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Gordon O. Rothney

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MACINNIS, Grace, *J. S. Woodsworth: A Man to Remember*. Toronto, The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1953. Pp. XVI, 336. \$4.50. (Foreword by M. J. Coldwell).

Ce que le *Canada* évite d'expliquer toutefois, ce qu'il devrait expliquer pourtant, c'est comment il se fait qu'il lui est arrivé déjà, à lui, de faire, à propos de feu J.S. Woodsworth, la réflexion suivante: *Le pauvre vieux en est resté au Sermon de la Montagne*; comme si c'eût été une navrante naïveté de la part de J.S. Woodsworth de s'inspirer de cette page sublime de l'Évangile qu'est le *Sermon des Béatitudes*.

These words appeared in *Le Devoir* (Montreal) shortly after the death of J.S. Woodsworth, member of parliament for Winnipeg North Centre, and Honorary President of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. Even in French Canada he was a controversial figure. At the close of his career, his views on the questions which he considered most fundamental were shared by the disciples of Henri Bourassa more than by the majority of the members of his own party.

Mr. Woodsworth's thinking had developed steadily throughout a lifetime of experience. The final phase of his spiritual development was the clear recognition of "the limitations and dangers of physical force". This was "the last and to him the most crucial, of all his convictions" (p. 318). But he did not live long enough to convince even his admirers in the C.C.F. that a world where there would be brotherhood among mankind "could be created only by those who had rejected the instrument of force". Such a world was "the yearning that was nearest his heart" (p. 329).

Mrs. MacInnis is the daughter of J.S. Woodsworth. She is also the wife of a C.C.F. member of parliament from Vancouver. One gets the impression that she herself shares the official C.C.F. point of view, and that she is slightly apologetic about her father's "most crucial" convictions. Nevertheless, she states his position clearly and affectionately.

James Shaver Woodsworth was born at Islington, near Toronto, on July 29, 1874. He was elected to parliament in 1921 as a candidate of the Independent Labor Party of Manitoba, and held his seat without interruption until his death in Vancouver on March 21, 1942, at the age of sixty-seven.

Although his life was spent mostly in Ontario, Manitoba, and British Columbia, he had important contacts with French Canada. For Woodsworth was always on the side of those who were unjustly treated. Like Bourassa, he was profoundly influenced by the South African War. After studying at Wesley (now United) College in Winnipeg, and at Victoria College in Toronto, he had gone to Oxford in 1899. In England he was at the heart of military imperialism. He studied its roots, and what it did to people. Neither he nor Bourassa ever forgot the lessons about the nature of international politics which they learned at that time.

In 1905 we find a troubled Woodsworth on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. It was "in the Garden of Gethsemane, that he relived the story of the man of Nazareth... It was... a man dedicated to following the gleam of an ideal, who returned to Canada at the end of the year" (pp. 52-53).

Ten years later he came to Montreal to give public lectures at McGill University on "Canadian Immigration Problems". It was November, 1915, and he was surprised by the friendly reception he received from Henri Bourassa (pp. 92-94):

I'm reaching quite a French public. Henri Bourassa's paper says that I'm the first English-speaking Canadian that has gotten hold of their ideal for Canada. ...It does seem stupid not to know French... *Le Devoir* is giving me a column every Monday and this has brought forth a private letter to *Le Devoir* from Sir Wilfrid Laurier... On Friday Dr. Atherton (Roman Catholic) lectured for me and had lunch with me. He is really quite a remarkable man...

In 1916, Woodsworth, who had been Secretary of the Canadian Welfare League, became Secretary of a Bureau of Social Research, established by the governments of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. But all that year "his conscience bade him denounce the evil of war" (p. 106). Finally, when the federal government decided upon "National Service Registration", Woodsworth wrote to the *Manitoba Free Press* (p. 98):

This registration is no mere census. It seems to look in the direction of a measure of conscription. As some of us cannot conscientiously engage in military service, we are bound to resist what — if the war continues — will inevitably lead to forced service.

The result was the immediate dismissal of Woodsworth. In the months which followed he was reduced, in spite of his physical frailness, to unloading ships as a longshoreman at Vancouver, while his wife taught in a little British Columbia school, to keep the family from starvation.

In 1919 the Winnipeg general strike occurred. Under the direction of the Hon. Arthur Meighen, Minister of Justice, restrictive legislation was quickly passed to crush the strike, and the Mounted Police used strong-arm methods. Woodsworth helped the strikers, — and was arrested. As a result he was elected a Labor member of parliament for Winnipeg Centre in 1921. Half the book is devoted to his twenty years in the House of Commons. In 1926, he and another Labor member, who also had been arrested during the Winnipeg strike, held the balance of power at Ottawa, and kept Mr. Meighen out of office for about six months. In return, Mr. King promised to introduce Old Age Pensions! Just before Mr. Woodsworth's death in 1942, Mr. Meighen's political career was finally ended when he was defeated in a by-election at York South, in the Toronto area, by a candidate of the C.C.F.

In 1925, Henri Bourassa, also, was elected to Parliament, and often worked with Mr. Woodsworth. He once remarked: "Mr. Woodsworth, it is too bad you are not a Catholic, because if you were, you would be such a *good* Catholic!" (p. 174). Together they worked for social reform. Together they worked to keep Canada from participating in the rivalries of the great powers. A typical example, not mentioned by Mrs. MacInnis, was Mr. Woodsworth's motion of March 22, 1926, that "Canada should refuse to accept any responsibility for complications arising from the foreign policy of the United Kingdom", — a motion which, of course, was not adopted.

In 1932, the Labor and Farmer members of parliament united to form the C.C.F., with Mr. Woodsworth as leader. But in 1939, he could not persuade his own followers to oppose Canadian participation in the war. On September 7, 1939, he spoke only for himself, not for the C.C.F.:

For some little time I had the opportunity of sitting in this house next to one whom I regard as a great French-Canadian, Henri Bourassa... with regard to a good many things I was delighted and perhaps surprised to find that we had a great deal in common... It would be a very serious matter if unity between Quebec and the English-speaking provinces did not exist... war is an absolute negation of anything Christian... I have boys of my own... if any one of those boys... really through belief, is willing to take his stand on this matter and, if necessary, to face a concentration camp or firing squad, I shall be more proud of that boy than if he enlisted for the war...

This was Woodsworth's last great speech in parliament, — "his finest hour" (p. 298).

Henri Bourassa had been defeated by a Liberal in 1935, but, although Mrs. MacInnis does not mention the fact, another Liberal arose on September 9, 1939, to speak against his party on this issue as Bourassa would have done, — Maxime Raymond: "There is no such thing as a war of ideologies, there are only wars of interest... The interests of Poland in Europe are not the interests of Canada in America; neither are the interests of England... Let us therefore declare neutrality."

Following the election of 1940, "J.S. Woodsworth felt lonely in the C.C.F. caucus. He was the only one to oppose Canada's participation in the war" (p. 307). On May 16, at a meeting of the C.C.F. National Council, he collapsed under the strain. He could never speak in parliament again. He lingered on in the milder climate of Vancouver until the first day of spring, 1942: "One who never turned his back but marched breast forward", and who never doubted that (p. 304):

...behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow,
Keeping watch above His own.

Mrs. MacInnis is right when she calls her father "a man to remember". It was fitting that at his funeral the speaker concluded with verses of farewell from an Indian poet (p. 329). Had Woodsworth lived in India instead of Canada, his great wisdom would have been more widely appreciated. Yet there were many in this country, French as well as English, who had learned to admire his independence. Perhaps this was why Henri Bourassa, as late as May 21, 1944, was saying:

Il faut voter d'abord pour les candidats de M. Raymond et s'il arrive qu'il n'y en ait pas dans certains comtés, il faut voter pour un candidat C.C.F. de préférence à un mouton rouge ou un mouton bleu.¹

The whole of this book is a reminder that J.S. Woodsworth was a leader of his generation in the truest sense, — a man who could never be called a "mouton".

Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Gordon O. ROTHNEY.