itself to radical action: "...many would not accept a radicalism spawned outside of the local... Any radicalism of a violent or aggravated nature would have resulted in an exodus of support from the general membership." Penner's explanation of the failure of the campaign, according to Prue, was "politically naive and mis-guided pseudo-intellectualism." Although the men appreciated the outside assistance they had received, Prue claimed that the Waffle had made a serious tactical error in trying to impose an alien ideology upon the Dunlop workers:

The union was convinced from the outset that it would run its own program and succeed or fail on its own terms and methods. Mr. Penner seems bitter that they failed and in effect blames their "social-democratic" values. This doctrinaire truth which was his was not that of the workers.<sup>17</sup>

Seeking clarification, Penner responded to Prue's comments. The real problem, Penner stated, was that the radicalism of the men was never

<sup>16</sup> Mel Watkins, "Learning to Move Left," p. 87.

<sup>17</sup> Michael Prue, *Waffle News*, July, 1970.

fairly tested. Penner accused Japp and other union leaders of "elitism" and "paternalism" for not involving the workers more directly in the decision-making process of the campaign:

...the point is that the campaign proceeded quite independently of the men in the plant who were after all the ones who had to pay the price of the campaign's defeat.<sup>18</sup>

Throughout the campaign the radical militancy of the Waffle clashed with the moderation of the union leadership and the NDP caucus. Prue's letter suggests that the men chose to follow the path set out for them by Japp and Renwick rather than by the Waffle. Penner suggests that the opportunity for the men to prove their potential radicalism was never provided. Either way, what had been aptly demonstrated was the danger of turning a particular materialistic battle into a general ideological war. Jim Gill, NDP Project Director of the Toronto Labour Council, who viewed the campaign as a typical situation of "too many chiefs -- and too few indians," commented:

...some of our party theoreticians incorrectly assessed the situation and the group with which we were working. Naturally, after having set their own high standards, some were disappointed that the end result of our efforts<sup>19</sup> did not meet these standards.

The Waffle's involvement in the Dunlop campaign fatefully affected the group's relationship with the NDP, and in particular the party's organized labour wing. In the late 1960s James Laxer had expressed objections to the undue influence of international unions on NDP policy. At the Winnipeg convention of 1969 internationalist Dennis McDermott

<sup>18</sup> Steve Penner, *Waffle News*, July, 1970.

<sup>19</sup> Jim Gill, *New Democrat*, vol. 9, no. 4, May-June, 1970.

and Canadian unionist William Dodge had both criticized the Waffle for what they interpreted as anti-Americanism. Early in 1970 the Ontario Waffle included criticisms of international unionism in its provincial Manifesto. The Wafflers and the unionists had obviously not started out as friends, but the Dunlop incident brought them into each other's direct line of fire. To Watkins and Penner, the union leaders had sold out the interests of the workers and were therefore detrimental to the achievement of socialism. To the unionists, the Waffle had overstepped its role in the campaign and had attempted to foist its own goals upon the workers. This growing animosity between the Waffle and the union leadership would eventually contribute to the demise of the group within the NDP.

Although the Waffle failed to achieve its objective in the Dunlop debacle, its nationalist influences were evident at the eighth constitutional convention of the Canadian Labour Congress held in May of 1970 in Edmonton. At that conference a recently-organized reform caucus won positive although qualified support for its programme calling for the implementation of social unionism, industrial democracy and greater autonomy for Canadian locals of international unions including the right to merge. Acknowledging its source of inspiration, the group called itself the Pancake. The *Toronto Star* commented on the new mood of the unionists:

With the CLC now committed to Industrial Democracy, to Social Unionism and to greater autonomy from the American Labour Movement, the dream of a just and independent Canadian society no longer seems so frail...The Canadian Labour Movement seems to have got a second wind in Edmonton this week, and its about time. Too often recently, Labour has worked like a slacker in the fight for social justice, its aims increasingly selfish, its leaders secure and suspicious of change, its days of

militant struggle in the 30's little more than sentimental memories...Through the impetus of a Reform Caucus, however, the Canadian Labour Congress now gives evidence<sup>20</sup> of renewed commitment and refreshed radicalism.

The pronouncements of the Waffle pervaded a number of other areas involving a variety of political philosophies. On June 3, 1970, Mel Watkins and Walter Gordon held a joint press conference to publicize the recent appearance of a book edited by Dave Godfrey with Mel Watkins entitled *Gordon to Watkins to You*. This monograph contained analyses of American infiltration of the Canadian economy ranging from the ideas of Walter Gordon to the Waffle Manifesto. On a CBC television special aired June 29, 1970, historian Donald Creighton told interviewer Larry Zolf that he probably would have joined the NDP had it endorsed the Waffle Manifesto in Winnipeg. Some months earlier Creighton had stated in an interview published in the *Globe and Mail*: "I respect and admire Melville Watkins. Nationalization is about the only thing that might work."<sup>21</sup> Creighton had expressed his disdain for American domination of the Canadian economy in written chronicles of history and in the future would explore it in novel form.<sup>22</sup>

The Waffle was able to attract at least moral support for itself from nationalists of all political stripes in Canada because it was, in effect, the only outspoken and serious nationalist Assemblage in the country. The success the Waffle had achieved in carrying the nationalist

<sup>20</sup> Cited in Gil Levine, "CLC's Reformers: Victorious or Co-opted?," *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 7, no. 1-2, June-July, 1970, p. 12.

<sup>21</sup> *Globe and Mail*, March 20, 1970.

<sup>22</sup> See Donald Creighton, *Canada's First Century* (Toronto, 1970), *The Forked Road* (Toronto 1976), or his novel, *Takeover* (Toronto, 1978).

torch into the general political arena, according to *Toronto Star* columnist Anthony Westell, had even affected the continentalist

Trudeau government:

The NDP prodded by the left-wing waffle group has made Canadian nationalism in the face of foreign ownership and control a major issue in Canada... Responding to this political pressure, the Trudeau government is developing its own programme of economic nationalism<sup>23</sup> including the CDC [Canada Development Corporation].

The change in the Liberal attitude to which Westell referred was exhibited in a speech delivered by Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources J.J. Greene in Denver, Colorado, in July of 1970. Despite his comments of December 1969 which contained the suggestion of an integrated continental energy deal between Canada and the United States, Greene told a gathering of Denver businessmen that Canada would take definitive measures to guarantee its own energy needs before any such deal could be consummated. Greene admitted that this new nationalist approach to the distribution of Canadian resources was a result of "the new mood in this country."<sup>24</sup> The Canadian financial community, however, did not approve of Greene's change of heart any more than did the Denver businessmen's conference. The *Financial Post* of July 11, 1970, accused Greene of "taking pot shots at a deeply troubled ally and friend."<sup>25</sup> In the same issue, Floyd S. Chalmers reminded Canadians that true nationalism lay "not in the bank balance" but "in the heart and mind."<sup>26</sup> Clearly,

<sup>23</sup> *Toronto Star*, May 19, 1970.

<sup>24</sup> Cited in *Waffle News*, May 1970.

<sup>25</sup> *Financial Post*, July 11, 1970. Cited in Resnick, *The Land of Cain*, p. 158.

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

the Waffle had not brought about a mass conversion to nationalism, but its articulation of a growing concern reached out and touched various sectors of Canadian society.

Although the Waffle had successfully elicited nationalist sentiment from a substantial number of Canadians, it was unhappy with its progress at the grassroots level of society. In July of 1970 individual members of the Ontario branch of the movement warned against an intellectual smugness which was setting into the group and criticized the organization for not more efficiently utilizing NDP riding associations as centres of socialist education. In an attempt to remedy this situation the Waffle set about preparing resolutions which would commit the NDP to greater involvement with trade unions, women's groups, tenants' associations and the poor. These proposals, along with a toughly-worded programme calling for immediate nationalization of natural resources, were to be presented at the upcoming Ontario NDP leadership and policy convention. Although Saskatchewan Waffler Don Mitchell had just recently placed third in the leadership race of that province's NDP, the Ontario group decided against presenting a leadership candidate for the Ontario party, although it did agree to contest all internal party positions. The question of leadership, James Laxer asserted, could only be relevant in so far as it was part of an overall Waffle strategy:

...the challenge of power must be aimed at the structures and the political practice of the NDP and not merely at a single leadership position or right-wing ideological perspective. Running for the leadership must be seen as a tactical question placed in its larger concept -- it <sup>27</sup> should not be viewed as a moral imperative.

<sup>27</sup> James Laxer, *Waffle News*, July 1970.



Prior to the Ontario NDP convention planned for October of 1970, the Waffle reviewed its policies at its first official national conference held August 1, 2 and 3 in Toronto. Although the Waffle membership list now boasted 1500 names, only between 200 and 300 people attended the convention. A new national structure for the Waffle was agreed upon at this meeting. The members of the old housekeeping committee, who had first congregated after the Winnipeg convention, resigned their seats and a new national council consisting of five men and five women was set up. Provincial representatives were added to the committee according to the following formula: Ontario - 5; Saskatchewan - 3; British Columbia - 2; Alberta - 2; Manitoba - 2; and each Atlantic province - 1. No official representation was granted to the province of Quebec but the national committee was instructed by the assembly to maintain close ties with the leftist elements of the Quebec NDP.

Aside from restructuring its internal operations, the Waffle arrived at two major decisions at this convention concerning its future activities. First, contrary to the verdict reached by the Ontario branch a month earlier, the group decided that it would nominate its own candidate for the NDP federal leadership contest which was expected to take place in 1971. The majority of the group agreed that a leadership campaign would provide the Waffle with a vocal and effective medium through which it could advocate its philosophy and programmes. Although the decision to run a candidate was ratified by a majority of Wafflers, the group agreed with Cy Gonic's suggestion that the particular candidate not be chosen until November or December. Secondly, the group agreed on plans for a nation-wide demonstration to be held in September protesting the bulk sale of Canadian natural resources to the United States. The

responsibility for this protest fell into the hands of James Laxer who had already begun to develop a reputation through a series of written articles as an outspoken opponent of the Liberal government's energy resource commitments to the United States.

In just over a year the Waffle had grown from a handful of NDP dissidents into a clearly identifiable moderate-size leftist movement of national stature. Due to the absence of any other serious nationalist grouping in Canada it had easily monopolized the issue of repatriation of the economy and had infiltrated the consciences of nationalists of a variety of political colours. It had forced the NDP to adopt a more radical and clarified programme calling for tougher restrictions to be placed on foreign-owned industry. Through its writings and public educational activities it had drawn enormous publicity to itself and the issues with which it was most concerned. At its first national convention in August of 1970 the group decided to sponsor its own candidate for the leadership of the NDP and announced further plans for a concentrated effort to pursue its nationalist goals. Although a number of Trotskyites and Communists had surfaced at this conference, great care was taken to insure that all proceedings were conducted by members of the NDP. Despite its obvious parallel party structure, independent activities and outspoken nature, the Waffle remained strictly a creation and instrument of the NDP.

Differences of opinion over the Waffle's priorities surfaced immediately following its first national convention. Wafflers such as Steve Penner, who had joined the group because of its fundamental approach to social problems at the community level, expressed disappointment that discussion of the leadership question had dominated a large

part of the convention's proceedings. Penner feared that an over-emphasis on politics would delay the building of the mass socialist base among the working class. Penner also expressed his discontent that the group was dominated by university-educated members of the middle class.<sup>28</sup> Complaints came in from Saskatchewan that the group was dominated by the Ontario members<sup>29</sup> and a representative of the New Democratic Youth accused the governing committee of elitism.<sup>30</sup> As the group began more to resemble a political party, it began to inherit the problems of such an organization.

In late August of 1970 the anxieties of Canadian nationalists such as the Wafflers were further heightened by the findings of the Wahn Report. This study, properly entitled *The Eleventh Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence Respecting Canada-U.S. Relations*, like the Watkins Report before it, pointed out the threat to Canadian political sovereignty which accompanied foreign investment. The Wahn Report called for the creation of the Canada Development Corporation and greater autonomy for Canadian unions which were affiliated with internationals. But also like the Watkins study, the Wahn Report received a negative response from the business community. In an editorial entitled "Tensions are Mounting," the *Financial Post* accused the report of being too "toughly nationalistic."<sup>31</sup> Responding

<sup>28</sup> Steve Penner, "National Conference Analysis," *Waffle News*, August 1970.

<sup>29</sup> Marilyn Hindmarch, Maija Crane, Lorne Brown, Caroline Brown and Pat Gallagher, "Saskatchewan Analysis of the National Convention," *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Financial Post*. Cited in Resnick, *The Land of Cain*, p. 158.

to the general reaction to the Wahn study, George Bain of the *Globe and Mail*, one of the few journalists who had tolerated the Waffle programme, commented:

If there is one thing that worries Canadians more than economic domination, it is that someone, sometime, will<sup>32</sup> try to do something about it.

In September of 1970 the new nationalist conscience which was emerging in Canada revealed itself through the formation of the non-political Committee for an Independent Canada (CIC). This nationalist pressure group, founded jointly by Walter Gordon, economist Abraham Rotstein and *Toronto Star* editor Peter Newman, took in a variety of nationalists who professed political convictions less radical than those of the Waffle. Although these individuals had expressed their concern for Canadian economic independence on previous occasions, they were prodded into action by the Waffle's virtual monopoly of nationalist issues. Journalist Christina Newman described the motivations of the group's founders:

That the Waffle was the only organized independentist movement in the country dismayed Gordon and Rotstein because they believed it would isolate nationalistic ideas in a fringe movement so remote from the Canadian political mainstream that they could never be realized. [The CIC] was meant to provide a focus for nationalists with ideas less radical -- though no less passionately<sup>33</sup> held -- than those of the Wafflers.

Although there was now a second nationalist group on Canada's

<sup>32</sup> Cited in Abraham Rotstein, "The Wahn Report," *Canadian Forum*, vol. I, no. 596, p. 195.

<sup>33</sup> Christina Newman, "Growing Up Reluctantly," *Macleans*, vol. 85, no. 8, August, 1972, p. 58. See also Cy Gonick, "Liberal-izing Continentalism," *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 7, no. 4, October-November, 1970, p. 5.

political horizon, the Waffle unquestionably remained the more militant and controversial of the two. On September 12, 1970, the group sponsored a nation-wide demonstration protesting the sale of Canadian resources to the United States. James Laxer especially disapproved of the Liberal government's continental trade agreements which he believed treated Canada as an American supply base and locked the country into a permanent state of underdevelopment. He also believed that American investment in Canadian resources created only temporary jobs for Canadians, threatened the environment and drew Canada into the American military machine. He made many of these ideas public in a little book entitled *The Energy Poker Game*. On the day of the rally Laxer addressed 120 people on Parliament Hill while in Toronto approximately 1,000 people participated in a Waffle-organized protest march. Groups of less than a hundred also partook in demonstrations in Edmonton, Regina and Calgary. The undertaking, however, had little effect on governmental policy. Later that month the Liberal government agreed to export 6.3 trillion cubic feet of natural gas worth \$2 billion to the United States over a fifteen year period.

The Waffle next turned its collective attention to the Ontario NDP convention of October 1, 2 and 3. The Waffle had earlier decided not to run a candidate for leadership at this convention and displayed little support for either of the two main contenders, Stephen Lewis and Walter Pitman, although both men had addressed a Waffle pre-convention rally on September 19. A Waffle spokesman criticized both Lewis and Pitman because "neither would advocate nationalization of private industry as the first step towards peoples' control of the Ontario

economy."<sup>34</sup> The Waffle convention strategy was to gain recognition of specific resolutions and to elect members to internal party posts. Its slogan going into the convention was: "Let's talk policy ... not personalities."

In the leadership race Stephen Lewis polled 1,188 votes as compared to Walter Pitman's 642 and Douglas Campbell's less-than-spectacular twenty-one. Waffler Krista Maeots lost the election for party president to Gordon Vichert by a vote of 818 to 416 and Waffler John Smart could only attract 373 votes to Gordon Brigden's 895 for the position of party secretary. Jackie Larkin Brown and Gordon Cleveland were unsuccessful in their attempts to win positions of vice-president. But Wafflers Bruce Kidd, Krista Maeots, John Smart and Jackie Larkin Brown were all elected to the provincial council. In addition, James Laxer received 637 votes to ensure him the position of one of two of the party's federal representatives.

Once again the Waffle had substantial impact on the party in the area of policy resolutions. The Ontario Manifesto "For a Socialist Ontario in an Independent Socialist Canada" was defeated by a narrow margin of 744 to 628. But the Waffle was triumphant with its resolution on the control of natural resources. Reacting to the recent sale of natural gas by the Liberal government to the United States, the convention enthusiastically passed the Waffle-sponsored resolution which read:

...the Ontario NDP, recognizing that the natural gas sale to the United States is the first step in a continental energy resources deal, advocates the nationalization of

<sup>34</sup> Tracy Morey, "Leadership Hopefuls Meet Wafflers," Ontario Waffle publication, Ontario NDP Convention, October 2, 3 and 4. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

the energy resources industries of Ontario and urges the federal government in conjunction with the provinces to bring about public ownership of these industries across<sup>35</sup> Canada.

The party also pledged not to honour any commitments arrived at by previous governments in regard to the sale of natural resources should the NDP assume power. And for immediate action, the party promised to sponsor a nation-wide educational programme dealing with the state of Canadian energy resources.

The excitement of the Ontario NDP convention, however, was eclipsed by events in another part of the country. As Ontario New Democrats were still mulling over the results of their recent conference, a bizarre episode in Canadian history was being written in the province of Quebec which interrupted and stupified all normal proceedings in the country. In stunned incomprehension, the entire nation awaited word on the kidnappings of British Counsel James Cross and Quebec cabinet minister Pierre Laporte by members of the separatist terrorist organization *Front de liberation du Quebec* (FLQ). On October 16 Prime Minister Trudeau invoked the War Measures Act suspending civil liberties and extending unrestricted power to authoritative agencies to aid in their search for the kidnappers. Tommy Douglas, David Lewis, Ed Broadbent and the majority of the NDP federal caucus were the only parliamentary voices to be raised in objection to the peace-time implementation of the Act. The next day Pierre Laporte's crumpled body was discovered in the trunk of a car. The horror of October 1970 temporarily brought together the different factions of the NDP just as it brought together differing elements of the country.

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<sup>35</sup>"The Waffle Campaign on Canadian Resources: Some Proposals," Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

The Waffle dropped its concentration on the question of energy resources and sponsored several rallies in defence of the small group of NDP MPs. Long-range goals were temporarily suspended as the Waffle, along with the rest of the country, suffered through a period of political and social disruption the likes of which few Canadians had previously witnessed.

Although normalcy would not return to the country for several months, the Waffle reverted to the pursuit of its original goals by late November at an Ontario Waffle conference. Included on the agenda of this meeting was the Waffle's relationship with labour, decision-making within the group and strategy for the upcoming NDP federal convention. The most important outcome of this meeting was the selection of James Laxer as leadership candidate. From this point to the time of the convention all Waffle activities and statements reflected an overall campaign strategy.

At the end of 1970 the Waffle remained the preeminent nationalist group in the country although its pressure and presence had indirectly led to the creation of a second patriotic grouping, the Committee for an Independent Canada. Through public rallies, written articles and press releases the Waffle had raised considerably the political consciences of Canadians with regard to the question of economic nationalism. At the Ontario NDP convention of October 1970 the group won support for a resolution calling for public ownership of the energy resources industry. But the group still encountered fierce opposition to its policies from certain quarters of the country. One of the most outspoken opponents of Waffle philosophy, Stanley Randall, Ontario Minister of Trade and Development, continued to insist that foreign investment was necessary to create employment. Prime Minister Trudeau claimed that economic nationalism was solely an Ontario phenomenon, but even he, near



the end of 1970, admitted: "I think the times have changed a bit... Canadians have become a lot more nationalist economically than they were before."<sup>36</sup>

The Waffle had made the question of economic nationalism the primary issue of concern at the NDP convention of 1969. Throughout the following year the group, through a variety of activities, brought this issue to the attention of the general public. At the end of 1970 the Waffle began to concentrate on a second national issue -- self-determination for the province of Quebec. In the mid 1960s James Laxer had expressed his doubt that separatism was a wise solution to the crisis in Quebec. The original Waffle Manifesto simply echoed the official NDP policy which recognized the national status of Quebec within the federal system although a resolution calling for self-determination had surfaced at the 1969 convention. In March of 1970, at the Waffle-sponsored University of Toronto public seminar, Laxer revealed the willingness of the Waffle to accept the principle of self-determination. On December 21, the Waffle spokesman, in an interview with *La Presse*, suggested that the NDP should attempt to seek some accommodation with the separatist *Parti Quebecois*. In January of 1971 a comprehensive Waffle resolution demanding Quebec's right to determine its own future was published in *Le Devoir*. The proposal read, in part:

Le Nouveau parti démocratique reconnaît au peuple du Québec le droit à l'auto-détermination nationale, y compris le droit d'établir un Etat indépendant du Québec.

But the Waffle qualified its call for self-determination by explicitly

<sup>36</sup> Cited in Resnick, *The Land of Cain*, p. 147.

stating its ultimate desire to see an alliance of English and French-speaking socialists:

A l'heure actuelle, les néo-démocrates ne doivent pas se laisser absorber par la définition d'aménagements constitutionnels, mais plutôt jeter les bases d'une alliance populaire entre les socialistes des deux nations du pays. Nous croyons que cette alliance dégagera progressivement plusieurs éléments d'un programme politique commun. Nous croyons aussi que, dans la mesure où le peuple du Québec et celui du Canada anglais se découvriront des aspirations communes, il leur apparaîtra justifié d'œuvrer à l'intérieur d'institutions économiques et politiques communes.<sup>37</sup>

Although the Waffle statement aroused the disfavour of Roland

Morin, the leader of the Quebec NDP, Claude Lemelin of *Le Devoir* wrote:

...the suggestions outlined by Jim Laxer and the Waffle group could turn out to be the only way to maintain fraternal links and an intimate and fruitful co-operation<sup>38</sup> between the two nations in Canada.

It took some months for the Waffle to arrive at a definitive view of the question of the self-determination of Quebec. The immediacy of the issue was undoubtedly heightened by the events of October 1970. But more importantly, the Waffle needed a new torch to carry into the NDP leadership convention. Although it had not abandoned its views on economic nationalism and public ownership, the Waffle needed to inject some fresh elements into its campaign to maintain the attention of fellow party members who, by now, were well acquainted with the group's nationalist and socialist philosophy. The Quebec question provided that new feature. Waffle pronouncements on self-determination were tactfully connected with other aspects of the leadership race. As Laxer unveiled the Waffle position on Quebec in a number of newspaper articles, interviews

<sup>37</sup> *Le Devoir*, January 19, 1971.

<sup>38</sup> Claude Lemelin, *Le Devoir*. Reprinted in *Waffle News*, January, 1971.

and speeches, he frequently included criticisms of the other candidates' views of the issue. David Lewis and Ed Broadbent, Laxer claimed, held a view of Quebec not essentially different from that of Pierre Trudeau while candidate John Harney was totally ambiguous on the question. The final candidate for leadership, Frank Howard, was chastized by the Waffle for having been one of four NDP MP's to support the War Measures Act. With this plank added to their nationalist and socialist platform, the Wafflers launched the Laxer campaign.

The battle between James Laxer and the other leadership candidates which would reach its point of climax at the NDP convention in April revealed itself in all party activities months prior to the gathering. While Lewis, Harney, Broadbent and Howard were competing with one another individually for the station of NDP chief, Laxer clearly represented not just new leadership for the party, but a fundamental change in ideology and direction. An early sign of this internal party division was revealed at an NDP federal council meeting held in Toronto July 16 and 17. The Waffle representatives on the council, acting as a bloc, criticized the partisan composition of the fifty-six member resolutions committee which had been named for the April convention. This was the committee that decided which resolutions received by the party from riding associations reached the floor for debate and in what shape and order. The Wafflers complained that the committee did not contain a fair proportion of their own representatives or female members. Although the council did not accept the proposal of Mel Watkins that the committee admit twenty Wafflers, ten men and ten women, the final composition did include approximately one-third women and an increased number of Waffle spokesmen. At the same two-day meeting the Waffle representatives also

convinced the federal council to consider a proposal calling for public ownership of the oil and gas industries in Canada.

It is clear that the Waffle had begun its campaign for James Laxer early in 1971; but it is equally true that the anti-Laxer forces were also profusely at work early in the year. On January 19, Desmond Morton, in a speech to the Don Valley NDP association, called the Wafflers "grinning, academic faces, hirsute and bespectacled, preaching total nationalization, bureaucracy and mindless, romantic protest." Morton accused the Waffle of adding to the longevity of the Trudeau regime by scaring off moderate NDP supporters with its radical policies.<sup>39</sup> More indicative of the growing tactical battle between Laxer and the mainstream candidates, however, was a confidential memorandum dated January 20 addressed to David Lewis from Marc Eliesen, the NDP director of research. Discussing the strategy of the Lewis camp at the upcoming convention, Eliesen wrote:

I suggest we attempt to seek Federal Council approval for the position that votes on resolution matters be taken at certain times during or at the end of the day. Because of the hard-core dedication of the Waffle Group, it is imperative that the anti-Waffle forces be there at all times when votes are taken on important policy matters. A large number of labour delegates do not participate in these policy matters and are therefore very difficult to<sup>40</sup> round up for the final votes.

Eliesen's note revealed two engaging elements. First, it was an unequivocal admission that the Waffle forces posed a realistic threat to the favoured positions of the NDP's hierarchy. Secondly, it divulged that the

<sup>39</sup> Desmond Morton, "Comment on the Waffle," CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>40</sup> Confidential Memorandum, Marc Eliesen to David Lewis, January 20, 1971. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

Lewis forces were depending heavily on the labour delegates for support.

Exhibiting greater confidence about the leadership convention publicly than his aid Marc Eliesen had expressed in private, David Lewis continued the campaign through a press release issued January 28. It read, in part:

I am certain that the convention next April will defeat the more extreme, unrealistic and doctrinaire Waffle proposals and I hope that an end may be brought to the harmful and divisive factionalism which is as unnecessary as it is dangerous.

In this same item Lewis accused the Waffle of fraternizing with the *Parti Quebecois* and thus contravening the NDP's pro-federalist conviction. The Waffle, Lewis claimed, had confused the public and damaged the image of the NDP by behaving like an independent political party. The Waffle's nationalization schemes were "old fashioned and out of date socialist fundamentalism." "There will for a long time to come, if not forever, be a large and important private sector in the economy," Lewis concluded.<sup>41</sup>

On February 2 Ed Broadbent issued a press release in which he echoed Lewis's regret that the Waffle had distorted the policies of the NDP in the public mind.<sup>42</sup> Two days later Frank Howard made his contribution to the pile of press releases through a public statement declaring that the Waffle was attempting to "establish by noise what it cannot substantiate in reason." Howard rejected the Waffle's proposals of

<sup>41</sup> David Lewis News Release, January 28, 1971. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>42</sup> Ed Broadbent News Release, February 2, 1971. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

public ownership as well as its policies on Quebec which he interpreted as "destructive both to the NDP and to the concept of Canadian unity."

Howard called on the other leadership candidates to explicitly announce their stands on the Waffle programme.<sup>43</sup> This last request clearly revealed the polarizing nature of the continuing campaign.

James Laxer responded to this barrage of criticism on February 12. Laxer claimed that Lewis's and Howard's criticisms of the Waffle only revealed their own lack of policies. He steadfastly denied that the Waffle constituted a party within a party. Laxer also dismissed the charge that the Waffle resolution on Quebec was pro-separatist, although he added:

Quebec and English Canada must have the right to limit their relationship or expand it depending on the democratic decisions of each people.<sup>44</sup>

Laxer was still not openly advocating independence for the province of Quebec. He consistently maintained his original desire to see English and French-speaking socialists join together to combat the encroachments of the American empire. But he was adamant in his belief that the nature of any such alliance, if it was to be effective, must be based upon the freely-expressed aspirations of the two parties.

Much to the chagrin of David Lewis and the other non-Waffle leadership candidates, the Waffle position on Quebec suddenly assumed greater credence late in February when the Quebec NDP elected Raymond Laliberté

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<sup>43</sup> Frank Howard News Release, February 4, 1971. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>44</sup> James Laxer News Release, February 12, 1971. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

party president. Laliberté was the former leader of Quebec's largest and most militant teachers' union. With the open support and encouragement of the Waffle, the Quebec NDP, urged on by Laliberté, adopted a resolution of self-determination identical in nature and spirit to the Waffle position.

Although the leadership convention was still two months away, the major issues of debate and the proponents and opponents of each had been clearly determined. The Waffle had successfully dominated the 1969 convention with its radical nationalist programme due to the absence of other substantial issues. In 1971 the group was still the centre of attention; but this time it had made itself noticeable by moulding the question of Quebec into the major convention issue. As convention time drew nearer, the growing tension within the NDP was explored in the public press.

In a feature story on NDP MP and anti-Waffler Max Saltzman, Richard Jackson, in the February 19 edition of the *Victoria Daily Colonist*, maliciously attacked the leftist group. Jackson heartily agreed with Saltzman's contention that the Waffle displayed "arrogant pretence at intellectual superiority." Jackson chastized the "wildmen of the Waffle" for their harsh criticism of Saltzman's support of the War Measures Act and claimed that they would lead to the destruction of the NDP if they were not routed.<sup>45</sup> Other mainstream newspapers in Canada displayed a slightly greater tolerance of the Waffle programme. On February 10, the *Toronto Star* editorialized:

<sup>45</sup> Richard Jackson, *Victoria Daily Colonist*, February 19, 1971.

The ideal outcome [of the convention] is a win for the NDP establishment, but with the Waffle staying in the party as a strong intelligent ginger group. Organized labour needs a rap or two, especially about foreign control, and Mr. Lewis may shirk from administering it unless pushed. The parliamentarians need reminding that all the answers aren't in Ottawa. And everyone needs to think more about Quebec, not excluding thinking the<sup>46</sup> unthinkable.

On February 20 the *Moose Jaw Times Herald* offered this opinion of the Waffle:

At least we know exactly where they stand and they have, for the first time in many a moon, given the people some clear-cut alternatives when they go to<sup>47</sup> the polls.

The most intense moments of the Waffle debate undoubtedly occurred within the ranks of the NDP itself. Stephen Lewis, getting into the act to help out his father's bid for leadership and displaying his own anti-Waffle sentiments, attacked the group at a provincial council meeting of the Ontario NDP in Kitchener on February 21. Twenty-four hours before Lewis spoke a partial text of his speech, in which he criticized the Waffle for its extremism and in particular its Quebec policy, had appeared on the front page of the *Globe and Mail*. One week later, in Hamilton, Desmond Morton was back into the fray. This time addressing a steelworkers political conference, Morton asserted that the Waffle was "almost totally ignorant of the roots of the Canadian left, its traditions and its circumstances." He accused the group of importing the bulk of its ideas from the United States. Its stand on Quebec, Morton claimed, would lead to the break up of the country. The Waffle's ideas were "archaic...opportunistic" and "irrelevant."

<sup>46</sup> *Toronto Star*, February 10, 1971.

<sup>47</sup> *Moose Jaw Times-Herald*, February 20, 1971.



Moreover, the members of the group were not even good party workers.<sup>48</sup>

Months before the convention the sides were clearly drawn. It was equally clear that Laxer stood alone on one side of a platform and faced four opponents whose programmes, while not interchangeable, all paled in comparison to the radicalism of the doctrines of the Waffle. Laxer travelled throughout the country during his campaign speaking individually on more than eighty occasions and entering into debate with other leadership candidates no less than twenty times. Nearing the end of the campaign it became apparent that the race was between James Laxer representing the Waffle and David Lewis personifying the party's moderate wing. Lewis had the support of thirteen of twenty-two members of the NDP parliamentary caucus. Laxer, on the other hand, could depend upon the votes of many Ontario Wafflers who had worked profusely within their riding associations to have themselves elected delegates to the convention. Laxer, however, was not the object of affection amongst the officialdom of the trade unions.

Although Laxer had approached the unionists during the pre-convention period he had relatively little success in shaking the bad name the Waffle had incurred among labour leaders. The group naturally had made few friends with people it had accused of being sellouts to the system, right-wing and paternalistic. Waffle attacks on the American infiltration of Canada were not well received in union offices which were affiliated with international organizations centred in the United States. The anti-Waffle sentiments shared by the union brass were

<sup>48</sup> Desmond Morton, "The Waffle Within the Ontario New Democratic Party," CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

revealed through a number of statements issued to the press. In a *Globe and Mail* article of April 12, Dennis McDermott criticized the Waffle's dogmatism and revealed his own interpretation of political idealism:

[The Waffle] has turned out to be a haven for every social misfit in the party ... They boast they are better socialists than anyone else. But the best socialist of all is Ed Schreyer. He won an election and that is what politics<sup>49</sup> is all about.

In the same article, Fred Dowling, Canadian Director of Food and Allied Workers, asserted:

Basically the Waffle did more to damage the party than anything that's happened in the past fifteen years. I am completely opposed to their whole position.<sup>50</sup>

Art Kube, director of the white collar workers of the CLC, added:

...it's time we had people who did some work rather than professors who write resolutions.<sup>51</sup>

A convention booklet published by the United Steelworkers also revealed a strong leadership disapproval of Waffle policy and strategy. The second sentence of the pamphlet's preamble is clearly an implicit warning to union delegates to beware of Waffle rhetoric:

A unique opportunity lies with the federal NDP convention to chart courses away from the policies of erosion practiced by the Liberals and Conservatives for the past twenty-five years. *But the delegates must make sure that sterile debate on extraneous matters or artificial competition over words "right" or "left," do not divert that purpose.* [Italics as in original]<sup>52</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *Globe and Mail*, April 12, 1971.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

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

<sup>52</sup> United Steelworkers of America, *Information* vol. 19, no. 1, March 1971.

At the 1969 convention in Winnipeg, Dennis McDermott spoke for many delegates when he objected to the Waffle programme on the grounds that it was poor election material. Two years later, many party members still shared this sentiment. The burden of alienating ideology, however, was a theme which had been debated throughout the entire existence of the NDP and its predecessor, the CCF. Prior to the 1971 leadership election, the recurring problem was expressed succinctly by NDP MP Max Saltzman:

My choice is a man who can put the party in a position so that it can approach the public. I'm tired of belonging to a debating society. We have to be willing to pay the price of being a party. That price is not to always be <sup>53</sup> the conscience of the country.

Once again faced with the problem of purism versus pragmatism, the NDP entered into a four-day debate over its future starting on April 21, 1971.

The NDP leadership convention took place at the Ottawa Civic Centre. The presence of the Waffle once again permeated every facet of the conference, but the Ottawa meeting differed from the Winnipeg gathering of 1969 in two important ways. First, the Waffle phenomenon was now well known to party members. There was nothing new or novel about the group. As a result, there was organized opposition within the party, particularly amongst unionists, prepared to meet the radicals on the convention floor resolution by resolution, vote by vote. Secondly, there was the all important question of the leadership race. All Waffle resolutions inevitably became synonymous with the Laxer leadership campaign. The Waffle was now offering a package deal to the delegates. For the majority

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<sup>53</sup> *Toronto Star*, April 22, 1971.

of them, it was an all or nothing affair. The Waffle could only hope to have most of its resolutions passed if it could carry the leadership race as well.

The first resolution to reach the floor was a Waffle proposal calling for increased female representation on governing councils of the NDP. The motion was presented by Waffler Krista Macots and seconded by leadership candidate John Harney. Although this was a fairly moderate resolution with which to begin debate because it appealed to some non-Waffle women as well as some non-Waffle males, such as Harney, the proposal was rejected. The Waffle claimed that the remainder of the policies which it had submitted to the resolutions committee for approval had been severely distorted and debilitated. The revision of one such policy resulted in the presentation and adoption of a foreign aid resolution which halved the designated amount of Canada's contribution to international development as had been agreed upon at the Winnipeg convention. The Waffle also failed to have its strong condemnations of the Viet Nam War and the War Measures Act adopted by the convention. Of fifty-eight submitted proposals on foreign policy, the resolutions committee allowed only four to reach the floor. Waffle resolutions on agriculture and extra-parliamentary activity were rejected outright. The greatest electoral successes experienced by the Waffle at the convention were the triumphant passages of a resolution banning leadership placards from the convention floor and a second one requesting a time change of a planned demonstration on Parliament Hill.

On the question of public ownership, the resolution adopted by the convention was an unequivocal retreat from the party's former stand. Whereas the NDP had previously put forward a policy calling for the

nationalization of the oil and gas industries, the new position only mentioned public ownership as a possibility. In his persuasive manner, retiring leader Tommy Douglas reassured the delegates: "There must always be a role for private ownership where competition is sufficient to prevent exploitation of the public and employees."<sup>54</sup> But the shift in party strategy, according to Ed Broadbent, put the NDP "back to the late fifties in terms of policy positions."<sup>55</sup>

Undoubtedly, the most important issue discussed at the convention was the question of Quebec. Opinions on this subject were distinctively divided between Wafflers and non-Wafflers. James Laxer, with the support of Richard Comber and Raymond Laliberté of the Quebec NDP, had submitted a resolution supporting the right of self-determination for the province of Quebec. The majority of New Democrats, prodded by the party leadership, could not accept this position fearing that it would be interpreted by the public as a pro-separatist stance. Seeking compromise, and consequently alienating a number of his own supporters, Ed Broadbent devised a resolution calling for continued support of the federal system while simultaneously recognizing Quebec's ultimate right to self-determination. But both sides of the Quebec debate remained intransigent and neither Wafflers nor moderates accepted Broadbent's proposal. The final resolution on Quebec adopted by the convention was one composed by Charles Taylor of McGill University which took a strong federalist stand but censored force as a method of maintaining national

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Cited in Michael S. Cross, "Third Class on the Titanic: The NDP Convention," *Canadian Forum*, vol. L1, no. 603-604, April-May 1971, p. 4.

unity. The Waffle lost this most important debate by a vote of 853 to 425.

One faction of the party which was especially critical of the Waffle's Quebec resolution was a lobby of moderate New Democrats who called themselves the NDP NOW group. This cadre, which had been organized by Desmond Morton a few months prior to the convention, was decidedly anti-Waffle in its purpose and approach and had fought with Wafflers for control of the convention's resolutions committee. The NDP NOW group stressed the importance of electoral victory and excoriated the Waffle for its idealistic and doctrinaire approach to the Canadian political scene. Individual members of the NDP NOW aggregation challenged Waffle candidates for several internal party positions. Joyce Nash and Peggy Prowse of NDP NOW were elected vice-presidents of the party while the Waffle managed only to maintain a single representative in this office. NDP NOW member Mary Eady was returned as party treasurer and Roland Morin, NDP NOW advisor, was re-elected associate president of the party by a margin of 807 to 680 over the Waffle choice and Quebec-backed Marc Boulard. In other party elections the Waffle placed only two of its members on the federal council, a decrease from its 1969 tally. For the office of party president Donald Macdonald defeated Saskatchewan Waffler Carol Gudmundsen by a verdict of 885 to 565.

Of course, the most important and intriguing battle of the convention was the leadership race itself. David Lewis, the oldest and most experienced CCF/NDPer of the leadership candidates, was favoured to win. John Harney and Ed Broadbent, however, were both popular high-profile members of the party, and Frank Howard could depend on some patriotic support from the British Columbia delegates, at least on the first ballot.

Then there was James Laxer. Laxer was unquestionably more than a singular threat to David Lewis and the other leadership candidates. He carried with him the Waffle label. He was the representative and leadership choice of the group of New Democrats who for the past two years had kept the party in a state of constant tumult and confusion. A strong second-place finish by Laxer would be an effective reminder to the party hierarchy of the discontent which remained within the NDP pertaining to official policy and practice. Realizing the potential danger of a strong showing by Laxer, some Lewis supporters admitted the possibility of voting for Broadbent on the first ballot to prevent Laxer from finishing a too-respectable second.<sup>56</sup> Lewis's ultimate desire was to win the leadership of the party and discredit the Waffle group at the same time. He only received half his wish.

The furious months of campaigning and cajoling were reduced to the intensity of a few moments when the results of the leadership balloting were announced. The voting pattern was as follows:

| Ballot    | I   | II  | III | IV   |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Lewis     | 661 | 715 | 742 | 1046 |
| Laxer     | 378 | 407 | 508 | 612  |
| Harney    | 299 | 347 | 431 |      |
| Broadbent | 236 | 223 |     |      |
| Howard    | 124 |     |     |      |

David Lewis was undoubtedly the delegates' choice for leader as was demonstrated by his personal poll on the first vote and increasing strength on each successive ballot. James Laxer's second-place finish after the first ballot, however, revealed the force of a strong Waffle

<sup>56</sup> Peter Regenstrief, "Waffle Sharpens Old NDP Dilemma: Is it Political Party or Movement?," *Toronto Star*, April 22, 1971.

contingent. Laxer's gains following the first vote were probably more indicative of the presence of moderate anti-Lewis sentiments than they were of Waffle popularity. Judging from the decrease in support for Ed Broadbent between the first and second ballots, it can be conjectured that some Lewis supporters made good on their promise to vote for Broadbent on the first ballot in an attempt to push Laxer off the board sooner. This strategy failed due to the strength of Laxer's forces and also on account of John Harney's surprising third-place finish on the first ballot. It is a reasonable assumption that the vast majority of the 490 voting delegates representing trade unions affiliated with the NDP followed the advice of their leaders and supported David Lewis. If this is true, then Lewis and Laxer almost evenly split the remaining delegate votes on the last ballot.

James Laxer, after the final count, followed tradition and called upon the delegates to express unanimous support for David Lewis as new leader, a gesture which elicited disdain from some of the more intransigent Wafflers. In a show of strong party solidarity David Lewis responded by declaring: "I look forward to working with Jim Laxer and his supporters in a unified party in the next election."<sup>57</sup> But in a more sobering moment Lewis had commented: "After the convention we will put our house in order."<sup>58</sup> Laxer's defeat led to contentious debate in the immediate post-convention discussions as to the future of the Waffle.

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<sup>57</sup> Cited in James Harding, "The Unity of Opposites: The Waffle and the NDP," *Our Generation*, vol. 7, no. 4, vol. 8, no. 8, September 1971, p. 108.

<sup>58</sup> Chodos, Burgess and Davidson, "David: The Centre of his Party," p. 32.



In the *Canadian Forum* Michael Cross expressed his suspicions that a purge of the leftist group was in the offing.<sup>59</sup> In a post-convention interview in the *Globe and Mail*, Lewis explicitly stated his opinion of the Waffle and the state of the NDP:

The Waffle is an organization of its own. I am the leader of the NDP and I don't intend to spend any time talking about the Waffle. I am not going to be articulating any policies of the Waffle. I will spend my time talking about the policies of the NDP.<sup>60</sup>

An ultimate clash between the Waffle and the NDP's moderate wing had been formulating ever since the radical splinter group first appeared in 1969. David Lewis had hoped that the 1971 leadership convention would prove to be the final showdown, but this was not to be the case. Although Waffle convention strategy had been stifled at almost every turn by organized lobbies such as the NDP NOW group which challenged the radicals on resolutions and for party positions, the Laxer camp still managed to attract thirty to forty per cent support on most debates. Moreover, twenty-nine year old James Laxer had taken David Lewis to a fourth ballot before the leadership race was decided. Events at the convention had only further emphasized the polarization which was plaguing the party. As in 1969, both sides left the federal convention claiming an important moral victory. The mutual elation would soon end.

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<sup>59</sup> Michael S. Cross, *Canadian Forum*, p. 59.

<sup>60</sup> *Globe and Mail*, April 26, 1971.

### CHAPTER III:

#### DISSOCIATION AND DISINTEGRATION

In the months immediately following the NDP leadership convention the Waffle exhibited an intractable will to survive. Despite the opposition it had confronted at the meeting and irrespective of David Lewis's pronouncement that the NDP would soon put its house in order, the Waffle continued to hold meetings and promulgate policies in pursuit of its goal of independence and socialism for Canada. Waffle organizations in Kingston, St. Catharines and Oshawa increased their membership and new cells were created in Windsor, London, Guelph, Hamilton and Sudbury. The St. Catharines group formed a Waffle Labour Caucus and in the summer of 1971 a Waffle women's wing was instituted. In June the Waffle initiated plans for a counter-conference to protest the Conference on Economic and Cultural Nationalism proposed by the Ontario provincial government. The NDP provincial caucus expressed its approval of these plans and the party eventually agreed to sponsor the event. In July Waffler John Smart presented a brief to the National Energy Board objecting to six separate applications requesting the export of natural gas to the United States. The national media coverage attracted by Smart's brief may have influenced the board's final decision to reject all six applications. Although the Gallup poll of June 1971 indicated that the NDP was favoured by twenty-four per cent of the respondents, the highest ranking the party had achieved in four years, David Lewis

and the party hierarchy came to believe that the time had come to take decisive action against the Waffle. Before the final battle between the Waffle and the NDP began, however, the left-wing group involved itself in several newsworthy events. The most important of these was the Tex Pack strike in Brantford in July of 1971.

Tex Pack Limited of Brantford manufactured gauge dressings and filter materials for industrial use. The plant was owned by the American Hospital Supply Corporation (AHSC) of Evanston, Illinois, a multinational company with branches in 120 countries. The May 1970 edition of *Fortune* listed the AHSC as the fourteenth fastest growing corporation in America. By mid 1971, however, the Brantford plant had stopped producing several items and was being used simply as a depot and distribution centre for material manufactured in other AHSC factories. This slowdown in production led to the laying off of 126 members of the predominantly female work corps between March and July of 1971. The average take home pay of the remaining workers, who were members of the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union, was less than sixty-five dollars per week. On July 16, seventy-five workers, objecting to the recent layoffs and rejecting the company's offer of a twenty cent per hour increase in pay over a two year period, walked out on strike.

The reaction of Tex Pack management to the strike was immediate and ruthless. In the July 28 edition of the *Hamilton Spectator*, the company, using an alias, advertised for strike-breakers. These replacement workers were bussed in to Brantford from Hamilton at company expense and were guaranteed safe passage in and out of the plant by various contingents of the Hamilton, Ancaster, Brantford and Ontario Provincial Police. In addition, the company withheld vacation pay from striking workers.

Both of these tactics, that of advertising for strike-breakers and withholding vacation pay, under the circumstances, contravened Ontario Labour Law. Fifteen strikers also received telegrams announcing their dismissal from the company. Facing almost insurmountable odds and receiving no financial assistance from the Brantford District Labour Council because their union was not affiliated with the CLC, the strikers appealed to the Waffle for assistance in early August.

The Waffle had little trouble collaborating with radical textile unionist and nationalist Kent Rowley who shared the group's discontent with international unionism. Once committed, the Waffle quickly put its well-oiled organizational machine to work. It instructed a group of University of Toronto professors to prepare a report on the strike for submission to the Ontario Legislature and organized a demonstration in Toronto to protest government inaction. The promotion of the strike which occurred as a result of Waffle involvement encouraged the Brantford District Labour Council to issue a statement and organize a rally supporting the strikers, although the committee still withheld financial aid. The Waffle also arranged for sympathetic members of Local 1005 of the Hamilton Steelworkers Union to join the picket line at Tex Pack. This increased physical presence led to a number of confrontations on the picket line resulting in the arrest of fifty demonstrators, among them Mel Watkins, Robert Laxer and Steve Penner.

By mid fall of 1971, after a long and strenuous struggle, the strike was won. Almost all of the strikers were recalled and granted a forty-four cent per hour increase over two years. The Waffle had clearly assisted in the success of the strike through its contributions of massive publicity and bodily reinforcements. Although this was a

happier moment for the Waffle than had been the aftermath of the Dunlop strike in Toronto, the group had encountered similar problems. First, the presence of the Waffle had created some trepidation amongst local unionists who believed an alien philosophy was being foisted upon the workers. Some of the sympathetic strikers in Brantford refused to distribute literature which was stamped with the Waffle logo. Secondly, the Waffle had once again undermined the authority and hegemony of labour's designated spokesmen. Objections to this type of interference surfaced in the midst of the strike in a speech delivered by Jean Beaudry, executive vice-president of the CLC, at the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour Convention held October 15, 1971. At that meeting Beaudry succinctly voiced organized labour's views of the overzealousness of the Waffle:

What is giving the organized labour movement concern is the fact that these groups have not been content to stay working for political solutions within the party, but have engaged themselves actively within the labour movement and have attempted to take unto themselves the right to make trade union decisions, even though the majority of them lack any trade union experience.

Beaudry spoke for many union leaders when he concluded: "We don't appreciate and will not tolerate outside interference."

Although the Waffle's latest intrigues in Brantford had once again raised the ire of the labour wing of the NDP, the different factions of the party interrupted their bickering long enough to prepare for the Ontario provincial election which had been called for October 21, 1971. The party centred its official campaign largely around the moderate, if aggressive, image of its new leader, Stephen Lewis. In fact, in the

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<sup>1</sup> Jean Beaudry, October 15, 1971. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

final weeks of the campaign, a *Globe and Mail* editorial declared Robert Nixon, leader of the provincial Liberal Party, the more radical of the two men.. The official NDP campaign concentrated on issues such as a guaranteed annual income, free tuition, salaries for housewives and the extension of medicare and largely ignored questions of labour policy and working class conditions. This approach presented a curious contradiction to the programmes of six Waffle members who had successfully procured the NDP nominations in their ridings. Although these candidates time and time again pledged their allegiance to the NDP, their particular campaigns were dominated by Waffle strategy and policies.

Although all party members were disappointed with the NDP's poor third-place finish in the election, especially with the losses of working class districts such as Brantford and Oshawa, the Wafflers were generally pleased with their own personal showings. None of the six NDP-Waffle candidates were elected to the Legislature, but five of them managed to increase the percentage of the NDP vote in their ridings as compared to the provincial election of 1967. Dan Heap who ran on an NDP-Waffle ticket in St. Andrew/St. Patrick raised the party vote 16.4 per cent. Steve Penner in Dovercourt improved on the NDP rating 5.6 per cent and came within thirty-eight votes of victory. Dave Neumann in Brant, Jean Usher in Carleton East and Garth Stevenson in Carleton increased the NDP poll 7, 14.3 and 4.1 per cent respectively. Bruce Kidd, who ran on an NDP-Waffle ticket in the riding of Beaches-Woodbine incurred a loss of 3.8 per cent of the vote and lost a party-held seat. Naturally, the Waffle was elated with these results in view of the fact that the overall party improvement across the province had only amounted to 1.3 per cent. This accomplishment, however, should not be overstated.

Because the Waffle carefully handpicked the ridings in which it believed its support was strongest, and ignored the others, it did not have to share the inevitable losses the party encountered in traditional Tory and Liberal ridings. Moreover, the attraction of the Waffle programme drew some campaign workers away from their home ridings thus leaving local candidates short of election helpers.

Within a week of the election the Waffle controversy within the NDP was rekindled. Once again, the major confrontation took place between the Waffle and the trade union leadership group. Two days prior to the Ontario Federation of Labour convention which was planned to run for three days starting on October 31, the Waffle Labour Caucus introduced itself at a press conference. The purpose of the new Waffle wing was described in the following highly convoluted terms:

The job of the labour caucus is to suggest and to carry out ways of heightening radical socialist [sic] consciousness and at initiating a revolutionary movement among workers in order to establish a dictatorship of the working class which will evolve into a communistic<sup>2</sup> society.

Although the Waffle had previously spoken of the need to create a mass socialist base at the grassroots level of society, and had criticized both the NDP and the CLC for their negligence in this matter, the group's labour statement was the most radical example of Marxist-Leninist thought which it had yet offered. To many observers the Waffle was beginning to resemble a Communist party, minus the Moscow connection.

The Waffle labour programme was fully explained in a pamphlet

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<sup>2</sup> Statement of the Labour Caucus. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

entitled "A Socialist Program for Canadian Trade Unionists." This document was circulated at the OFL convention by the Waffle which also operated a hospitality suite at the Royal York Hotel for the duration of the conference. The statement called for massive increases in public ownership and worker control and a better deal for women, the unorganized and the unemployed. The programme was ferocious in its attack on union leadership. The labour hierarchy, according to the Waffle, had succumbed to the pressures of the capitalist system and betrayed its working class roots. The "right wing establishment in the trade union movement" had replaced "rank and file militancy with bureaucracy." Under a section entitled *The Brass*, the Waffle passed the following judgement on trade unionism in Canada:

Before the labour movement will be able to mobilize its great strength for immediate and long range battles, we must realize that under a right wing bureaucracy, the official trade union movement has become a major institution buttressing private corporate enterprise.

"At bottom," the Waffle added, union leaders who had sold out to the interests of American corporate society and alienated their own members in the process, had "no stomach for the<sup>3</sup> struggle to free Canada from the American empire."<sup>3</sup>

Once again the Waffle perceived nationalism as the logical base upon which to build a new social movement. The first step in the process was to be the establishment of "completely sovereign and independent Canadian unions" which could pursue the particular interests of the Canadian worker. Once out from under the control of the internationals,

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<sup>3</sup> Waffle Labour Committee, "A Socialist Program for Canadian Trade Unionists," CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.



small and ineffective Canadian versions of larger American models would be able to merge and form powerful forces for social change. All of this was to take place with the complete involvement of the rank and file members of each union:

In place of 'business unionism' which has aped the capitalists in their methods, motivation and style of operation, and which has in effect become a buttress of capitalism as a system, organized labour needs social unionism with a strong, democratic edge based on militant action to defend the all round<sup>4</sup> interests of the workers.

Union leaders naturally responded angrily to the Waffle accusations. Labour veterans who had more than once been involved in long and bitter strikes and frustrating bargaining sessions with management resented being labelled right wing and docile. Many union leaders believed that they alone could understand and represent the views and needs of their members. The aspirations of the Waffle were foreign to many rank and file workers as well. "With the working people in the lead," the Waffle declared, "other sections of society such as students and farmers, will join increasingly in the struggle to build an independent socialist Canada."<sup>5</sup> To the ordinary Canadian workingman whose main concerns were wages, hours of work, pensions and holidays, this role as vanguard of the New Jerusalem imposed upon him from outside was indeed overwhelming.

The Waffle encountered the greatest amount of criticism to its labour programmes from the large international unions such as the United Steelworkers and the United Auto Workers<sup>A</sup> of America. Dennis

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<sup>4</sup>"Labour in Ontario," Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>5</sup><sup>A</sup>"A Socialist Programme for Canadian Trade Unionists."

McDermott of the United Auto Workers, a long-time outspoken foe of the Waffle, and other officials of the internationals were naturally uncomfortable with the Waffle's insistence on completely sovereign Canadian unions. Donald MacDonald, president of the CLC, William Dodge, the CLC's secretary-treasurer, and William Mahoney, Canadian Director of the United Steelworkers were all members of the Canadian-American Committee, a pro-continental organization which promoted greater Canadian-American economic integration. Directing his comments specifically to the question of nationalism, Larry Sefton, a former director of the United Steelworkers provided the classic response:

Nationalism has never put a penny in a worker's pocket and it never will. Nationalism has never rallied the workers to anything but the trenches for conflicts between the races of people on earth.

The escalating battle between the Waffle and the unionists would shortly make it impossible for both groups to continue existing within the same organization.

The Waffle's almost independent participation in the Ontario provincial election and its continuing agitation against union leaders pushed the party officialdom to its breaking point. Writing in the *Ottawa Citizen* November 4, 1971, NDP spokesman and strategist Desmond Morton asserted: "By making the NDP appear faction-ridden and far more extreme than its actual programme, the Waffle hurt the party's electoral prospects." The purpose of the NDP, Morton claimed, was to "become a government, not a perfectionist sect." Morton also revealed in this

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<sup>6</sup> Cited in Robert Laxer, *Canada's Unions* (Toronto, 1976), p. 119.

article the growing incompatibility between the Waffle and the NDP's affiliated labour wing. If the party was to recover in Ontario, Morton concluded, the Waffle would have to go.<sup>7</sup> It would not be long before an implicit state of war was declared within the NDP.

The first volley to be fired in the battle came from Don Eastman of the Hamilton Mountain Riding Association. Eastman, who had been defeated in the Ontario provincial election, blamed his loss on the presence of the Waffle within the NDP, despite the fact that fellow candidates Ian Deans, Norm Davison and Reg Gisborn had all been victorious in the Hamilton area. Nevertheless, Eastman desired to see the Waffle expelled from the party and, through the Hamilton Mountain Riding Association, proposed that the section of the NDP's constitution which forbade members to support other political organizations be amended to read:

Exclusion from membership belonging to or supporting another political party include those who adhere to any clearly identifiable ongoing political group who organize, solicit funds, employ staff, hold press conferences to expound their point of view instead of operating within and supporting democratically arrived at decisions of the party through convention and<sup>8</sup> council action.

Eastman did everything except add the phrase "and those calling themselves Wafflers" to specify exactly to whom his resolution was directed. The Hamilton Mountain statement appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on November 30 along with an endorsement from Ian Deans, the Ontario

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<sup>7</sup> Desmond Morton, *Ottawa Citizen*, November 4, 1971.

<sup>8</sup> Hamilton Mountain Riding Association resolution. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

NDP House leader. Dennis McDermott also voiced his approval of the motion as did the Welland NDP riding association. But there was no unanimity amongst NDPers as to how the Waffle problem should be approached. Although the majority of party members could not support the group's radical programmes, many of them appreciated the policy debates which were frequently initiated by the Waffle and respected the long-standing CCF/NDP tradition of internal party dissent. In response to the Hamilton Mountain resolution, the following statement was forwarded to the Ontario executive from the Bellwoods Riding Association:

...the membership of Bellwoods riding association urges the party not to embark on this course. It is our feeling that Waffle supporters are loyal members of our party. Any attempt to limit debate through administrative measures<sup>9</sup> can only in the end do irreparable damage to the party.

Similar resolutions were received from St. David's, Sudbury, Eglinton, Etobicoke, Windsor West, St. Catharines, Peterborough County, High Park and Halton East, not all Waffle-controlled ridings.

Over the next couple of months the war within the NDP remained in the paper stage. Resolution after resolution were met with an equal number of counter-resolutions. As the debate escalated within the party, events in the federal political arena reminded the Waffle and the general public of the premise upon which the group had initially been founded. Late in 1971 the findings of another Royal Commission on foreign investment in Canada, the Gray Report, were leaked to the *Canadian Forum*. The Gray study, which was never officially released to the public, surpassed the Watkins Report of 1968 in its exposition of

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<sup>9</sup> Bellwoods Riding Association Resolution. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

the political and economic dangers foreign investment created in Canada. The strongest palliative suggested by Gray, however, was the creation of a foreign investment screening agency. The weaknesses of Gray's proposals, in view of the damaging evidence he had uncovered, provoked Mel Watkins to assert publicly that the need for independence and socialism in Canada was now more relevant than ever.<sup>10</sup> Although the Gray Report was destined to join its predecessors, the Watkins and Wahn studies, on the now-crowded parliamentary shelf, its forced appearance served to remind many Canadians that the issue of economic nationalism as encompassed by the Waffle remained a tangible and serious question.

Early in 1972 the attentions of the Waffle switched back to its own affairs. On January 9 of that year, in conjunction with the Windsor and District Labour Council, the group sponsored a symposium criticizing the terms of the Canadian-American Auto-Pact. Ed Broadbent and Ted Bounsall, the newly-elected NDP MP for Windsor and party labour critic addressed the 350 people in attendance. Although the meeting had been endorsed by the Windsor and District Labour Council and had earned the praise of the *Windsor Star* and the city's mayor, Dennis McDermott of the UAW was infuriated with the Waffle's actions. McDermott was especially upset with the Waffle's suggestion that the autoworkers participate in a one-day work stoppage. This, McDermott believed, constituted a blatant infringement upon the rights and prerogatives of labour's proper leaders.

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<sup>10</sup> See Mel Watkins, "Three Socialists Look at the Gray Report," *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 8, no. 4-5, January 1972, and Watkins, "A Strategy for whom?," *Canadian Forum*, vol. 11, no. 612-613, January-February, 1972.

Moreover, if the workers chose to follow the Waffle lead the credibility of unionists such as McDermott would be damaged in the eyes of both labour and management. McDermott unleashed his anger in the *Windsor Star* on January 17:

✓ [The UAW] has dissociated itself from the activities of the Waffle and, in my view, the NDP will have to do the same thing...the Waffle is acting as an independent party doing its own thing without consulting anyone...the leaders of the Waffle are footloose academics with no affinity and very little understanding of labour. 11

On January 18 in the *Globe and Mail* James Laxer responded to McDermott's comments and attacked the UAW director for his anti-nationalism:

I have no intention of behaving like a compromised Canadian just because Mr. McDermott is more concerned about the heads of his union in Detroit than he is about the sellout of the auto pact safeguards... 12

From the beginning, because of its harsh criticisms of international unionism, the Waffle had never won the affection of labour leaders whose organizations were affiliated with groups in the United States. The rift between the unions and the Waffle increased in proportion as the leftist group continually involved itself with labour affairs, programmes and strategy. Caught in between, keeping a careful eye on the polls, was the NDP leadership group, with David Lewis at the helm of the federal organization and his son Stephen in charge of the Ontario wing. When the NDP hierarchy was finally forced to move on the problem, it would be in Ontario, the birthplace of the group, where the exorcism would begin. On March 18 at a provincial council meeting held in Oshawa Stephen Lewis openly declared war on the group.

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<sup>11</sup> Dennis McDermott, *Windsor Star*, January 17, 1972.

<sup>12</sup> James Laxer, *Globe and Mail*, January 18, 1972.

Stephen Lewis admitted at the outset of the meeting that what he was about to say was the most difficult speech he ever had to make as leader of the Ontario party.<sup>13</sup> But "we, as a political party," Lewis declared, "can no longer proceed in our present state." Lewis addressed himself to the problem of the Waffle under four general headings: human relationships, party structure, relations with labour and ideology. In the first area, Lewis asserted, the Waffle had initiated debate within the NDP which had contributed more to the creation of long-lasting rancor than it had to the establishment of sound party policy: "There has crept into the party evidence of acrimony and bitterness without precedent." Lewis admitted that the CCF/NDP had always tolerated dissent from within party ranks; but in the case of the Waffle, internal protest had been carried to the point of self-destruction.

Lewis dedicated the greatest part of his speech to discussing the structure of the Waffle. He accused the group of setting up an organization parallel to that of the NDP itself. Pointing to the Waffle's mailing list, collection of dues, publications, public announcements and committees, Lewis quipped: "...it all rather reminds one of a political party." This parallel structure which the Waffle had created, Lewis claimed, redirected funds and energy which rightfully belonged to the central organization of the NDP. Lewis also expressed concern with what he believed was infiltration of the Waffle by Trotskyites, Maoists and American New Lefters, as had been evidenced at a recent Ontario Waffle conference held at McMaster University in Hamilton in February.

<sup>13</sup> Stephen Lewis speech, March 18, 1972, Oshawa. Reprinted in *New Democrat*, March-April, 1972.

Borrowing a phrase from another political figure, Lewis announced:

"I didn't assume the leadership of this party to preside over its dismemberment."

In his third topic area, Lewis spoke of the Waffle's relationship with organized labour. The Ontario leader contended: "There has developed in our party a sneering, contemptuous attitude towards official trade unionism and the labour leadership." Referring to the Waffle's attacks on unions, Lewis queried: "...by what perverse assessment of reality does the New Democratic Party have to do Pierre Elliott Trudeau's dirty work for him?". As co-founders of the DNP and as the historic defenders of the rights of the workingman, the unions, Lewis claimed, had earned a revered position in party politics. Furthermore, the use of the NDP's name on Waffle labour literature, Lewis asserted, amounted to "palpable slander." Using this as an example, the Ontario leader pointed out, quite correctly, that the Waffle's use of the party name on publications which had not been ratified by the general membership or the executive council was in violation of the NDP's constitution.

In the fourth and final section of his speech, Lewis grappled with the question of Waffle ideology. The offense the Waffle had committed in this area, according to Lewis, was not its criticism of party policy, a practice which had always been welcome within the CCF/NDP, but its refusal to adhere to decisions which had been arrived at democratically at party conventions. This situation created an extremely perplexing problem for a democratically-based party such as the NDP. The Waffle's obstinance and use of dogmatic language created "in the public mind inevitable confusion about what our policy really is, and where the devil we're going."



Lewis's two major complaints against the Waffle were the divisions it had caused within the party and the resulting confusion which had been created in the public mind. Lewis's speech revealed a much greater concern for pragmatic politics than ideological argument. He left no doubt in anyone's mind that the Waffle had hurt the political objectives of the party and some disciplinary action would be forthcoming. But Lewis was wisely sensitive to the negative responses which had been received from several constituency ridings following the tabling of the Hamilton Mountain resolution. "The prospect of a purge, or expulsion, the energy, the time, the fratricide, has an absolutely nightmarish quality about it," Lewis admitted. Rejecting the Hamilton statement outright, the Oshawa delegation supported party secretary Gordon Brigden's suggestion that a three-member committee consisting of party president Gordon Vichert, treasurer John Brewin and Stephen Lewis's advisor and ex-Waffler Gerald Caplan be assigned to study the question of the responsibilities and obligations of party members in view of the Waffle problem and report back to council in June. This proposal was passed by a vote of 157 to 62. A breakdown of the voting reveals strong union support for the creation of the investigative committee. Of the union delegates present at the council, seventy-eight were in favour of Brigden's motion while only twelve expressed opposition to it. The rest of the voting was comprised of the riding delegates who were fifty-nine to forty-four in favour of the motion and members of the executive who endorsed the proposal by a margin of twenty to six.<sup>14</sup>

A few days following the Oshawa meeting, Donald Taylor, Assistant

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<sup>14</sup> *New Democrat*, March-April, 1972, and *New Democrat*, July-August, 1972.

Research Director of the United Steelworkers of America, revealed through a letter to the *Globe and Mail* the sentiments of several of the unionists who had been present at the gathering:

I and many others feel that the Waffle, if it will not voluntarily relinquish its parasitic attachment to the NDP, should be asked by the majority of the party, to<sup>15</sup> do so.

Reporting on the meeting in the *Canadian Forum*, Michael Cross expressed his belief that the unions had been behind Lewis's actions all along:

When Dennis McDermott demands the ouster of the Waffle can Steve Lewis be far behind? ...Faced by nationalist unrest, an unrest egged on by the Waffle, union leaders appear to have decided that it was more dramatic and easier, to crush the Waffle within the party rather than<sup>16</sup> try to root it out of union locals.

At a meeting held April 8, the executive council of the Ontario NDP approved of James Laxer's suggestion that the tripartite investigative committee hold public meetings in various riding constituencies of the province to consider the views of rank and file members. Such gatherings took place in Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Timmins, Ottawa, London and Toronto. Over 500 people attended the meetings altogether and the committee was confronted with more than 100 oral presentations and 103 written briefs, including a submission from the New Democratic Youth defending the Waffle and chastizing the party hierarchy for its disciplinary actions. At the executive hearing of April 27 in Toronto, the Waffle, in an 8,000 word dissertation, presented its defence.

<sup>15</sup> Donald Taylor, *Globe and Mail*, March 23, 1972.

<sup>16</sup> Michael S. Cross, "The Waffle or the Unions," *Canadian Forum*, vol. L11, no. 615, April, 1972, p. 3.

The Waffle statement chose the unions, and Bob Mackenzie of the United Steelworkers in particular, as subjects of primary attack. The Waffle claimed that the outspoken Mackenzie had been the real motivating force behind the Hamilton Mountain resolution. The statement noted that Mackenzie had also, at a provincial council meeting in May of 1971, objected to Waffler Steve Penner's nomination in Dovercourt for the Ontario provincial election. The brief then reminded the New Democrats that Penner had increased the party vote in that riding and had fallen just thirty-eight ballots short of victory. During the same election the riding in Hamilton in which Mackenzie was party organizer decreased its NDP vote by 1300 despite the fact that the total number of votes cast had increased by 20,000. "On the evidence," the Waffle concluded, "Mackenzie has a record of misdirecting his energies."<sup>17</sup>

Leaving Mackenzie, the Waffle statement focussed its attention on the behaviour of the union spokesmen generally within the party. If it was Mackenzie who had been responsible for the first motion brought against the Waffle, it was the rest of the union leaders who had pushed Stephen Lewis to attack the group in Oshawa. The Waffle claimed that the unions had used their bloc voting power to support the motion calling for the creation of the investigative committee, a resolution which was only marginally supported by the riding delegates. Moreover, the Waffle accused, the meeting had been packed: "The customary 10 to 15 delegates from the unions had swelled to 90 or 95, and paid staff representatives were very much in evidence." The Waffle claimed that its old union

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<sup>17</sup>"A Statement by the Ontario Waffle to the Ontario Executive of the New Democratic Party." Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

enemies, such as Dennis McDermott and Donald Taylor, were exerting undue influence on the words and actions of Stephen Lewis.

The Waffle argued that it was simply following in the tradition of organized dissent which had long been characteristic of the CCF/NDP and objected to Lewis's comments that it had abused this practice by setting up a paralld party structure:

It is a pretense to argue that all groupings of opinion are welcome to exist provided that organizing is not done to give expression to such ideas. No political idea can exist in a relevant fashion without a form through which it can be expressed.

The Waffle contended that Lewis's actual dilemma was that he could not tolerate the authentic socialist policies put forth by the group; but this he covered up by exaggerating the structural threat the Waffle presented to the party:

The question now before the ONDP is whether the debate on critical ideological matters can continue or whether it will be stilted by raising the false cry of structures and by crushing the Waffle and the ideology it enunciates by administrative means.

The group denied that its members were not good party workers. The prepared statement pointed out the Waffle candidates who had run in the last Ontario provincial election and the local constituency positions which were held by Wafflers. The group also claimed that the public activities it had sponsored in the last two years frequently brought favourable publicity to the party and thus increased its electoral appeal. In fact, the Waffle claimed, it alone was keeping party members active by following up on official NDP commitments which the larger organization had placed aside, such as the resources campaign which had been approved at the Ontario NDP convention of 1970:

To a very considerable extent the Waffle exists by default, by the failure of the party leadership to appreciate the extent to which many people in the Party find little that is relevant to do between elections.

The Waffle admitted that it had not always been tactful in its dealings with organized labour, but hastened to add that the union representatives themselves were equally guilty of unscrupulous behaviour. The group agreed that it had contributed to tensions within the party but maintained that "the present ~~high~~ level of tension is more clearly the result of Stephen Lewis' initiative." It also conceded that it was indeed in violation of the section of the NDP constitution which forbade members to use the party's name or symbol on literature containing policies which had not been passed at a general convention or by the executive council, but promised that this situation would be rectified in the future.

The prepared Waffle statement apparently had very little effect on the findings of the investigative committee which released its report on May 6, 1972. "The Waffle," the document declared, "presents a direct and fundamental challenge to the whole structure, direction, purpose and leadership of the party."<sup>18</sup> The report claimed to have found amongst Wafflers "a messianic fundamentalism, a bigotry and intolerance which echoed the American South...as dangerous to the NDP as George Wallace's populism is to the Democratic Party in the United States." Their "moral high-mindedness and insufferable self-righteousness," the report claimed,

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<sup>18</sup> Gordon Vichert, John Brewin and Gerald Caplan, Report to Provincial Executives, May 6, 1972. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

made "normal democratic activities nearly impossible." These comments were hardly surprising coming from a committee which had admitted in the preamble of its report: "All of us disagree more or less with the strategies and objectives of the Waffle group," despite the fact that Desmond Morton had described the authors as initially "neutral, evenly mildly sympathetic."<sup>19</sup>

Following its presentation of an imaginative collection of derogatory adjectives lambasting the Waffle, the committee then attempted to illustrate that the group was in violation of party principles. "The party," the report asserted,

can be defined in terms of its principles, as determined from the Regina Manifesto through successive conventions to the present. The Waffle exists, by its own admission, in order to change these principles.

This is surely an illogical accusation. The history of the CCF/NDP reveals that fluctuating policies were characteristic of the party's development. It is ironic that the committee should mention the Regina Manifesto, for the Waffle programme was closer in spirit to that document than were current official NDP statements. The Waffle was simply trying to convince the party to respond realistically to the social and political undercurrents of the time as it interpreted them, similar to the manner in which David Lewis helped transform party strategy in the late 1950s.

The report accused the Waffle of creating confusion in the public mind and thus sabotaging the NDP's electoral appeal:

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<sup>19</sup> Morton, *Social Democracy in Canada*, p. 133.

The public sees only a dual leadership and inevitably becomes confused about the purpose, direction and policies of the party. It is not enough for Waffle spokesmen to say that they continually make the distinction between Waffle policy and NDP policy. The existence of a formal continuing group in our party cannot fail to confuse the public.

The report also quoted Waffler Cy Gonick in an attempt to demonstrate what it thought was the Waffle's disdain of electoral politics. The excerpt from Gonick, however, was misconstrued and sorely misinterpreted. Gonick had simply stated that the winning of elections was irrelevant if the victorious party did not possess strong policies with which to reinforce its political position. The example relied upon by the committee is further discredited when it is realized that Gonick himself was an elected NDP member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. The statement also ignored the fact that six Wafflers had run in the last Ontario provincial election and four members of the group had sought and won nominations for the upcoming federal election. Aside from having little interest in electoral politics, the committee claimed that the Waffle had "alternative policies in almost every field." This observation ignored the fact that some Waffle policies, notably in the areas of housing, women's rights and energy resources had been endorsed at the last Ontario NDP convention.

Under the circumstances, the report concluded, the party had the right and the obligation to apply disciplinary measures against the group. The Waffle had abused the NDP's traditional channels of expression of discontent and had caused an intolerable rupture in party ranks. Although members had the right to assemble before and during conventions for the purpose of supporting specific resolutions, the party was not prepared to tolerate the existence of a continuing opposition caucus.

On these grounds the committee recommended the dissolution of the Waffle as a group, but pleaded with its members to remain within the NDP and continue contributing to constructive debate. The report did put forward three positive recommendations all of which, in part, reflected the legitimacy of Waffle complaints. The committee suggested that the party examine its internal communications procedure, review its relationship with organized labour, in an attempt to involve a greater number of rank and file unionists in party affairs, and develop an educational programme within the party itself.

The investigative committee had been instructed by the Oshawa meeting to examine the responsibilities and obligations of members of the NDP in view of what many saw as a growing crisis within the party. It was not an unreasonable suggestion that party members should adhere to policies arrived at by the majority. Pushed and pulled one way and the other by impassioned pleas of party members throughout its investigation, however, the committee ended up launching an unrestrained attack on the Waffle and the problems it had created within the NDP. What resulted was an extremely critical statement which depended upon analogies and character innuendoes to establish its case. Nonetheless, the report was endorsed by the executive council of the Ontario NDP by a margin of seventeen to six, with Waffle members James Laxer, Krista Macots, Jackie Larkin Brown, Bruce Kidd, John Smart and Barry Weisleder voting against it. Like the Hamilton Mountain Resolution which had initiated the entire process, the executive report drew several varied responses from the NDP membership. The first and most articulate reply came from Waffle spokesman, James Laxer.

Although the Ontario NDP executive had authorized the existence of



a committee which investigated the Waffle as a group and attacked it specifically on the grounds that it was an organized faction, the party refused to allow the Waffle to publish a collective response in the Ontario NDP's newspaper, the *New Democrat*. The prejudiced application of this double standard forced the Waffle to be satisfied with an individual response from James Laxer which the party did accept for publication in the paper. Laxer was naturally critical of the executive report, the findings of which he claimed were "essentially invalid" and the tone of which he believed would be unacceptable to most party members. The investigators' "experience in listening to briefs from party members around the province," Laxer claimed, "has evidently unhinged their rationality." Laxer asserted that the Waffle had captured the new mood and politics of the 1960s in view of the NDP's failure to do the same:

As the first coherent political statement on the left on the issue of foreign ownership, the Waffle Manifesto asserted the powerful interrelation between the goals of Canadian independence and socialism and fundamentally affected Canadian political debate in so doing...The Waffle's contribution to the socialist movement in Canada, and hence to the NDP, since 1969 has been little short of enormous. Serious political discussion has been generated not only in the party but in Canada as a whole, about socialism and independence.

Laxer repeated the Waffle's earlier assertion that it was the group's authentic socialist ideology, especially as it pertained to public ownership, which Stephen Lewis found unacceptable, but attempted to avoid by emphasizing the structural elements of the Waffle-NDP problem.<sup>20</sup>

At a meeting on May 14 held in London, Ontario, the Waffle steering committee assessed the group's position within the party in view of the

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<sup>20</sup> James Laxer, *New Democrat*, May-June, 1972.

ongoing controversy. It was here that the group displayed for the first time a willingness to compromise. Having previously admitted that it was, in fact, in violation of certain party principles, the group agreed upon the following resolution:

...the Waffle recognizes the NDP as its principal locus of activity and engages in extra party public actions only after advising and seeking endorsement of the party for<sup>21</sup> such action.

The Ontario NDP executive also received a number of compromise resolutions from certain riding associations as well as individuals within the party. One such proposal was submitted by NDP MPP Michael Cassidy. Cassidy accused the Waffle of having set up a parallel party structure but defended the right of groups within the NDP to meet informally and discuss policy. The Waffle's major offences, according to Cassidy, were the polarization it had created within the party and the confusion it had instilled in the public mind. Cassidy admitted that there was some truth to the Waffle's accusations that labour leaders frequently exerted undue influence on party decisions, but he hoped that the problem could be solved through moderation and conciliation. "What I obviously want," Cassidy concluded, "is to create channels within the party that will make the Waffle's separate organization unnecessary."<sup>22</sup> Cassidy's imprecise solution was not quite as obvious to other New Democrats and consequently impressed no one.

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<sup>21</sup>Waffle Bulletin. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>22</sup>Michael Cassidy, "Dissent and the NDP -- An Attempt at Some Guidelines," April, 1972. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

At a meeting held in Toronto in early June, 300 New Democrats from the fifteen metropolitan ridings voted overwhelmingly against the executive report. The vote was more reflective of the NDPers concern for the maintenance of an internal party democracy than it was of stringent support for the Waffle. Steve Penner told reporters at the meeting that the Waffle would refuse to disband and that the NDP would be a "moribund party" without the constant prodding of the left-wing group.<sup>23</sup>

At the same gathering Mel Watkins announced:

This party is deeply polarized. The Waffle is seriously committed to finding a solution and the president and executive of the party are determined to split the party.<sup>24</sup>

Watkins thus reversed the major accusation of polarization which had been levelled against the Waffle. He estimated that the provincial riding associations were two to one against the recommendation of the executive report that the Waffle be dissolved. But Gordon Vichert, party president and one of the authors of the report, claimed fifty-five per cent of riding association members and seventy-five per cent of affiliated union members approved of the statement. Even if Vichert's estimation is the correct one, it displays a substantial riding association disapproval of the tone and temperament of the Vichert-Brewin-Caplan study.

At a meeting on June 5 the Ottawa South Riding Association endorsed a statement condemning the executive report as basically undemocratic in nature.<sup>25</sup> The Ottawa South organization threatened to withhold party dues

<sup>23</sup> John Slinger, *Globe and Mail*, June 5, 1972.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Ottawa South Riding Association Press Release, June 5, 1972. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

and cease all constituency work if a more agreeable solution to the Waffle problem was not found. A similar statement had been received from the St. David's riding in Toronto. At an earlier meeting the Ottawa group had overwhelmingly rejected the Cassidy compromise resolution as well. The Ottawa riding argued that since the Waffle had now agreed to seek party approval before sponsoring its separate functions the main problem had been solved and the group should be allowed to continue. By June 7, four out of six Ottawa ridings, along with St. David's, Beaches-Woodbine, Sarnia and Peterborough had outright rejected the executive report.

Another compromise resolution was received from John Harney and Walter Pitman through the Peterborough Riding Association. The Harney-Pitman solution offered two possible options to the Waffle. The first suggestion was that the Waffle remain organized as a left caucus within the NDP but abandon its public role and dismantle its parallel party structure. The second, more accommodating alternative, offered the Waffle "associate membership." This would allow the group to continue pursuing its individual goals outside of the party while maintaining nominal connection with the NDP. Even the anti-Waffler Desmond Morton endorsed the latter proposition. In a rare moment of calm, Pitman and Harney implored their fellow party members: "If we stop shouting, we may perhaps get to hear each other."<sup>26</sup>

A final compromise resolution was received by the executive from Ed Broadbent through the Riverdale Riding Association in Toronto.

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<sup>26</sup> John Harney and Walter Pitman, *New Democrat*, May-June, 1972.

Broadbent's proposal asserted that the "present structure and behaviour of the Waffle cannot continue" but that groups within the NDP should be allowed to caucus "so long as their role remains non-public and consistent with the principles of the New Democratic Party."<sup>27</sup> Since the Waffle had violated the constitution by behaving like a clearly identifiable separate entity unto itself, the group should be required to drop its name and dismantle its complex organization. Broadbent's resolution repeated the additional recommendations of the Vichert-Brewin-Caplan report and called for an improvement in internal party communications, a re-evaluation of the party's relationship with labour and the development of an NDP educational programme. The Riverdale statement was less offensive in approach than the executive report and allowed for slightly greater freedom of assembly amongst NDP members. But it was undoubtedly a measure designed to rid the party of the Waffle problem and, as such, would prove to be the vehicle of dispensing with the group for which Stephen Lewis was searching.

It was no secret that prominent trade union leaders had been consistently opposed to the Waffle's programmes, activities and intervention in the affairs of labour. And there is substantial evidence to suggest that the union spokesmen, those whose positions of authority would be undermined the most if Waffle proposals were implemented, exerted great influence on NDP leaders to have the Waffle expelled. Bob Mackenzie, staff representative of the United Steelworkers in Hamilton, was quoted in the *Hamilton Spectator* of June 3, 1972: "I don't think the Waffle

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<sup>27</sup> Riverdale Riding Association resolution, June 21, 1972. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

has any interest in the party except to destroy it...It's a collection of some good people, and a lot of Maoists, Trots, Commies and Kooks."<sup>28</sup>

A *Spectator* editorial of June 6 revealed the results of a meeting which had taken place between unionists Bill Mahoney, Lynn Williams and Dennis McDermott and NDP leaders David and Stephen Lewis:

A group of unionists told David and Stephen Lewis that unless the Waffle situation was straightened out the unions would withdraw their financial support in the next federal election.

The *Spectator* drew the only logical conclusion:

Suddenly the issue was not whether the NDP could afford to lose the Waffle but whether it could afford to keep it.<sup>29</sup>

In a letter to David Lewis dated June 7, Bob Mackenzie emphasized the antipathy the union men and the Waffle held for one another. Mackenzie was upset that a more immediate solution to the problem had not been pursued. Adamant that no compromises should be enacted, he wrote to Lewis:

I am unhappy, angry, and more than a little disgusted with your arm-twisting in favour of Waffle compromise... I don't think you are showing leadership in face of a situation I personally believe to be much more serious than you may realize.

Mackenzie pointed out to Lewis that the Hamilton area Council of the United Steelworkers of America, consisting of a president and one executive representative from each of fifty-three locals, had voted unanimously in favour of the Vichert-Brewin-Caplan report. Mackenzie also reminded Lewis of the financial contributions the unions provided

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<sup>28</sup> Hamilton *Spectator*, June 3, 1972.

<sup>29</sup> Hamilton *Spectator*, June 6, 1972.

and the difficulties for the NDP which would be encountered should such support be withdrawn.<sup>30</sup>

With this much pressure being exerted upon them by the union representatives, the NDP leaders had little choice but to respond promptly to the lingering problem of the Waffle if they wished to maintain union support. When distributing material related to the Waffle affair to provincial secretaries, however, Clifford Scotton, federal secretary of the party, reminded them of the need for circumspection. Scotton wrote:

On the eve of a federal general election the need for discretion in dealing with this matter is self-evident. The material is for information only and need not be<sup>31</sup> widely disseminated.

When the expected summer election was not called, however, the way was clear for the NDP to deal with the Waffle problem with a minimum of adverse publicity. Writing to Ontario NDP president Gordon Vichert, federal leader David Lewis insisted that "an appropriate and decisive step has to be taken with respect to the Waffle" at the provincial council meeting planned for June 24 and 25.<sup>32</sup> Lewis's interest in the Ontario party's problem was indicative of the wider national perspective of the Waffle saga.

More than six months had passed since the appearance of the Hamilton Mountain resolution, the first written statement calling for the expulsion

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<sup>30</sup> Bob Mackenzie to David Lewis, June 7, 1972. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>31</sup> Clifford Scotton to Provincial Secretaries, May 10, 1972. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>32</sup> David Lewis to Gordon Vichert, May 23, 1972. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

of the Waffle. The attacks and counter-attacks which plagued the months following the announcement of the Hamilton proposal were costly to both the Waffle and the NDP in terms of money, time, energy and public image. Both sides yearned desperately for a solution. Although secret meetings had been held in the spring and early summer of 1972 between Gerald Caplan, Stephen Lewis and James Laxer "in a desperate attempt to find an acceptable compromise,"<sup>33</sup> no agreeable remedy was forthcoming. To the NDP leaders, the Waffle had violated the constitution and caused an abysmal disruption of normal party proceedings. By refusing to allow the group to respond collectively in the party organ, the *New Democrat*, the leadership caucus had already implicitly proclaimed the illegitimacy of the leftist group. What remained was to sever it from the official party structure without creating a worse or long-lasting schism. Only in the final few weeks of the furious debate did the Waffle exhibit a willingness to compromise. In May it pleaded guilty to the charge of misusing the party name and promised to desist from this practice in the future. Late in June the Waffle retracted some of its more severe criticisms of the affiliated unionists and pledged to lobby publicly for support of its independent motions only immediately prior to NDP conventions. But for Stephen Lewis and the unions, it was too little, too late.

The fate of the Waffle within the NDP was decided on the weekend of June 24 in the tranquil northern Ontario town of Orillia. As the majority of Orillians pursued normal Saturday pleasures, 300 party

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<sup>33</sup> Gerald Caplan to John Bullen, August 22, 1979. These meetings were not officially recorded.



delegates and 600 spectators crowded together in the high school gymnasium to pass the final verdict on the Waffle's relationship with the NDP. This was the highest attendance that an Ontario provincial council meeting had ever witnessed. The meeting began at 9:35 A.M. The three major options facing the Waffle were outlined by the Vichert-Brewin-Caplan report which called for the dissolution of the group, the less offensive Riverdale motion which would also dismantle the structure of the Waffle and a slightly-altered Pitman-Harney associate membership resolution. The night before the Orillia meeting, the Waffle had reluctantly voted in favour of supporting the Pitman-Harney compromise position, but a motion asking for this option to be discussed first by the assembly was overturned in favour of consideration of the Riverdale resolution. It was clear that it was this motion which the majority of executive members favoured. Chairman Donald MacDonald called upon English professor Annabelle Patterson to introduce the Riverdale option and the debate began.

MPP Michael Cassidy, MP Andrew Brewin and Ontario party president Gordon Vichert all spoke strongly in favour of the Riverdale motion. The union delegates, through their spokesman Bob Mackenzie, also supported the Riverdale statement. There was no doubt in the minds of the unionists that the Riverdale resolution provided a hard line approach to the Waffle problem. Mackenzie told the delegates that the Riverdale motion equipped the party with "the tools to cut out the cancer"<sup>34</sup> and in a moment of fury warned James Laxer that he would receive "a lesson in gutsmanship

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<sup>34</sup> Bill Sweet to NDP members, August 24, 1972. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

today."<sup>35</sup> James Laxer, Krista Maeots, Jackie Larkin Brown, Bruce Kidd and Varda Kidd all spoke in defence of the Waffle. Representing the voice of moderation, Pauline Jewett warned the NDP against adopting disciplinary measures restricting internal debate which would make it indistinguishable from the other political parties in Canada.

The tension dissipated slightly as the group broke for lunch. At that time James Laxer expressed his belief that the meeting would not call upon the Waffle to disband. But the afternoon session proved to be even more furious and heated than the morning debate. Gerald Caplan attacked the Waffle vigorously and Kelly Crichton sprang to the group's defence. Stephen Lewis announced that Waffle concessions had come too late and the group must be asked to disband to allow the NDP to return to its routine proceedings. "I wish to fight for a free Canada," Lewis pleaded, "but without the Waffle forever an encumbrance around my neck."<sup>36</sup> When the cheering for Lewis subsided, Chairman Donald MacDonald put the question to a vote. An exhausted and solemn-looking James Laxer sat quietly with his head down, his large frame bent forward in his chair, as he heard it announced at 3:15 P.M. that the Riverdale resolution was approved by a vote of 217 to eighty-eight.

Both Lewises were ecstatic with the results of the voting. Stephen Lewis jubilantly declared: "I have the feeling its my party again. I feel liberated...The Waffle as it presently is known and exists is

<sup>35</sup> Michael S. Cross, "Sunless Sketches," *Canadian Forum*, vol. L11, no. 618-619, July-August, 1972, p. 3.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

dissolved."<sup>37</sup> A relieved David Lewis told newsmen: "If you say to me, 'What about the Waffle View?', I say to you, 'What's the Waffle?', It no longer exists,"<sup>38</sup> The omnipresence of the unionists in the whole affair was once again recalled in an analysis of the voting which appeared in *Time*:

The significance of the vote was that the New Democratic Party in effect cut off its left wing to save its right -- the Ontario labour union movement that gives the party <sup>39</sup> its most substantial base of money and votes.

The temptation is strong to term the NDP's action a unilateral purge. And this is exactly how most Wafflers and Waffle sympathizers described the Orillia incident. A close examination of the evidence, however, reveals that the Waffle, by its own admission, was in violation of existing party principles. The decision to forcibly disband the group was arrived at through the normal democratic proceedings of a provincial council meeting. It is equally clear, however, that the NDP leadership caucus, prodded by the trade union representatives, used the full force of its influence to have the favoured Riverdale resolution approved. But there is no evidence of any Waffle member being forced to relinquish his or her membership in the NDP. Those who left the party did so voluntarily and those who wished to remain were accommodated. Many, including James Laxer, would eventually return to the fold.

Two hundred Wafflers met in Orillia's Orange Hall immediately following the provincial council meeting. The group was angry because

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<sup>37</sup> *Time*, July 10, 1972.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* 2

the Harney-Pitman associate membership resolution, the one which the Waffle had unenthusiastically endorsed, had not been granted fair discussion time at the meeting, Krista Maeots called the Riverdale resolution the NDP's Public Order Act. At this meeting the Waffle reiterated its earlier decision to remain assembled but announced that its final response to the Riverdale resolution would be decided upon at a Waffle conference planned for August. Until that time, the members of the splinter group were asked by their leaders not to take individual action or release personal statements to the press.<sup>40</sup>

Waiting for the Waffle became the theme of the Ontario NDP immediately following the Orillia meeting. Gordon Vichert and Stephen Lewis both agreed that the Waffle had the right to meet in August to decide its own future. Vichert even approved of an extra edition of the *Waffle News*, but expressed his belief that the group should not go about enlisting new members. Two impatient Toronto ridings, however, announced that they were on strike over the decision to disband the Waffle and refused to pay their debts to the provincial party treasury. The Quebec NDP condemned the Ontario executive for its decision and the Saskatchewan wing of the Waffle threatened complete inactivity if the verdict was not repealed. More significantly, many moderate NDPers objected to what they believed was a violation of the party's long tradition of democracy and tolerance.

The Waffle itself was thrown into a mild state of confusion. The first major issue which confronted the Wafflers after Orillia was the

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<sup>40</sup> Waffle Bulletin. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

question of the four group members who had been nominated to run on the NDP ticket in the upcoming federal election. The first response of the candidates themselves, Mel Watkins in Parkdale, James Laxer in York East, Ellie Prepas in Trinity and George Gilks in Hamilton West, was to withdraw their names. The candidates wrote to their fellow Wafflers:

"As principled socialists, we do not believe that we can represent to the electorate at this time a party that has chosen to move decisively rightward."<sup>41</sup> This decision elicited an immediate negative response from Ontario Waffle steering committee members Joe Flexer, Varda Kidd, Jackie Larkin Brown, Donna McCombs and Steve Penner. These Wafflers believed that the decision to withdraw the candidates from the election was a judgment which should be arrived at collectively by the Waffle and not by the individuals concerned. In view of the disagreement, Mel Watkins, James Laxer and Ellie Prepas agreed to wait for the Waffle summer conference before announcing their intentions. George Gilks resigned his candidature at the request of his riding association to submit an early decision.

The second immediate issue facing the Waffle was the question of its own future. In the weeks of private discussions following Orillia, two basic options with minor variations emerged. One alternative suggested that the group relinquish its official ties with the NDP and continue as an independent socialist movement. This proposal, which became known as option three, was heavily favoured by Waffle leaders Laxer and Watkins.

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<sup>41</sup> Mel Watkins, James Laxer, Ellie Prepas and George Gilks to Waffle members, July 19, 1972. CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

A second proposal, which became known as option five, suggested that the group fight to remain within the NDP. This would necessitate attending the Ontario NDP convention in December and attempting to have the Riverdale resolution withdrawn. This option was strongly supported by Wafflers Steve Penner and Varda Kidd. One of these two major choices would be decided upon at the Waffle convention set for August 19 and 20 in Delaware, near London, Ontario.

The Delaware meeting was attended by 138 registered voting Waffle delegates and approximately 250 observers, including nine from outside of Ontario. Disposing with a number of procedural quarrels, the meeting addressed itself immediately to the question of option three and option five. Introducing option five, the stay and fight proposal, Varda Kidd claimed that complete withdrawal from the NDP would lead to irrelevance for the Waffle. Steve Penner and Jackie Larkin Brown also spoke in favour of option five. But the power and influence of James Laxer, Mel Watkins and Bela Egyed swayed the majority of delegates to support option three, the proposal which would declare the Waffle an independent socialist movement with no affiliation to the NDP. Option three was accepted by a margin of eighty-nine to forty-nine.<sup>42</sup>

The Waffle had clearly decided upon a new future for itself but the process undertaken had been a costly and bitter experience. The supporters of option five did not accept their loss lightly. Toronto Wafflers Jack Quarter, Norman Feltes and Ron Mayne accused the Waffle leadership of unfairly using their positions and influence to guarantee the passage

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<sup>42</sup> Delaware Meeting Minutes, August 19, 1972. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

of option three. Quarter, Feltes and Mayne had earlier objected to the Delaware convention being conducted by delegate vote. They believed that questions of such importance should be voted upon by all active Waffle members. On Saturday night, following the acceptance of option three, Steve Penner and a handful of option five advocates issued a press release declaring that they would not honour the decision to form an independent group but would remain as a left caucus within the NDP. This action led to the passage of a resolution proposed by John Smart forbidding Penner and his rebellious cohorts to sit on the organizing committee of the new movement. The Waffle had apparently enacted its own purge. Commenting on the manner in which Mel Watkins criticized the more radical Wafflers, Michael Cross wrote in the *Canadian Forum*:

In his attacks on "left tendencies within the Waffle," Mel Watkins did a letter-perfect imitation of Stephen Lewis. The leadership dominance, the promise of centralized organization, the purge of left elements... all would seem to indicate that the [Waffle] cure is nearly as bad as the NDP disease. 43

Rae Murphy of the *Last Post* added his observations:

When the left acts out this ritual it makes enemies of people who should be colleagues...For the anemic Canadian left, Delaware was only a routine bloodbath. 44

On Sunday, August 20, the organizing committee of the new movement met to determine a new strategy and set of principles. It was decided that the name of the undertaking would be the Ontario Waffle Movement

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<sup>43</sup>Michael S. Cross, "The Waffle Follies," *Canadian Forum*, vol. LII, no. 621-622, October-November, 1972, p. 6.

<sup>44</sup>Rae Murphy, "Ontario Waffle: Beyond the Divide," *Last Post*, vol. 2, no. 7, October, 1972, pp. 31, 34.

for an Independent Socialist Canada (MISC). Because the group had declared its dissociation from the NDP, the question of the three remaining Waffle candidates for the upcoming general election was left to the discretion of the concerned individuals. The organizing committee agreed to the possibility of working closely with other movements in society which shared sentiments similar to those of the Waffle, but cross-memberships would not be tolerated. To protect the new group from internal disruption the following resolution was passed:

Its membership shall not be open to members of other left groups who operate closed or unacknowledged 45  
caucuses in its midst.

The extreme irony here is self-evident.

The decision taken at Delaware was a crucial turning point in the life of the Waffle. It not only determined the new route the group would follow, but it removed the preeminent concern which had dominated the Waffle's interests for the past two years -- its right to exist within the NDP. With this single unifying element eliminated, the group soon fell prey to its own internal divisions and quarrels. From its founding convention of August 1970, Waffle purists had accused the group of being middle-class, overly intellectual and elitist. In March of 1972 Robin Mathews had stated: "...the leadership group has created a fog that confuses the good, shields the opportunist, obscures direction, and makes impossible growing public adherence and sympathy with Waffle."<sup>46</sup> Waffle

<sup>45</sup> Delaware Minutes. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>46</sup> Robin Mathews, "A Consideration of Waffle Difficulties and Future Plans," March 10, 1972. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.



members who were sympathetic to the Canadian Party of Labour referred to Laxer and Watkins as "phonies who have been manipulating the Waffle for a long time" and declared that the two leaders "won't lead a real socialist movement any more than Stephen Lewis would."<sup>47</sup> These divisions and criticisms remained muted as long as the Waffle was waging its battle of survival within the NDP. Once that problem had disappeared, however, the cracks in the Waffle structure became more apparent and more destructive. Reflecting the observations of many, an out-of-province Waffler expressed his dismay with the "polarization and mistrust" which had surfaced at the Delaware conference.<sup>48</sup> The movement was still alive, but it was unknowingly preparing itself for a slow and painful death.

The first project undertaken by the revamped Waffle movement was the publication and distribution of a four-page tabloid-form commentary on the 1972 federal election campaign. Although the group did not sponsor any of its own candidates, it believed that issues such as independence, unemployment, inflation, Quebec, women and control of the resource industry deserved publicity and discussion. The Waffle tabloid accused the mainstream parties, including the NDP, of only superficially touching upon these essential questions. But an examination of the NDP election platform of 1972 indicates that the party had not taken a giant rightward step in policy-making as the Waffle following its forced dismemberment

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<sup>47</sup> Canadian Party of Labour, "Class War, not Nationalist Research, Stop Railroad by Laxer and Watkins," CCF/NDP Papers, Waffle File, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>48</sup> Delaware Minutes.

had predicted. The official party programme for 1972 stressed the need for Canada to win back control of its own economy from the United States. The "first step in this process," the NDP policy booklet declared, "will be to acquire public ownership of oil and natural gas distribution systems." Other resource industries would be controlled in the national interest under "public ownership and joint participation with private industry." The programme also called for the creation of a Labour Bill of Rights which would guarantee the right to strike and provide for the expansion of collective bargaining. The NDP maintained its federalist stance but did call for the writing of a new Canadian constitution. The NDP promised to withdraw from NATO and NORAD and restated its condemnation of the War in Viet Nam. Provisions were also made for increased aid to developing countries, greater participatory democracy, the removal of abortion from the criminal code and equality for women.<sup>49</sup> The absence of the Waffle had obviously not led to the total softening of the NDP.

By mid November of 1972 the new Waffle movement could boast only 345 registered members, three-quarters of whom lived in either Toronto or Ottawa. Of this number only about seventy-five attended the first delegate conference of the Waffle to be held since the Delaware affair in Toronto on November 25 and 26. At this meeting the group reiterated its decision to seek working alliances with other organizations in society such as the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers. Two strategy

<sup>49</sup> New Democratic Party Program 1972. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

papers were presented at this gathering. One, composed by James Laxer, entitled "Waffle Strategy," suggested that the group continue its public education programmes concentrating on issues such as the control of resource industries and the effects of foreign ownership. A second paper entitled "A Multi-level Strategy for the Waffle," however, was critical of the federal election counter-campaign which the group had sponsored and suggested that the movement involve itself more directly and immediately in smaller community projects. Although it was agreed upon that a precise strategy for the Waffle would be left open for further debate, plans to continue pursuing a modest resources campaign were approved.<sup>50</sup>

Since declaring itself independent of the NDP the Waffle had almost totally lost the interest of the news media. But the effect of its pressure continued to surface at particular times and places. A handful of ex-Wafflers who had not surrendered their party memberships made an appearance at the Ontario NDP convention in December but were unsuccessful in their attempts to influence the course of events. Starting in January of 1973 the Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada sponsored a series of public lectures in Toronto, the papers from which were published in a book edited by Robert Laxer entitled, *(Canada) Ltd.: The Political Economy of Dependency*. These lectures covered areas relating to the de-industrialization of Canada which had resulted from an international shift in American corporate interests,

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<sup>50</sup> Ontario Waffle Provincial Council Meeting Minutes, November 25 and 26, 1972. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada. *Waffle News*, December, 1972.

class and income distribution in Canada and the history of Canadian trade unionism. This particular series of lectures contained elements of Marxism and class-oriented politics which represented the Waffle in its most radical ideological stage. At one of these lectures Mel Watkins urged the rank and file unionists to

move beyond the reformism of the NDP and play a major role in the creation of a new socialist party which truly represents the interests of the Canadian working class.<sup>51</sup>

Despite these more fundamental statements, many ultra-leftish elements remained unconvinced of the Waffle's orthodoxy and believed the group was more concerned with materialistic nationalism than it was with a radical restructuring of society. Expressing his unhappiness, and demonstrating the growing split within the movement, Waffler Barry Weisleder wrote to the *Last Post* accusing the Waffle of "petty bourgeois nationalist ideology."<sup>52</sup>

Arguments over the direction and purpose of the Waffle erupted again immediately following an executive meeting held in Toronto February 24, 1973. At this gathering the twelve Wafflers in attendance devised plans for two public rallies to be held on the subject of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline as one part of a larger Waffle resources campaign. The Ottawa Waffle, however, complained that this decision had been arrived at unilaterally by a handful of the Toronto members.

<sup>51</sup> Mel Watkins, "The Trade Union Movement in Canada," in Robert Laxer ed., (Canada) Ltd.: *The Political Economy of Dependency* (Toronto, 1973), p. 196.

<sup>52</sup> Barry Weisleder, *Last Post*, vol. 3, no. 1, January, 1973, p. 4.

The Ottawa group believed that the Toronto representatives had stepped far beyond the agreement of the November 1972 meeting to pursue a resources campaign of moderate proportions. An Ottawa Waffler wrote:

Is it too harsh to say that the basic problem with the February 24 proposals is that they ignore the progress in thinking that the November resolution represents in the history of the Ontario Waffle? We thought that the November resolution represented a step forward on the part of the whole Waffle not a compromise which neither side in the debate would respect once the debate ended.<sup>53</sup>

Ottawa Waffler Paul Larocque, who was present at the Toronto meeting, claimed that "communication simply did not exist at any level at all" and that the Toronto proposals "totally distorted the original mandate given by the November Council meeting for the the campaign."<sup>54</sup>

Jeffrey Patterson of Ottawa, equally upset with the Toronto decision, warned the Waffle against "being co-opted by single issue campaigns."<sup>55</sup>

For the next year and a half the most vigorous battle waged by the Waffle was with itself. Clear divisions developed between the Ottawa and Toronto groups. The Laxer-dominated Toronto section continued to insist that the movement should pursue large-scale public campaigns on issues such as the control of resources and the de-industrialization of Canada. The Ottawa group believed that, given the small size and limited financial resources of the organization, it would be a more significant and productive movement if it concentrated on small-scale

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<sup>53</sup> Ottawa Waffle Newsletter. Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>54</sup> Paul Larocque, *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Jeffrey Patterson, *Ibid.*

community projects spread throughout the province. The continued hegemony of the Toronto-based cell led Ottawa Waffler David Orenstein to comment: "This smacks of revisionism, a moving from strong local groups to a strong central structure."<sup>56</sup> Moreover, once the Waffle had dissociated itself from the social democracy of the NDP, it attracted some of society's more radical elements. These individuals, who adhered to a stringent interpretation of socialism as a movement within which class struggle assumed precedence over all other concerns, looked with disdain upon the nationalist doctrines of Laxer and the leadership group. It would be this issue, the group's touchstone, upon which the Waffle would finally self-destruct.

By the end of 1973 two more important changes had taken place within the Ontario Waffle. First, urged on by the Laxer group, the Waffle decided to re-enter active politics. Some members believed that a Waffle party would eventually replace the NDP as the voice of leftism in Canadian politics. Others, however, resigned from the group in view of what they interpreted as a sell-out to middle-class and sterile electoral strategy. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, Mel Watkins accepted a position as economic advisor to the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories which was in the process of preparing a statement for the Berger Inquiry into the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline. With the departure of Watkins the Waffle lost one of its founding fathers and its most astute intellectual spokesman.

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<sup>56</sup> David Orenstein, "Report on Provincial Council Meeting," Ed Dahl Papers, Public Archives of Canada.

Early in 1974 the growing divisions within the Waffle were further agitated. The question of nationalism versus pure socialism formed the base of the disagreement. At a Waffle conference in February, Robert Laxer presented a paper entitled "The Waffle and Alliances for Independence" in which he suggested that the Waffle seek open working agreements with other nationalist groupings in the country such as the Committee for an Independent Canada. The expanding left wing of the group responded to this position with hostility and refused to voice its support for alliances with any non-socialist organizations. The question of the association of nationalism and socialism, the very premise upon which the Waffle had been founded, was subjected to severe criticism by the new vocal left elements. James Laxer, growing increasingly impatient with internal disruptions which he believed were the result of the infiltration of American New Lefters, dismissed all debate on the topic as "sterile harassment."<sup>57</sup>

The growing civil war within the Waffle did not prevent the group from participating in the federal election of July 1974. The Waffle programme promised the public a complete restructuring of the price and wage system that only parties with no hope of winning would ever dare offer. But its efforts on this political front attracted a minimum of public attention and only caused greater disturbances within the group itself. James Laxer, who ran on the Waffle ticket in York West where he drew less than 700 votes, was criticized by the group's more radical elements for changing his slogan from "Independence and Socialism"

<sup>57</sup> Virginia Hunter, "Why I Left the Waffle," *Canadian Forum*, vol. LIV, no. 649, March, 1975, p. 19.

to simply "Canadian Independence" in the last weeks of the campaign. The handful of other Wafflers who ran for office, including Bela Egyed in Ottawa, attracted less than 1800 votes collectively.

By October of 1974 the moment of truth for James Laxer and the Waffle had arrived. A New Left caucus within the Waffle, some of whom Mel Watkins had once referred to as the "crazies," accused the leadership of the group of being "authoritarian" and "cliquish."<sup>58</sup> Tiring of Laxer's nationalist strategy, this group presented a paper at a meeting in Ottawa entitled "Towards an Alternative Strategy" which called for the re-implementation of New Left policies of direct involvement in community affairs and the rejection of nationalism and electoral politics. Because this programme was attempting to restore some vitality to a movement grown tired with age and because Laxer had become obnoxiously intransigent under attack, the new policies met with the approval of a majority of the members, including some of the original Wafflers. Having been rebuked by his own membership, James Laxer, with a handful of loyal followers, walked out in disgust on the movement he had given life to five years earlier.

Without Laxer, and left in the hands of a group of young and inexperienced political strategists, the once-dynamic and propulsive force of the Waffle soon succumbed to sterility and inconsequence.

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<sup>58</sup> Avacumovic, *Socialism in Canada*, p. 239.



Virginia Hunter, an early Waffler, commented on the new strategy and direction of the group as displayed at a meeting on December 15, 1974, in Toronto:

As for what remains of the Waffle, the *epigones*, the rationality they displayed in Ottawa has been swept away by the kind of love for the working class that only middle-class children can feel.

"The movement," Hunter eulogized, "is smashed."<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Hunter, p. 20.

## CONCLUSION:

### THE WAFFLE IN PERSPECTIVE

The Waffle originated in the spring of 1969 as a small voice of protest within the NDP. A group of NDPers feared that their party, the alleged expression of leftist thought in Canada, was slipping comfortably into a pattern of consensus politics. The cluster of party thinkers was especially solicitous of the NDP's failure to respond in a responsible and positive fashion to the social and political peculiarities of the 1960s. The two major features which the Waffle wished to see reflected in NDP policy were personified by the group's two most prominent spokesmen, Mel Watkins and James Laxer. Watkins had been transformed into an economic nationalist after discovering undesirable social and political ramifications of American control of Canadian commercial affairs. Having his nationalist doctrines rebuked by both the Canadian government and business class, Watkins moved beyond the liberal-nationalism of Walter Gordon and arrived at a preference for socialism. James Laxer, on the other hand, augmented his inherited Marxist beliefs through his involvement with the radical student movement of the 1960s which was heavily imbued with the ideas of New Leftism. Desiring to see the ideology of the New Left applied more effectively to the unique Canadian social and political environment, Laxer arrived at a new understanding of national independence based upon socialism. Together, Watkins and Laxer came to believe that independence and socialism were interrelated.

and interdependent goals for Canada. Along with their fellow Wafflers, they believed that the first step towards the achievement of these goals was the transformation of the NDP into a political party whose main objective would be the establishment of an independent socialist state.

The Waffle was thus faced with the task of transforming the society within which it operated by first radicalizing its immediate constituency, the NDP. The ideology of the Waffle was criticized and scorned by the spokesmen of the capitalist class, a situation which befalls all democratic socialist movements; but the group's radicalism was also opposed by members of the NDP who had worked hard to establish a popular public image for the party. In fact, as the militancy of the Waffle increased, it lost some of its original supporters, such as Ed Broadbent and Gerald Caplan, who later became instrumental in the dismantling of the group. The uproar the Waffle created within the NDP, and in particular amongst the trade union representatives, forced the party's leadership to enact disciplinary measures against the group. Threatened with expulsion, the Ontario Waffle voluntarily relinquished its affiliation with the NDP and continued to pursue its objectives as the autonomous Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada. But having failed to achieve its primary goal of radicalizing the NDP and having lost the public forum provided by the established party, the Waffle soon fell victim to its own divisiveness and entered into the hall of obscurity which housed so many other leftist groupings in Canada.

Although the Waffle achieved national stature, it began and ended as a phenomenon of Ontario, the province which best represented the group's criticisms of modern corporate society. Ontario contained Canada's most highly developed industrial and manufacturing sectors and

was responsible for forty per cent of the country's Gross National Product. Ontario also had the closest economic ties with the United States or, as historian Kenneth McNaught preferred to state the case, it was "the most reliable of the American provinces."<sup>1</sup> Sixty-four per cent of United States controlled employment in Canada was within 300 miles of Toronto.<sup>2</sup> Ontario best fulfilled the Waffle's description of the dependent Canadian state, but the province's fourteen public universities and large working-class population provided fertile ground upon which to build a new social and intellectual movement.

The Waffle first assumed importance as a result of its ability to organize and mobilize the radical elements of the NDP. Due to its particular nature and origin, it appealed mainly to the young and highly-educated population of the party. A sample survey conducted by *Canadian Dimension* in 1971 revealed some interesting facts and figures about the composition of the group. According to the findings of the poll, fifty-two per cent of Wafflers were under the age of forty as compared to thirty-four per cent of regular NDPers. Twenty-one per cent of Wafflers were students while only six per cent of other New Democrats identified with this category. Nineteen per cent of Wafflers claimed to be tied to professional occupations while only five per cent

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth McNaught, "The Permanent Colony," *Canadian Forum*, vol. XLIX, no. 588, January, 1970, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> D. Michael Ray, "Regional Aspects of Foreign Ownership," in Ted Richard ed., *Canada and Capitalism*. Cited in Resnick, "The New Left in Ontario," in Roussopoulos ed., *The New Left in Canada*.

of regular NDPers responded positively to this question. Sixty-two per cent of Wafflers had belonged to the NDP less than ten years and twenty per cent of the group had joined the party after the Winnipeg convention of 1969. These figures suggest that the base of the Waffle was composed of the young, highly-educated and middle-class members of the NDP, although the group also appealed to a moderate number of veteran CCFers who welcomed the return to radicalism. As an organized left caucus, the Waffle followed in the tradition of other radical dissenting groups which had always been present within the CCF/NDP. But it differed from all previous groupings in three important ways. First, unlike the majority of its predecessors which continually called for a return to the founding principles of the party which had been established in the early 1930s, the Waffle directly represented a current trend in Canadian thought which was concerned with American domination of the economy. Secondly, it insisted upon presenting itself and its ideas to the general public as well as to other party members. Thirdly, it continued to meet between party conventions and explored an ever-widening range of policies and activities.

The Waffle was able to attract the attention, if not the allegiance, of the general public because it appealed to a growing concern amongst Canadians regarding their national identity which had been previously raised by individuals such as Walter Gordon and Eric Kierans. Until September of 1970, at which time the Committee for an Independent Canada was founded as a haven for moderate nationalists, the Waffle was the only collective voice in the country to address itself explicitly to the question of Canada's political survival. The Waffle was also fortunate to have at its helm two intelligent and articulate spokesmen in the

embodiment of James Laxer and Mel Watkins. Both men were respected members of the university community and masters of the spoken and written word. The pronouncements of Laxer and Watkins captured the interest of the members of the news media who are always anxious to explore the rumours of revolution within major political parties. The resulting publicity and controversy created around the group allowed it to maintain national notoriety until which time it severed its ties with the NDP.

Although the Waffle was never a financially solvent organization, constantly begging its supporters for donations, it managed to set up a complex and efficient communications network. In view of the Waffle's internal workings, it is almost impossible to defend the group against the charge of being a party within a party. It published its own newspaper, which was distributed to as many as 3,000 supporters, collected dues, held exclusive meetings, sponsored conferences and conventions, devised separate policies and issued independent press releases. Furthermore, the Waffle usually behaved as a bloc at NDP meetings according to a preconceived strategy. Although the activities of the Waffle obviously undermined the larger party structure, the group continually insisted, prior to its own declaration of independence, that the NDP was to be the co-ordinating agent through which the political movement for independence and socialism would emerge. But the independent activities of the group made the NDP appear to the public as a party divided amongst itself and uncertain of its direction. Confronted with a continuing opposition caucus which created endless confusion in the public mind, it was inevitable that at some point the party establishment would be forced to enact disciplinary measures

against the group.

The Waffle clearly failed in its attempt to transform the NDP into a radical socialist party. What remains is an outstanding case history of the difficulties encountered by a splinter group which attempts to redirect the policies of an established political party. Although the Waffle located a responsive constituency within the NDP, it was unable to convert the party's leadership group and the majority of its members to its radical beliefs. Moreover, in attempting to do so, the group in many ways led to its own demise within the party.

To moderate members of the NDP, the Wafflers often behaved in an obstinate and intransigent fashion. The group believed that willingness to compromise led closer to political irrelevance and was therefore determined not to be moved from its founding principles. To historian Ivan Avacumovic, the Wafflers

[1]ike other staunch socialists...were impatient with anyone who did not share their views. They failed to grasp that what was self-evident to them looked far less plausible to those from a different background. Like other academics they tended to lecture. Unfortunately for them the NDP was not a captive audience of undergraduates who had to put up with what was being<sup>3</sup> said to them week after week.

The Waffle acquired a reputation for rudely disrupting local constituency meetings and infuriated many New Democrats by labelling long-time members and unionists sell-outs to bourgeois capitalism, although the custom of name-calling within the party was certainly a reciprocal affair. Many of the Wafflers were idealistic students who were not overly-concerned with the pragmatism of politics, as were some of the

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<sup>3</sup>Avacumovic, *Socialism in Canada*, p. 237.

NDP's older members who had suffered through numerous and frustrating electoral defeats. Moreover, a substantial number of Wafflers, having recently graduated from the radical student movement, were self-styled activists and, to the dismay of the older NDPers, looked with indifference and even contempt upon the inglorious day-to-day chores which were necessary to maintain the structure of a political organization. To the leftists, radicalism surpassed all other objectives and many of them adopted the characteristic of self-righteousness which frequently accompanies the psychological excitability of being a member of a vanguard movement. In so doing, the group alienated many of its potential supporters. The following description of the Waffle offered by an Ontario NDPer is a typical example of how many party members viewed the group:

I see it as being similar to fundamentalist Christian sects who believe that they and only they hold the secret of salvation. It is an elitist group dedicated to the belief that it is better to remain "pure" and "holy" in the wilderness than to be prepared to seek power through compromise, in the belief that doing some good for some of the people is a worthy objective...It is unfortunate that it seems to be the destiny of 'socialist' parties to be in greater danger<sup>4</sup> from the 'purists' within than the 'enemies' without.

The section of the NDP the Waffle irritated the most was the group of trade unionists who represented organizations affiliated with the party. These members, many of whom had walked picket lines and waited out bargaining sessions in starvation situations, reacted angrily to accusations of apathy and quiescence. Many were also aggravated by the

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<sup>4</sup>Cited in "Who's and Views in the NDP," Dimension Staff, *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 7, no. 8, April 1971, p. 41.



Waffle's nationalist attacks on their parent organizations located in the United States. The unionists believed that they alone could understand and represent the interests of the workingman and objected strenuously to Waffle intervention in the affairs of labour. The socialist jargon of the Waffle, the labour spokesmen claimed, was not applicable to the social and political condition of the workingman in the modern world. The labour leaders, of course, would lose the most if Waffle proposals calling for a greater distribution of power amongst rank and file workers were ever implemented. The unionists were the most vocal group to continually point out the damage to the party's public image caused by the radical leftists. According to Desmond Morton, the Waffle-labour impasse could be described in fundamental terms:

What Wafflers could never understand was that much of the union animus against them was not due to Dennis McDermott or to puppet-like dependence on the "Big International Unions" but to a bitter resentment of the intellectual and social snobbery of Mel Watkins and others -- none of it intended in the slightest. It was, I recall thinking the response<sup>5</sup> of the peasants to the *narodniks*.

For all of its concern with the working class, the Waffle never reached common ground with labour's designated spokesmen. And without at least neutralizing the union leadership, a predominant force within the NDP, the Waffle could never hope to turn the party around.

Although the Waffle enjoyed a somewhat warmer relationship with rank and file workers than it did with the union brass, the group occasionally encountered turbulence even at the grassroots level. In situations such as the Dunlop and Tex Pack strikes, the Waffle was

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<sup>5</sup> Desmond Morton to Joseph Levitt, n.d.

accused of imposing a foreign and incomprehensible political ideology onto the workers. Few of the Wafflers had working class experience and consequently had difficulty understanding the ordinary day-to-day concerns of the workers. Moreover, many ordinary wage earners neither understood nor shared the Waffle's interpretation of the historic importance of the working class to the creation of a new society.

The Waffle was continually criticized by its own left wing for its lack of fundamentalism and undue concentration on traditional political concerns, such as the leadership campaign. Several members of internationally-oriented leftist movements, who did not even qualify for membership in the NDP, infiltrated the Toronto section of the Waffle and attacked the group for its nationalist doctrines. A greater number of fringe elements joined the Waffle during its days as an independent movement and contributed to its demise through their internal harassment. The ultra-radical community accused the Waffle of "paternalism," "elitism," "bourgeois nationalism" and a variety of other right-wing crimes. Irrespective of the Waffle's labour programmes which consistently called for the implementation of workers' control, the group was charged with attempting to establish socialism from above, of replacing the existing order with a type of state capitalism, a sacrilege to the authentic grassroots elements of society who maintained that this hierarchical process would never lead to the total emancipation of the working class. To the charge of "elitism," there is substantial evidence to suggest that, in fact, the decision-making process in the Waffle did not always correspond to the rules of complete participatory democracy. But the radical leftists were unjustified in accusing the Waffle of sacrificing the principles of socialism to an expression of bourgeois

nationalism. The group was founded upon an intellectual belief that nationalism was a necessary pre-condition to the achievement of socialism in Canada. The original Wafflers fervidly believed that it was necessary to repatriate the economy of the country before it could be restructured along socialist lines.

Despite what dogmatic shortcomings the Waffle may have exhibited, no observer of the left in Canada should be surprised that challenges to the group's philosophy emanated from other radical communities. A favourite pastime amongst radical socialists in Canada is to see who can stand furthest to the left without becoming totally irrelevant. All leftist organizations assert that they represent the best interests of the working class and all claim to differ fundamentally from their numerous counterparts, who all remain the same. Yet they all criticize one another on essentially the same grounds of "elitism," "paternalism" and "pseudo-intellectualism." Caught up in this merry-go-round of rhetorical confusion, they all remain enigmatic to members of the Canadian working class, many of whom still agonize over the decision to cast a ballot for the moderate NDP.

The programmes of the Waffle were categorically rejected by the majority of the NDP, the trade unionists, the working class and the ultra-left radical community. Whatever reasons the others professed for repudiating the Waffle, for the NDP it was the historic question of radical purism versus political pragmatism. The Waffle believed that because the NDP was the largest organized leftist grouping in Canada with roots in the working class, it was the logical place to begin building a mass socialist base. But New Democrats such as David Lewis, who had spent a lifetime bringing an aura of respectability to the

party, were not prepared to tolerate the radicalism of the Waffle and jeopardize the electoral appeal of the NDP. According to Gordon Pape of the *Winnipeg Tribune*, the adoption of the Waffle Manifesto

...would have had the effect of exiling the NDP into the same political limbo...inhabited by the Canadian Communist Party...NDP supporters have been over too many rough roads and have worked too hard to bring the party to its present level of respectability to commit that kind of blunder.

In this sense, the NDP itself was the Waffle's most inflexible constituency.

Although the Waffle failed to achieve its primary objectives, it indisputably enjoyed a certain degree of success within the NDP and Canadian society in general. Its cajoling and campaigning within the party forced the NDP to clarify and strengthen its stand on the question of economic nationalism, as embodied by the Marshmallow Resolution of 1969, the Ontario NDP resolution on public ownership of the energy resource industry and the federal election platform of 1972. The group contributed to the passage of a number of other progressive resolutions at NDP federal and provincial conventions. The Waffle also forced the NDP to scrutinize its democratic foundations. Even the damning Vichert-Brewin-Caplan report suggested that the party needed to examine closely several aspects of its internal workings. The extra-parliamentary activities of the Waffle frequently drew the NDP into worthwhile community endeavours, such as the Dunlop campaign. In the estimation of historian Michael Cross, the Waffle

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<sup>6</sup> Gordon Pape, *Winnipeg Tribune*, September 12, 1969.

played the same role within the NDP that the party has played in Canadian politics: the source of new ideas, and new energy, the conscience of politics.

Outside of the party, the Waffle deserves praise for its efforts at mass public education. The increased nationalist sentiment in Canada encouraged by Waffle writings, seminars and rallies led to the birth of a second nationalist grouping, the Committee for an Independent Canada in 1970, the creation of the Canada Development Corporation by the Trudeau government in 1971 and the passage of the Foreign Investment Review Act in 1973. In the short-term, perhaps the Waffle's most significant contribution to Canadian society was its open-minded assessment of the situation in Quebec. It was the first non-French organization to introduce to English Canadians the idea that independence was a legitimate and realistic option for the people of Quebec. In view of the state of affairs in that province in the mid 1970s, James Laxer proved to be a better social analyst than most around him.

The most meritorious long-term contribution of the Waffle to society was its presentation of a political alternative to the Canadian public. The Waffle injected the ideas of a new and imaginative politics into a society which had become intoxicated with the philosophy of the liberal-democratic state. The activities of the group served to remind the electorate that the defenders of the status quo are frequently as potentially destructive elements as are those who challenge it. Although the Waffle's extremist policies proved too radical for the majority of Canadians, Anthony Westell suggested that the group's persistent pressure

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<sup>7</sup>Michael S. Cross, "The Waffle or the Unions," *Canadian Forum*, p. 11.

on the left may have caused a beneficial shift at the centre:

...the Waffle makes Walter Gordon's brand of nationalism sound thoroughly conservative which probably means that Canadian opinion is about ready for his policy proposals.<sup>8</sup>

Even after its demise, the effects of the Waffle on the NDP and Canadian society lingered on. At the NDP leadership convention of 1975 candidate Rosemary Brown, running on a strongly socialistic platform, took Ed Broadbent to a fourth ballot until she was finally defeated by a margin of 948 to 658. The same convention rejected resolutions dealing with natural resources and multi-national corporations because they did not strongly enough suggest the possibility of public ownership. Events at this conference led *Last Post* columnist Eric Hamovitch to comment: "Curiously, the NDP seems more willing to move to the left in the absence of an organized left-wing lobby."<sup>9</sup> Traces of Waffle philosophy were also detectable in areas outside of the NDP. In 1977 the Science Council of Canada described the Canadian economy in terms which appeared to directly paraphrase James Laxer: "We are now witnessing sluggish industrial development and perhaps even the *de-industrialization* of Canadian society."<sup>10</sup>

The Waffle is an important part of any discussion of Canadian nationalism because it raised a fundamental question pertaining to Canada's

<sup>8</sup> Cited in Reginald Whittaker, "The Waffle and Electoralism," *Our Generation* vol. 8, no. 2, winter, April 1972, p. 97.

<sup>9</sup> Eric Hamovitch, "Ed Broadbent: Leader at a Turning Point," *Last Post* vol. 5, no. 1, October, 1975, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> Cited in Robert Chodos, "Continentalism Rears its Head," *Last Post* vol. 6, no. 6, January, 1978.

political survival. According to the group, American control of the economy was the paramount threat to Canadian independence. Although others had recognized the dangers which accompanied American investment and had offered a variety of palliatives to help mitigate the problem, the Waffle was the first contingent of Canadian nationalists to devise a full-scale strategy which would guarantee Canada's political independence as well as create a more democratic and equitable society. The essential element of the Waffle scheme was the linkage of independence and socialism. To the Wafflers, neither was possible without the other. Although a majority of Canadians would not accept socialism as the insurer of independence, the Waffle contributed in a profound fashion to the understanding of Canadian nationalism. And the fundamental question of the interdependence of independence and socialism remains unresolved.

Given the persistence of the social, economic and political conditions which activated the Waffle phenomenon, such as American control of the Canadian economy and the dehumanizing and impersonal practices of modern corporate society, it is a certainty that sentiments similar to those of the Waffle will someday resurface. It is also likely that this new expression of socialism will emerge from within the ranks of the NDP. It would be to deny the long history of democratic socialism in Canada were it otherwise. The Waffle, like radical protest movements before it, died a premature political death. Ideology dies harder.

## APPENDIX A

### WAFFLE MANIFESTO

Our aim as democratic socialists is to build an independent socialist Canada. Our aim as supporters of the New Democratic Party is to make it a truly socialist party.

The achievement of socialism awaits the building of a mass base of socialists in factories and offices, on farms and campuses. The development of socialist consciousness, on which can be built a socialist base, must be the first priority of the New Democratic Party.

The New Democratic Party must be seen as the parliamentary wing of a movement dedicated to fundamental social change. It must be radicalized from within and it must be radicalized from without.

The most urgent issue for Canadians is the very survival of Canada. Anxiety is pervasive and the goal of greater economic independence receives widespread support. But economic independence without socialism is a sham and neither are meaningful without true participatory democracy.

The major threat to Canadian survival today is American control of the Canadian economy. The major issue of our times is not national unity but national survival, and the fundamental threat is external, not internal.

American corporate capitalism is the dominant factor shaping Canadian society. In Canada American economic control operates through the formidable medium of the multi-national corporation. The Canadian corporate elite has opted for a junior partnership with these American enterprises. Canada has been reduced to a resource base and consumer market within the American empire.

The American empire is the central reality for Canadians. It is an empire characterized by militarism abroad and racism at home. Canadian resources and diplomacy have been enlisted in the support of that empire. In the barbarous war in Vietnam Canada has supported the United States through its membership on the International Control Commission and through sales of arms and strategic resources to the American military-industrial complex.

The American empire is held together through worldwide military alliances and by giant corporations. Canada's membership in the American alliance system and the ownership of the Canadian economy by American corporations precluded Canada's playing an independent role in the world.



These bonds must be cut if corporate capitalism and the social priorities it creates is to be effectively challenged.

Canadian development is distorted by a corporate capitalist economy. Corporate investment creates and fosters superfluous individual consumption at the expense of social needs. Corporate decision-making concentrates investment in a few major urban areas which become increasingly uninhabitable while the rest of the country sinks into underdevelopment.

The criterion that the most profitable pursuits are the most important ones causes the neglect of activities whose value cannot be measured by the standard of profitability. It is not accidental that housing, education, medical care and public transportation are inadequately provided for by the present social system.

The problem of regional disparities is rooted in the profit orientation of capitalism. The social costs of stagnant areas are irrelevant to the corporations. For Canada the problem is compounded by the reduction of Canada to the position of an economic colony of the United States. The foreign capitalist has even less concern for balanced development of the country than the Canadian capitalist with roots in a particular region.

An independence movement based on substituting Canadian capitalists for American capitalists, or on public policy to make foreign corporations behave as if they were Canadian corporations, cannot be our final objective. There is not now an independent Canadian capitalism and any lingering pretensions on the part of Canadian businessmen to independence lacks credibility. Without a strong national capitalist class behind them, Canadian governments, Liberal and Conservative, have functioned in the interests of international and particularly American capitalism, and have lacked the will to pursue even a modest strategy of economic independence.

Capitalism must be replaced by socialism, by national planning of investment and by the public ownership of the means of production in the interests of the Canadian people as a whole. Canadian nationalism is a relevant force on which to build to the extent that it is anti-imperialist. On the road to socialism, such aspirations for independence must be taken into account. For to pursue independence seriously is to make visible the necessity of socialism in Canada.

Those who desire socialism and independence for Canada have often been baffled and mystified by the problem of internal divisions within Canada. While the essential fact of Canadian history in the past century is the reduction of Canada to a colony of the United States, with a consequent increase in regional inequalities, there is no denying the existence of two nations within Canada, each with its own language, culture and aspiration. This reality must be incorporated into the strategy of the New Democratic Party.

English Canada and Quebec can share common institutions to the extent that they share common purposes. So long as Canada is governed by those who believe that national policy should be limited to the passive function of maintaining a peaceful and secure climate for foreign investors, there can be no meaningful unity between English and French Canadians. So long as the federal government refuses to protect the country from American economic and cultural domination, English Canada is bound to appear to French Canadians simply as part of the United States. An English Canada concerned with its own national survival would create common aspirations that would help to tie the two nations together once more.

Nor can the present treatment of the constitutional issue in isolation from economic and social forces that transcend the two nations be anything but irrelevant. Our present constitution was drafted a century ago by politicians committed to the values and structure of a capitalist society. Constitutional change relevant to socialists must be based on the needs of the people rather than the corporations and must reflect the power of classes and groups excluded from effective decision-making by the present system.

A united Canada is of critical importance in pursuing a successful strategy against the reality of American imperialism. Quebec's history and aspirations must be allowed full expression and implementation in the conviction that new ties will emerge from the common perception of "two nations, one struggle." Socialists in English Canada must ally themselves with socialists in Quebec in this common cause.

Central to the creation of an independent socialist Canada is the strength and tradition of the Canadian working class and the trade union movement. The revitalization and extension of the labour movement would involve a fundamental democratization of our society.

Corporate capitalism is characterized by the predominant power of the corporate elite aided and abetted by the political elite. A central objective of Canadian socialists must be to further the democratization process in industry. The Canadian trade union movement throughout its history has waged a democratic battle against the so-called rights or prerogatives of ownership and management. It has achieved the important moral and legal victory of providing for working men an effective say in what their wages will be. At present management's "right" to control technological change is being challenged. The New Democratic Party must provide leadership in the struggle to extend working men's influence into every area of industrial decision-making. Those who work must have effective control in the determination of working conditions, and substantial power in determining the nature of the product prices, and so on. Democracy and socialism require nothing less.

Trade unionists and New Democrats have led in extending the welfare state in Canada. Much remains to be done: more and better housing, a really progressive tax structure, a guaranteed annual income. But these are no longer enough. A socialist society must be one in which there is democratic control of all institutions which have a major effect on men's

lives and where there is equal opportunity for creative non-exploitative self-development. It is now time to go beyond the welfare state.

New Democrats must begin now to insist on the redistribution of power, and not simply welfare, in a socialist direction. The struggle for worker participation in industrial decision-making and against management "rights" is such a move toward economic and social democracy.

By strengthening the Canadian labour movement, New Democrats will further the pursuit of Canadian independence. So long as Canadian economic activity is dominated by the corporate elite, and so long as workers' rights are confined within their present limits, corporate requirements for profit will continue to take precedence over human needs.

By bringing men together primarily as buyers and sellers of each other, by enshrining profitability and material gain in place of humanity and spiritual growth, capitalism has always been inherently alienating. Today sheer size combined with modern technology further exaggerates man's sense of insignificance and impotence. A socialist transformation of society will return to man his sense of humanity, to replace his sense of being a commodity. But a socialist democracy implies man's control of his immediate environment as well, and in any strategy for building socialism, community democracy is as vital as the struggle for electoral success. To that end, socialists must strive for democracy at those levels which most directly affect us all -- in our neighbourhoods, our schools, our places of work. Tenants' unions, consumers' and producers' co-operatives are examples of areas in which socialists must lead in efforts to involve people directly in the struggle to control their own destinies.

Socialism is a process and a programme. The process is the raising of socialist consciousness, the building of a mass base of socialists, and a strategy to make visible the limits of liberal capitalism.

While the programme must evolve out of the process, its leading features seem clear. Relevant instruments for bringing the Canadian economy under Canadian ownership and control and for altering the priorities established by corporate capitalism are at hand. They include extensive public control over investment and nationalization of the commanding heights of the economy, such as the key resources industries, finance and credit, and industries strategic to planning our economy. Within that programme, workers' participation in all institutions promises to release creative energies, promote decentralization, and restore human and social priorities.

The struggle to build a democratic socialist Canada must proceed at all levels of Canadian society. The New Democratic Party is the organization suited to bringing these activities into a common focus. The New Democratic Party has grown out of a movement for democratic socialism that has deep roots in Canadian history. It is the core around which should be mobilized the social and political movement necessary for building an independent socialist Canada. The New Democratic Party must rise to that challenge or become irrelevant. Victory lies in joining the struggle.

## APPENDIX B

### MARSHMALLOW RESOLUTION

New Democratic policy seeks to make and keep Canada free to realize the full potential and greatness of her people.

The live issue which concerns New Democrats, and Canadians generally, is to make us free to create the future of our economy and society; to redress the inequalities both within and between regions; to broaden and deepen the role of our people in the decisions which affect their lives; to redesign our cities; to improve the quality of life for all Canadians; to build a modern and efficient economy free of control of private corporate power, whether foreign or domestic; and to play a truly independent and meaningful role in the world.

The New Democratic Party is convinced that this cannot be achieved without the philosophy and policies of democratic socialism. The struggle for Canada's independence is one with the struggle for a better society. It is a struggle for human equality and self-fulfillment. To win this struggle, there must be Canadian control of the economy, public control of investment and other priorities, democratic social planning to use our resources for the enrichment of the human condition.

The urgent fact which concerns us is that our future as Canadians is now in peril. There are too many among us whose self-interest lies in the disintegration of our country. Our right of economic self-determination, the foundation of our future, is deeply undermined. The control of our industry and our resources has passed to alarming degree into foreign hands.

The erosion of our national independence has reached alarming proportions. Effective measures to reverse the trend are necessary now before foreign control of our economic life reaches the point of no return.

The facts of foreign control in Canada are stark and threatening. The rising rate of take-overs, the growth of foreign ownership in many of our major industries, the imposition of foreign laws on Canadian subsidiaries, and Canada's increasing dependence on American markets and practices have placed unacceptable limits on our freedom to pursue independent policies for the welfare of the Canadian people.

In our present society, the future shape of our economy is determined mainly by the major investment decisions taken by large corporations. And for Canada this has meant, to an important and growing extent, decisions by corporations owned and controlled by American interests. The inevitable result has been a branch-plant manufacturing industry much

less efficient than it should be, a natural resources industry largely serving the U.S. market, inadequate industrial research and development, restrictions on our foreign exchange policies, and investment decisions which take little account of the priorities and needs of Canadians.

All this has happened openly. Those who hold power in Canada, the politicians and businessmen who have run this country, have presided publicly over the devastation of our environment, the dissolution of our national goals and the disappearance of our autonomy. Their outworn economic philosophy led them to welcome Canadian dependence on American corporations and to offer increasing concessions in return for continued good-will. Canadian business and industrial circles found it profitable to follow this course.

While Continentalism has been the policy and practice of Liberal and Conservative governments, in marked contrast, Canadian independence and Canada's survival as a free nation have been and are the determined goals of the New Democratic Party.

Old party spokesmen are fond of decrying concern for Canadian independence as anti-American. Nothing shows more clearly how little they understand the feelings of Canadians. Anti-Americanism is as barren and negative a concept as is anti-French or anti-English or anti any other country or people. Canadians have always known this.

What New Democrats seek is to make and keep Canada free to realize her full potential and greatness. We must regain control of our national future, not because of sentimental patriotism but because it is the only foundation on which we can build a better society.

To achieve this end, New Democrats will use all the means available in a modern economy; expansion of public investment and public ownership, government planning, investment controls, a just tax system, purposeful monetary policies freed from the restraints of a fixed exchange rate, and necessary laws to limit and regulate foreign investment and subsidiaries in Canada.

From its inception, the New Democratic Party has proposed a massive, publicly owned Development Corporation to give Canadians a strong new voice in the growth of their country and to provide government with an operating instrument having a large pool of capital for public investment in accordance with the essential social priorities. We also propose a national commodity field throughout the world, so as to reduce Canada's unhealthy dependence on one unregulated market. Finally, we recognize that only our own efforts, through a serious commitment in carefully chosen areas of science and technology, will secure our industrial future.

Using not only one but all available means, the New Democratic Party calls on Canadians to free their country from foreign domination of its economy, of its cultural development and of its international policies. However, we believe that the survival of Canada depends even more on national programmes for people -- in housing, beauty and comfort in the cities, comfort and security on the farms, income maintenance, education, recreation and a host of other areas.

We have a noble myth in Canada of our capacity to accommodate cultural difference. For too long, however, disparity of income and opportunity has been the price of diversity. The result has been a persistent sectionalism, most conspicuously in French Canada, but apparent throughout Canada - in the Atlantic Region, in Northern Ontario and in the West. The survival of Canada depends on removing regional and all other inequalities and building a true foundation for one united country in which the position and responsibilities of every region and, particularly, those of Quebec, are fully recognized within Confederation.

Millions of Canadians share our faith in Canada and our determination to strengthen and enrich Canada's independence and place in the world. We call on them to join with us in the great common enterprise of saving our country. This is the challenge of the seventies and to this challenge the New Democratic Party rededicates itself.

## APPENDIX C

### FOR A SOCIALIST ONTARIO IN AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST CANADA

As democratic socialists, we seek to build a socialist Ontario in an independent socialist Canada. As members of the New Democratic Party, we seek to make it the key instrument of that struggle.

There is much to be done. We live today in a corporate capitalist society. Its failures are increasingly evident. The combination of unemployment and inflation undermines the security of working people. Labour is treated as a commodity, with giant corporations unilaterally closing plants and replacing workers in the name of "progress," while the power of the state is used to repress unions. Our resources are alienated into the hands of private capitalists, who are typically foreign, and the benefits that should accrue to the local communities are drained abroad. The land is despoiled, the air we breathe and the water we drink is polluted. The educational system is designed to favor the privileged few while training the many to play social roles that have been prepared for them. There is widespread discrimination against women. The poor, the immigrant and native minorities are systematically excluded from our economic, political and cultural institutions and from affluence and power. Toronto, as the dominant metropolis of the provincial economy, takes its tribute from its hinterland, and notably from resource-rich Northern Ontario. The government is little more than a committee that administers on behalf of the corporations.

Nor is that all, for Ontario is but a link in a long imperial chain. The Ontario economy has been integrated into the American corporate system. Corporate capitalism within the American empire funnels wealth to the large shareholders in the American metropolis. Toronto corporate middlemen run the branch office for New York in appropriating much of the profits of the Canadian economy for American owners. The system of corporate empire results in investment being centred in a few favoured urban areas while the hinterland is exploited for resources and allowed to sink into economic stagnation and underdevelopment. Economic imbalance results for much of the country including large parts of Ontario. Between 1960 and 1967, Canadian subsidiaries and affiliates (about half of which are in Ontario) sent two billion dollars more to the United States in the form of profits, royalties, license and management fees than they received from parent corporations in the form of capital imports. Ontario is now the vehicle for the exploitation of much of the rest of Canada. We must end this domination of all Canadians by Ontario-based corporations.

So it is that today the continuing Americanization of Ontario not only turns Ontario into a branch-plant society; it poses the chief threat to the achievement of Canadian independence and Canadian socialism. To build a vital socialist movement in Ontario would be to take a long step toward building an independent socialist Canada.

The means to build a socialist Ontario are at hand. The necessary powers to plan, to bring the economy under public ownership and control, and to develop our natural resources for the public good already lie within the Province of Ontario. The use of these instruments awaits the development of a socialist consciousness in factories, offices, campuses and neighbourhoods.

In fundamental opposition to our goals is the Ontario government's present serving of corporate interests. We must not let the continuing increase in government activity mislead us into thinking that we are moving, albeit gradually, towards a social order in which the people will get a larger say. Rather, the needs of an advanced technological society are integrating the government more closely with the corporations. What is now called planning by the government involves only the further buttressing of the system of private capitalism and reinforces the holding of power by those who already wield it. They are satisfied to supply the support systems -- hydro electricity, highways, trained manpower -- needed for the expansion of corporate activity.

In the face of the increasing power of American multi-national corporations, the present Ontario government not only does nothing to resist but instead actively promotes the foreign takeovers. Ontario businessmen and the old-line parties who represent their interests have given up any serious pretensions to an independent status for this country. Our human and natural resources are treated as enticements to investors, mostly American, to locate in Ontario. In recent years, the Robarts government has subsidized through grants and forgivable loans such giant corporations as Union Carbide, Allied Chemical, Kraft Foods and General Foods. In this fashion, the taxes of ordinary people are used to subsidize the corporate elite and to reduce yet further domestic control of the economy. Rising unemployment and a full sharing of American inflation are among the results of foreign ownership (the present system is unable to cope with the most straightforward demand of working people).

As democratic socialists, we must dedicate ourselves to fighting with all the means at our disposal this sell-out and give-away of Canada's largest province. To the present reality of Americanization and capitalism, we must pose the alternative of independence and socialism. In order to rid ourselves of the control of our society by American corporations and their local allies, we must insist on nothing less than the diffusion of power to the vast majorities of citizens not now included in decision-making. The means for the repatriation of our economy and for the winning of power for the people are known. They include extensive public control over investment and the nationalization of large corporations in the key sectors of the economy.



To bring presently privately-owned corporations under public ownership would be to bring our economy directly under democratic control. To create new Crown corporations is the most effective means to create both more jobs and more creative jobs. And public enterprises in general must be run in such a way as to permit maximum participation in decision-making by workers.

Socialist planning will make it possible for us both to halt and reverse the Americanization of the economy and to combat underdevelopment in disadvantaged regions. Crown corporations should be located in such areas so as to create a balanced variety of jobs and to ensure that development serves the area and is not simply geared to quick profits for a distant head office. Such Crown corporations must be administered by people in the area rather than by an impersonal bureaucracy at Queen's Park.

Our present society is characterized by gross inequality in the distribution of income and wealth and by a monopoly of power in the hands of the few. Much remains to be done to redistribute income through an equitable system of taxation and a humane system of welfare. But these are no longer enough. Socialism means the gathering back of power into this country so that it can be put in the hands of ordinary men and women. What is required is nothing less than the building of a truly democratic society.

Across Canada we desire a new set of social and working relations in which the people themselves actually decide local issues in the factory, office, neighbourhood and school. Socialist democracy means both the control of the immediate environment by those affected and the control of the larger provincial and national communities by the people as a whole. Social movements such as those of workers, farmers, students, tenants, women and minority groups are central to this social transformation. Socialists must involve themselves in the organization of tenants' unions, welfare recipients' groups and producers' and consumers' co-operatives.

The distorted priorities of the present system are nowhere more evident and more dangerous than in the destruction of the natural and human environment of this province. We can no longer afford to be sanguine about our open spaces and our limitless resources, or imagine that Ontario is in fact a "place to stand and a place to grow." Now we know that the world's largest lakes and rivers can be killed by pollution, that immense timber stands can be mined out of existence, that rich resources can be turned into slag heaps and foul air. We have seen unregulated urban sprawl eat away the province's best agricultural land. The existence of tens of thousands of lakes has not guaranteed their recreational use for the public good. The reckless exploitation of the natural environment of this province now imperils our future for all time to come.

The impending energy resources deal between the Canadian government and that of the United States gives particular urgency to the case for new resource policies. Such an agreement, negotiated by a Liberal government in Ottawa, aided and abetted by a Conservative government in Ontario, could result in the alienation in perpetuity of Ontarians from their resources. An immediate objective of New Democrats must be to stop any deal which treats Canadian resources simply as continental resources. We must oppose such an extension of American imperialism by all the means at our disposal -- through action at the provincial level as well as the federal, and by direct political action as well as in the Legislature.

In the cities, our human environment has suffered from the government's primary concern with the promotion of profit and the pursuit of growth without regard to social costs. Poor public transportation, inadequate housing, and the lack of parks and recreational facilities make it evident that human well-being is not the present aim of urban design. The automobile industry in particular, with its attendant jungle of expressways, has already given us unplanned urban sprawl and now threatens the habitability of the inner city.

Only by replacing a government controlled by profit seekers with a government controlled by the people can we make the preservation of our natural environment and the refashioning of our urban environment for human habitation attainable goals.

In our present capitalist society, the people themselves are seen as a resource. Corporations use the state to provide them with trained manpower. Immigrants are treated as a pool of cheap labour to be exploited. Their entry into Canada is determined more by the state of the capitalist labour market and the manpower needs of the corporations than by human considerations. Mindless talk of cultural diversity and the vertical mosaic obscures the reality of ghettos and of pervasive barriers to the achievement of equality of condition.

As the educational system becomes increasingly integrated with corporate activity, people are taught to accept their lot as producers and consumers within the American empire. Our young people are taught to be competitive and individualist toward each other, and to be passive and obedient toward the school system, their employers and the state. Through their taxes, working people finance an educational system geared to maintain corporate interest: and to educate privileged income groups.

The industrial dependence on institutions of higher learning is causing both corporations and governments to use their influence and control to make universities and colleges better instruments for strengthening the capitalist system along continentalist lines. We now have a branch plant system of higher education the better to service our branch plant economy.

Canada is unique among the developed nations of the world in terms of the number of foreigners who teach in our universities. Fewer than fifty per cent of professors teaching in the Arts and Science faculties

of many Ontario universities are Canadian citizens. The social sciences as developed in the United States have become instruments to extend American control by eroding our value systems and our national consciousness, and by creating tastes and attitudes that make us passive consumers of North American civilization.

Democratic socialists must seek a system of education in Ontario that is critical and Canadian, and that is governed by students, teachers and representative members of the community.

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The overwhelming section of the population that works for a wage or salary must play the key role in transforming our society. New Democrats who are trade unionists must continue the struggle to organize the majority of the working people who remain unorganized. All New Democrats who are trade unionists must oppose the Robarts Government's direct suppression of the labour movement. While corporations combine to set prices and to exercise monopolistic control of markets, workers are prevented by state injunctions from using their organized power.

Socialists must reject the concept that there are "management rights" in industry which are non-negotiable. They must articulate and support new rights for working people; the right to a job, and with shorter hours and higher pay; the right to benefit from technological change without threat to income or security; and the right to control the product of their own labour through the popular democratic management of industry.

The Labour movement in Canada and in Ontario is presently fragmented among too many unions, in part because of the prevalence of international unionism. Canadian sections of international unions must have full autonomy, and mergers must be sought between unions in Canada.

Farmers, like trade unionists, have long struggled to control their own environment. At present in Ontario farmers are losing that fight. Farmers are not working for themselves so much as for the benefit of the great food monopolies, farm implement companies and other corporations which exploit both the farmer and the consumer. Socialists must commit themselves to improving the standard of living and the quality of life in rural Ontario. These objectives can be reached by ensuring that agriculture is carried on in the interests of the farmer and the community as a whole. Industries related to farming such as food processing and farm implement manufacturing must be brought under public or co-operative control. Agricultural marketing must be rationalized and prices maintained by means of producer-controlled marketing boards.

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The movement to end the exploitation of women must be vigorously supported by socialists. The oppression of women stems from the definition of a woman as wife and mother to the exclusion of all else. Discrimination operates against women in the educational system and the work place. Women are discouraged from seeking higher education and are channelled

into the lowest paying and most meaningless jobs. The overwhelming majority of working women are unorganized and suffer discrimination not only from management but also from their fellow male workers.

The New Democratic Party must provide its full support for the struggle for the liberation of women and must support independent women's organizations which are fighting oppression.

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In the face of accelerating continentalism, the growth of social movements and the increasing support for the goals of independence and socialism are reasons for hope. The new awareness of the people regarding Americanization and the new consciousness of the social and human costs of capitalism must be given political expression at once if we are to halt the destruction of Canada.

We must not be deterred by those who will try to dismiss us by labelling us "anti-American," for those who do so profoundly misunderstand. Our complaint is not against the American people and the progressive movements in that country, but against the American corporate, political and cultural domination of Canada. Our colonial condition makes necessary an anti-imperialist struggle if we are to achieve socialism and independence.

Finally, in our efforts to oppose the present regime at Queen's Park, we cannot afford to have the people misled by partial solutions that would result in neither independence nor socialism. We must not settle for state capitalism or for welfare capitalism. The New Democratic Party must dedicate itself to the building of a socialist Ontario in independent socialist Canada.

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Abbreviations: CD - *Canadian Dimension*  
CF - *Canadian Forum*  
LP - *Last Post*  
OG - *Our Generation*

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