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Résumé de l'article

La période pendant et après la colonisation du dix-neuvième siècle marque un changement dans l'agrarianisme manitobain, alors qu'au vingtième siècle la vision oppositionnelle fait place à l'accommodation. Le présent article se penche sur ce changement en reconstruisant le langage du radicalisme utilisé par les Patrons de l'Industrie et le langage d'accommodation qui devint prééminent dans la Manitoba Grain Growers' Association et les Fermiers-Unis du Manitoba. L'auteur suggère qu'en voyant ces langages comme des entités distinctes, avec leur propre unité discursive, il est possible et nécessaire de considérer l'idéologie agraire comme distanciée de sa position de classe putative. La Population Syndiquée au Québec

# The Language of Agrarianism in Manitoba, 1890-1925

Jeffery M Taylor

POPULAR, ACADEMIC, CORPORATE, and governmental analyses of western Canadian agriculture are all conducted within historically constructed systems of thought. The twentieth century, in fact, has been marked by three distinct periods of agricultural discourse. As the state became increasingly interventionist after World War II, attempting to stabilize working-class and agrarian consumption while resisting challenges from the left, the contours of current social democratic and bourgeois perspectives on agriculture were put in place. In the preceding two decades bourgeois and social democratic analyses of the countryside struggled with socialist, communist, and social credit views for popular acceptance. And the essential foundations for discussion throughout the century were established between the 1890s and the 1920s as a dominant view of rural economy and society was consolidated and popular conceptions of the prevailing order were transformed. Unfortunately, historical materialist interpretations of western Canadian agrarianism have tended to view this history in reductionist terms. Analysts from C.B. Macpherson to John Conway, using categories from classical and Second International Marxism, have simply viewed the political and ideological behaviour of farm folk as the predictable reaction of a "petit bourgeois" class to its transitional place in capitalist development.<sup>1</sup>

There are two theoretical problems here. One involves the conceptualisation of simple commodity agriculture as a form of production. Recent studies of simple

<sup>1</sup>John Conway's "'To Seek A Goodly Heritage': The Prairie Populist Resistance to the National Policy," unpublished PhD thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1979 utilizes Lenin's analysis of Russian populism to argue that the agrarian movement was a "petit bourgeois response to capitalist industrialization," while C.B. Macpherson's *Democracy in Alberta: Social Credit and the Party System* (Toronto 1962) should be understood in the context of the author's main interest, the materialist analysis of early modern bourgeois democratic theory in terms of a classical understanding of capitalist transition. David Laycock's recent "Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Prairies, 1910-1945," unpublished PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1985 avoids the problem of class reductionism by abandoning materialism to embrace discourse theory. He isolates four systems of populist thought which seem to operate at their own distinct level, unencumbered by interactions with other discursive systems or material determinations.

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commodity production in other parts of the world suggest that this form has a more subtle relation to capitalist development than classical, Second International, or even dependency perspectives reveal. Our own position, elaborated elsewhere, is that the simple commodity labour process (in both the production of goods and the production of labour power) became effectively subordinated to capital in western Canada during the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> The other problem, which is taken up below, is the thorny one of the relationship between social being and social identity. Is it legitimate, that is, to assume a direct correspondence between ideology and social position? Through theoretical reflection on the question of ideology, and an empirical assessment of the language of agrarianism in Manitoba before 1925, it is argued here that popular ideology in western Canadian agriculture is more complex and variable than previous materialist analyses have allowed.<sup>3</sup>

## I

ANY HISTORICAL MATERIALIST discussion of ideology must begin with Gramsci and Althusser. In his attempt to transcend the determinist models of Second International Marxism in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution, Gramsci developed an epistemology that owed much to Hegel's version of totality and Croce's conception of the unity of subject and object.<sup>4</sup> In so doing, he rejected the rigid base/superstructure metaphor in favour of the notion of a single essence imbuing the social whole and, more importantly, a vision of the social world in which reality is deemed to be indivisible from human consciousness and action. The existence of a reality beyond immediate social practice is denied, and the formation of ideologies is related directly to class interest. According to Gramsci, every class position in production carries with it an implicit conception of the world, and the clash of these conceptions is an important area of class struggle. Both class domination and popular resistance have to be constantly organized at the ideologi-

<sup>2</sup>These issues are discussed in J. Taylor, "Dominant and Popular Ideologies in the Making of Rural Manitobans, 1890-1925," unpublished PhD thesis, University of Manitoba, 1988, chapters 1 and 2. Studies of western Canadian agriculture that employ a dependency approach include D. Mitchell, *The Politics of Food* (Toronto 1975) and P. Phillips, "Staples, Surplus and Exchange: The Commercial-Industrial Question in the National Policy Period," in D. Cameron, ed., *Explorations in Canadian Economic History: Essays in Honour of Irene M. Spry* (Ottawa 1985). Suggestive studies that move beyond dependency in analysing the relation of agriculture to capitalist development include J. Chevalier, "There is Nothing Simple About Simple Commodity Production," *Studies in Political Economy*, 7 (Winter 1982), 89-124; H. Friedmann, "Household Production and the National Economy: Concepts for the Analysis of Agrarian Formations," *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 7 (1980), 158-184; C. Post, "The American Road to Capitalism," *New Left Review*, 133 (1982), 30-51; and M. Aglietta, *A Theory of Capitalist Regulation: The U.S. Experience* (London 1979) esp. 78-9.

<sup>3</sup>This does not include a discussion of female agrarianism. The language women used in the Women's Grain Growers' Association and the United Farm Women of Manitoba was somewhat different, owing something to the influence of feminism. It is discussed in Taylor, "Dominant and Popular Ideologies," Ch. 6.

<sup>4</sup>Totality refers to the determining domination of the whole over its constituent parts. Benedetto Croce was a leading idealist philosopher in early twentieth century Italy.

cal and political level.<sup>5</sup>

Althusser, in seeking to construct a scientific Marxism, rejected Gramsci's philosophy as Hegelian and humanist.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, he took issue with the concept of totality employed in both Second International and "historicist" Marxism, particularly the unity of subject and object common to the epistemology of Lukacs, Gramsci, and many of their contemporaries (the historicists).<sup>7</sup> He identified and rejected an "expressive" totality in which the social whole possesses a core (economy) or essence that is then reflected as epiphenomena in the other elements of society. Furthermore, he rejected the notion that history is the manifestation of a subject, be it an Absolute Idea (as in Hegel) or the proletariat (as in historicist Marxism). Rather, he maintained that an historical reality exists independent of collective consciousness. That reality is composed of and determined by the objective, antagonistic structures known as modes of production, which are propelled by class struggle, and human beings are constituted as subjects through ideological practice, which is an integral instance of the social formation. This differs from Gramsci's notion of hegemony in that, by rejecting the unity of subject and object, Althusser pointed to the epistemological space between being and consciousness.<sup>8</sup>

It is significant that one of the most fruitful applications of Gramsci's interpretation of popular consciousness and resistance has been in England.<sup>9</sup> There it met with an historiography of the working and popular classes that shared many of Gramsci's philosophical premises. This historiography took form in the Communist Party of Great Britain Historians' Group during the 1940s and 1950s and emerged as a distinctive genre after "1956."<sup>10</sup> The epistemology that characterizes this tradition retains an expressive conception of totality and the unity of subject and object.<sup>11</sup> It presumes that there is a direct relationship between thought and

<sup>5</sup>A. Gramsci, *Selections From The Prison Notebooks*; C. Boggs, *Gramsci's Marxism*; R. Miliband, *Marxism and Politics* (London 1977), 48-9, 57-62; Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society* (London 1969), ch. 9; A. Callinicos, *Marxism and Philosophy* (Oxford 1983), 61-80, 150-3; Callinicos, *Althusser's Marxism* (London 1976), 16-29.

<sup>6</sup>In rejecting humanism Althusser was denying "that the human essence is the subject of history and that it determines its direction according to a predestined drama of alienation and reconciliation." Callinicos, *Althusser's Marxism*, 69-70.

<sup>7</sup>In historicism a theory "possesses a claim to cognitive validity to the extent that it is appropriate to the historical needs of a particular class in a particular epoch." Callinicos, *Althusser's Marxism*, 17-18.

<sup>8</sup>L. Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (London 1971); Callinicos, *Althusser's Marxism*; Callinicos, *Marxism and Philosophy*, 89-95; T. Benton, *The Rise and Fall of Structural Marxism* (London 1984).

<sup>9</sup>See, for example, S. Hall and T. Jefferson, eds., *Resistance Through Rituals* (London 1976).

<sup>10</sup>B. Schwarz, "'The people' in history: the Communist Party Historians' Group, 1946-56," in Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *Making Histories: Studies in history-writing and politics* (London 1982); R. Samuel, "British Marxist Historians I," *New Left Review*, 120 (1980); R. Johnson, "Culture and the historians," and "Three problematics: elements of a theory of working class culture," in J. Clarke, C. Critcher, and R. Johnson, eds., *Working class Culture: studies in history and theory* (London 1979); D. Torr, *Tom Mann and His Times* (London 1956).

<sup>11</sup>G. Rude, *Ideology and Popular Protest* (New York 1980); Rude, *The Crowd in History* (New York

reality. The notion of the working class as Subject is retained from the Hegelian tradition, and experience and culture replace the economy as the expressive essence of the totality. But the approach does not allow one to ask questions about the ideological constitution of historical subjects or the material determination of ideologies; that is to say, there is no way to analyse the intermediate forms in which social identities are shaped.<sup>12</sup>

This inevitably leads into discourse theory. The challenge posed to materialist epistemologies by post-Saussurian linguistics has been profound. It is no longer possible to treat language as the neutral medium through which experience is expressed. Rather, we must recognise that language itself is constitutive of reality; we cannot read past language to an underlying source, but we must analyse how language itself forms reality.

Saussure's concept of language, which informs the analytical approaches of Deleuze, Foucault, and others, can be a slippery and dangerous slope, however. Without getting hopelessly mired in the intricacies of linguistic theory, it should be noted that, in this approach, language is deemed to be constantly in flux, communication is necessarily ambiguous, and there is no reality beyond discourse. Since a given word in one's vocabulary does not have a definite reference point in an anterior reality, a new meaning is assigned to the word whenever it is used to construct a novel sentence. In turn, reality itself (which is constituted through language) is fragmentary and incoherent. Indeed, any attempt to impose order on this flux is an exercise in domination. In Foucault's work, discourse and its practices are forms of power/knowledge that inevitably organize and control. The history of sexuality is really the history of dominating discourses on sexuality. Deleuze, going further, suggests that language itself is an artificial imposition on

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1964); E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London 1963); Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present*, 50 (1971), 76-136; C. Hill, "The Norman Yoke," in J. Saville, ed., *Democracy and the Labour Movement: Essays in Honour of Dona Torr* (London 1954). This, of course, is also the guiding epistemology of North American working-class historiography, which apparently has now entered the mainstream of the historical profession. Discussions of Gramsci's faults and values now grace the pages of *American Historical Review* and *Journal of American History*. See T. Jackson Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," *American Historical Review*, 90 (1985), 567-93; and L. Fink, "The New Labor History and the Powers of Historical Pessimism: Consensus, Hegemony, and the Case of the Knights of Labor," *Journal of American History*, 75 (1988) 115-36 and comments.

<sup>12</sup>The best example of the use of this approach in the analysis of rural North American popular politics is Lawrence Goodwyn's *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (New York 1978). It is rich in cultural analysis: the concept of movement culture; the identification of a sequential process of agrarian insurgency; culture and experience as determining forces in history. Yet, Goodwyn refuses to abstract. He denies the existence of a mode of production or social formation conceptually distinct from experience. Hence, his populists--the mid-roads at least--are presented as pure subjects. They are the bearers of democracy, resisting the forces of corporate hegemony. See also Goodwyn's critique of James Green in "The 'Co-operative Commonwealth' and Other Abstractions," *Marxist Perspectives*, 10 (1980), and Green's reply "Populism, Socialism and the Promise of Democracy," *Radical History Review*, 24 (1980).

the flux of the unconscious.<sup>13</sup>

Historical materialists and other realists should be wary of such approaches. All discourses, including Marxism, are deemed to be apparatuses of domination in this view. The political position that logically flows from such an analysis is an extreme and immobilising anarchism. Nevertheless, by retaining a materialist stance, yet incorporating some of the post-Saussurian insights, it is possible to accord language and discourse a certain determining role.<sup>14</sup>

Gareth Stedman Jones's analysis of Chartist language is one example of how this might work in practice. Rejecting previous "social" analyses of Chartism, in which the political language of the movement was deemed to be expressive of an underlying social reality, he focuses on the language itself, interpreting its form rather than its putative content. "What is proposed," he writes:

is an approach which attempts to identify and situate the place of language and form, and which resists the temptation to collapse questions posed by the form of Chartism into questions of its assumed substance. It is argued that, if the interpretation of language and politics is freed from *a priori* social inferences, it then becomes possible to establish a far closer and more precise relationship between ideology and activity than is conveyed in the standard picture of the movement.

The conclusion he reaches is that Chartist language was continuous with an older language of radicalism that predated the emergence of a working class. It was more than a vehicle for the expression of working class discontent, however, for it played a significant role in establishing the premises and parameters of Chartism. But the movement ultimately collapsed, Stedman Jones suggests, due to the failure of the Chartist leadership to persuade its constituency to interpret distress and discontent within the terms of the inherited language.<sup>15</sup>

How, then, should we approach ideology? To begin with, following Gramsci, ideology should be seen as a contested social terrain, demanding constant organization and intervention by both dominant and subordinate social groups. Further-

<sup>13</sup>A. Callinicos, *Marxism and Philosophy*, 5 and 6; Callinicos, *Is There A Future For Marxism?* (London 1982); M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction* (New York 1980); J. Weeks, *Sexuality and Its Discontents: Meanings, Myths and Modern Sexualities* (London 1985), 170-81; "Language and History," *History Workshop Journal*, 10 (1980), 1-5.

<sup>14</sup>See P. Dews, "The 'Nouvelle Philosophie' and Foucault," *Economy and Society*, 8 (1979), 127-71; and Dews, "The 'new philosophers' and the end of Leftism," *Radical Philosophy*, 24 (1980), 2-11, for analyses of the politics of structuralism. The vehemence with which proponents of a cultural or experiential approach reject the analysis of language is quite astounding. See, for example, Bryan Palmer's refusal to engage with the substance of Joan Scott's argument in his comment on Scott's "On Language, Gender, and Working Class History" in *International Labor and Working Class History*, 31 (1987), 14-23.

<sup>15</sup>G. Stedman Jones, "Rethinking Chartism," in *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History, 1832-1982* (Cambridge 1983), 94-5; for a classical Marxist critique see J. Foster, "The Declassing of Language," *New Left Review*, 150 (1985), 29-45; for a sympathetic appreciation see G. Claeys, "Language, class and historical consciousness in nineteenth century England," *Economy and Society*, 14 (1985), 239-63; for an analysis of French popular politics that is similar, though more social, see M. Sonenscher, "The Sans-culottes of the Year II: rethinking the language of labour in revolutionary France," *Social History*, 9 (1984), 301-28.

more, as culturalist historiography has shown, resistance to the forces of domination is constructed in popular ideology and politics by subordinate subjects who play an active, determining role in the historical process. But, taking account of Althusser's critique of Hegelian and Second International Marxism, the epistemological distance between subject and object must be recognized. There is no direct relation between social being and social identity; rather, as discourse theory suggests, identity is shaped through intermediate languages and discourses. It is here that ideologies operate. Focussing analytical attention on these languages can reveal how identity is formed.

## II

WORKING-CLASS AND AGRARIAN CRITIQUES of capital and the state in the nineteenth century were part of a tradition of popular analysis that dated from the eighteenth century. The source of this tradition — at least in its plebian and democratic form — was the English and American radicalism that emerged in the 1770s, becoming coherent in the 1790s following the revolutionary moments in America, Ireland, and France. As Stedman Jones has shown, radicalism — with its focus on political oppression and corruption — remained the determining mode of popular thought in England until at least the mid-nineteenth century. The misuse of political power was the cause of economic misery in this analysis. Similarly, early nineteenth century North American popular politics was guided by a radical ideology of anti-monopoly, equal rights, and a labour theory of value. The succession of popular movements that crossed the historical stage in the latter half of the nineteenth century stretched the radical, anti-monopolist categories in an attempt to comprehend the reality of industrial capitalism. The National Labor Union in the 1860s, the Grange and Greenbackism in the 1870s, and the Single Tax and Nationalism in the 1880s all denounced political and economic oppression in similar terms, sharing a vision of society in which the toilers — workers and farmers — were exploited through the swindles and chicanery of the rich, particularly the “parasites” control of the state.<sup>16</sup>

The impressive agrarian and working class mobilizations at the end of the nineteenth century were the last, and the most important, movements to employ

<sup>16</sup>G. Stedman Jones. “Rethinking Chartism,” in *Languages of Class*; P. Hollis, *The Pauper Press: A Study in Working Class Radicalism of the 1830s* (Oxford 1970); E. Pessen, *Most Uncommon Jacksonians: The Radical Leaders of the Early Labor Movement* (Albany 1967), ch. 10; A. Dawley, *Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn* (Cambridge, Mass. 1976), esp. chs. 2 and 8; S. Ryerson, *Unequal Union: Confederation and the Roots of Conflict in the Canadas, 1815-1873* (Toronto 1975), 85-133; D. Montgomery, *Beyond Equality: Labor and the Radical Republicans, 1867-1872* (New York 1967); G. Grob, *Workers and Utopia: A Study of Ideological Conflict in the American Labor Movement, 1865-1900* (Chicago 1961), ch. II; C. Destler, “Western Radicalism, 1865-1901: Concepts and Origins,” in *American Radicalism, 1865-1901* (Chicago 1946); R. Hann, *Farmers Confront Industrialism: Some Historical Perspectives on Ontario Agrarian Movements* (Toronto 1975); L.A. Wood, *A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada: The Origins and Development of Agrarian Protest, 1872-1924* (Toronto 1924; reprinted 1975), part I.

radicalism in a coherent way. Eschewing a distinctively economic analysis of production relations, the Knights of Labor in the 1880s reacted to their loss of control over the pace and rhythm of work, and their increasingly subordinate place in their communities, by invoking the radical tradition in their demand for the abolition of the wage system. And North American agrarians in the Farmers' Alliance, the People's Party, and the Patrons of Industry shared with the Knights an understanding of capitalist development that made sense of their common experience of exploitation. These movements began with a notion of equal rights and opposition to special privilege that fuelled their producerism, anti-monopolism, and co-operative vision. According to Knights and agrarians, monopoly power, through its manipulation of the state, operated in the fields of railroads and communications, the tariff, the land, and money and banking, and a producer directed government would bring coercive monopolies under popular control. Equally important, co-operation was the crucial corollary to state intervention in the radical project. In the agrarian vision, the co-operative commonwealth could be established and sustained through producer and consumer organizations. For Knights, the extent to which they opposed strikes was in fact an expression of their rejection of a conflict-ridden system foisted upon producers by non-producers. At the heart of late nineteenth century radicalism, however, stood the three elements in the concept of producerism: labour was the source of all value; the wealth that labour created belonged to labour alone; and farmers and workers shared common cause in their struggle against non-producers entrenched in the corporations and the state.<sup>17</sup>

In both the working class and agrarian movements, radicalism gave way to divergent ideological strains during the twentieth century.<sup>18</sup> Between the demise

<sup>17</sup>On the Knights of Labor, see Grob, *Workers and Utopia*, ch. III; M. Dubofsky, *Industrialism and the American Worker, 1865-1920* (New York 1975), 54-61; Kealey and Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900* (Cambridge 1982); L. Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor and American Politics* (Chicago 1983), ch. 1; R. Hann, "Brainworkers and the Knights of Labor: E.E. Sheppard, Phillips Thompson, and the Toronto News, 1883-1887," in G. Kealey and P. Warrion, eds., *Essays in Canadian Working Class History* (Toronto 1976), 35-57. The Knights, while they may have represented the North American working class fully "made" as culturalist historiography suggests, employed a language which predated proletarianization and, more importantly, extended beyond the world of the waged worker.

On agrarianism, see B. Palmer, *Man Over Money: The Southern Populist Critique of American Capitalism* (Chapel Hill 1980); L. Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (New York 1976); C. Destler, "Western Radicalism, 1865-1901," N. Pollack, ed., *The Populist Mind* (New York 1967); Pollack, *The Populist Response to Industrial America* (Cambridge, Mass. 1962); R. Cook, "Tillers and Toilers: The Rise and Fall of Populism in Canada in the 1890s," *Historical Papers* (1984), 1-20; S.E.D. Shortt, "Social Change and Political Crisis in Rural Ontario: the Patrons of Industry, 1889-1896," in D. Swainson, ed., *Oliver Mowat's Ontario* (Toronto 1972).

<sup>18</sup>On the Canadian working class see, for example, Palmer, *Working Class Experience: The Rise and Reconstitution of Canadian Labour, 1800-1980*, (Toronto 1983), ch. 4; C. Heron, "Labourism and the Canadian Working Class," *Labour/Le Travail*, 13 (Spring, 1984), 45-75; G. Friesen, "'Yours in Revolt': Regionalism, Socialism and the Western Canadian Labour Movement," *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 1 (1976), 139-57; A.R. McCormack, *Reformers, Rebels and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian*



of Populism and the organization of the American Farm Bureau Federation in the United States, and between the decline of Patronism and the formation of the Progressive Party in Canada, a clearly pro-bourgeois perspective was forged in North American agrarianism. Across the continent farm organizations turned their attention to the business of marketing with, for example, the incorporation of the Equity Co-operative Exchange of St. Paul in 1911, and the launching of the Grain Growers' Grain Company of Winnipeg in 1907. Although capital perceived these challenges as a threat, and farmers used radical language to justify them, the marketing agencies nevertheless represented an adjustment to the apparently permanent reality of the capitalist economy. Politically, the elements that came together as the American Farm Bureau in 1919, out of a network mobilized by the newly created county agent system, championed farmer co-operation with capital in the interests of making the economy work more efficiently for "all business" (farm and otherwise). In Canada the group around United Grain Growers, and in the mainstream of the Progressive Party, sought an alliance with capital's reform wing in order to secure fair treatment for the agricultural sector in a political economy increasingly dominated by industry and finance. By the 1920s this tendency effectively controlled farm politics and economics across North America, but not without having had to confront a significant challenge from the left.<sup>19</sup>

While this conservative ideology was being constructed in the first three decades of the century, proto-socialist and socialist agrarian movements were sustaining, deepening, and transforming the oppositional potential of radicalism. Left agrarianism in Canada emerged as an identifiable entity in the 1920s out of the progressive wing of the farm movement. In the Ontario and prairie movements a radical critique had been kept alive while the mainstream moved into alignment with capital. After the war this critique became increasingly socialist, gaining organizational expression in the Farmers' Union of Canada during the campaign for compulsory pools. By the late 1920s and early 1930s the Farmers' Union had spawned two socialist perspectives on Canadian agriculture. On the one hand, the Communist Party, through the Farmers' Unity League, was applying a Marxist analysis that, despite creative attempts by some to adapt historical materialism to the realities of rural North America, was rigid and doctrinaire. On the other hand, the CCF was evolving a more flexible approach that eventually succumbed to the

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Radical Movement, 1899-1919 (Toronto 1977); N. Penner, *The Canadian Left: A Critical Analysis* (Toronto 1977), ch. 3.

<sup>19</sup>T. Saloutos and J. Hicks, *Agricultural Discontent in the Middle West, 1900-1939* (Madison 1951); G. Fite, *American Farmers: The New Minority* (Bloomington 1981); W.L. Morton, *The Progressive Party in Canada* (Toronto 1950); H.S. Patton, *Grain Growers' Co-operation in Western Canada* (Cambridge, Mass. 1928); I. Macpherson, *Each for All: A History of the Co-operative Movement in English Canada, 1900-1945* (Toronto 1979), 9-16, 77-80; J. Thompson with A. Seager, *Canada 1922-1939: Decades of Discord* (Toronto 1985), 28-37; D. Laycock, "Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Prairies," ch. II; G. Panting, "A Study of the United Farmers' of Manitoba to 1928: An Agricultural Association During a Period of Transition," unpublished MA thesis, University of Manitoba, 1954.

accommodationist dynamics of social democracy.<sup>20</sup>

### III

ALTHOUGH A GRANGE LOCAL was founded at High Bluff in the 1870s, significant agrarian insurgency in Manitoba really dates from the early 1880s. The fall of 1883 witnessed the formation of two organizations, one in Manitou and the other in Brandon, dedicated to agrarian reform. The western group, the Manitoba and Northwest Farmers' Union, adopted a platform calling for tariff modifications, Manitoba's right to charter railways, the settlement of public lands, lower freight rates, and an end to elevator monopoly. The southern organization, the Manitoba and Northwest Farmers' Protective Union, meanwhile, sought the general repeal of laws which favoured monopolists and oppressed farmers.<sup>21</sup> The Protective Union was a more purely farmers' organization than the Farmers' Union because the latter included grain dealers within its ranks. Although both movements failed within three years, they left a legacy of political agitation and a system of co-operative enterprises, notably a number of farmer owned elevators around the province, upon which future activists could build.<sup>22</sup>

After a period in the later 1880s during which the Liberal party dominated agrarian discontent, the decade of the 1890s opened with the formation of the Rockwood Farmers' Alliance, the organization of the Farmers' League of Manitoba at Cartwright, and the establishment of new farmer owned elevator companies at Carman, Carberry, Neepawa, Crystal City, and Morden.<sup>23</sup> In retrospect, these activities simply presaged the emergence of the Patrons of Industry in the winter of 1891-92. An immediate outgrowth of the Ontario Patrons, formed in 1889, this latest expression of insurgency was, like the Grange, the Farmers' Alliance, and the Farmers' League before it, part of a broader North American movement. The first Manitoba locals were, in fact, initiated by an

<sup>20</sup>J. Green, *Grassroots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895-1943* (Baton Rouge 1978); G. Burbank, *When Farmers Voted Red* (Westport 1976); R. Morlan, *Political Prairie Fire* (Minneapolis 1955); J.K. Putman, "The Socialist Party of North Dakota, 1902-1918," unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of North Dakota, 1956; L.K. Dyson, *Red Harvest: The Communist Party and American Farmers* (Lincoln 1982); D.S. Spafford, "The Left-Wing, 1921-1931," in N. Ward and D.S. Spafford, eds., *Politics in Saskatchewan* (Toronto 1968); Spafford, "The Origin of the Farmers' Union of Canada," in D. Swainson, ed., *Historical Essays on the Prairie Provinces* (Toronto 1970); D. Monod, "Rethinking Prairie Communism," *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, 35 (1985), 99-118; Macpherson, *Each for All*, 68-77; Thompson and Seager, *Canada 1922-1939*, 229-35; S.M. Lipset, *Agrarian Socialism: The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan: A Study in Political Sociology* (Berkeley 1950; reprint 1971); Laycock, "Populism and Democratic Thought," ch. III and IV.

<sup>21</sup>"Farmers' Grievances," *Manitoba Free Press* 6 December 1883; B. McCutcheon, "The Economic and Social Structure of Political Agrarianism in Manitoba, 1870-1900," unpublished PhD thesis, University of British Columbia, 1974, 98-115; L.A. Wood, *A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada: The Origins and Development of Agrarian Protest, 1872-1924* (Toronto 1924; reprint 1975), 123-29.

<sup>22</sup>McCutcheon, "The Economic and Social Structure," ch. IV and V, and 272.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 275-78; "Successful Farmers' Elevator Companies," *The Farmers' Advocate (TFA)* 5 April 1898.

American organizer. Sub-associations then grew quickly throughout the settled areas of Manitoba and into the Northwest during 1892. Constituted as fraternal brotherhoods, with the accompanying paraphernalia and ritual, the Patrons were also heavily engaged in various aspects of co-operative buying and selling throughout their existence. By 1894, however, their primary energies were shifting in the direction of electoral politics.<sup>24</sup>

What were the components of Patron ideology? The first element in Patronism was a labour theory of value in which farmers and workers shared common interests as the creators of wealth. In a letter to *The Patrons' Advocate* in 1895, "Pro Patria" wrote that "the greatest misfortune of a country is poor farmers." He then elaborated in terms of a labour theory of worth:

Every man should be secured in his labor and in his homestead; he should work for himself and not for others, no one should share in the profits who does not share in the production. Labor must have the exclusive right to the produce, if we are ever to achieve permanency and stability in agriculture.... Laws must be passed to secure the exclusive right of the occupier of the ground to the fruits of his labor.<sup>25</sup>

This passage is noteworthy for its use of the term "labor," although the specific focus is agriculture. An exclusively agrarian theory of value was sometimes employed in Patronism, but this physiocratic sentiment was rare. "Without wasting space by needless demonstration, let us assume that society rests upon the labor of farmers," wrote Henry Clay in an editorial plea for Patron co-operation with "Labor Unions" and "Trade Organizations." On the fundamental basis of food production, he argued, carpenters and masons provide shelter, tailors provide clothing, the merchant comes into existence, and factories and mills arise to supply the merchant. But, "[t]he wholè procession is headed by the farmer."<sup>26</sup> More commonly, no distinction was drawn between the labour of farmers and workers. For example, Spender Percival of Glenora, an occasional contributor to the *Advocate*, referred to "the farmer and working classes — the producers as the source of wealth to the country" in an 1895 letter.<sup>27</sup> Clay, meanwhile, in a late 1894 article entitled "Indirect Taxation and Agriculture," used the term "laborers," and then added the following clarification: "...when I say laborers, I include the farmer, for whilst in

<sup>24</sup>R. Cook, "Tillers and Toilers;" G. Kealey and B. Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might Be*, 387-91; McCutcheon, "The Economic and Social Structure," 279-89; Wood, *A History*, 109-22; S.E.D. Shortt, "Social Change and Political Crisis;" S. Glazer, "The Patrons of Industry in Michigan," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 24 (1937), 185-94. During 1894 the Patrons won a provincial bye-election in Beautiful Plains constituency, while in the provincial general election of 1896 Patrons were nominated in seven constituencies and elected in two constituencies. In the federal election of 1896, meanwhile, two Patrons were nominated in Manitoba and one was nominated in the North West Territories, but none of the three was successful. Wood, *A History*, 128, 143, 145.

<sup>25</sup>*The Patrons' Advocate (Advocate)*, 13 March 1895.

<sup>26</sup>*Advocate*, 3 October 1894. Henry Clay was the editor of *The Patrons' Advocate* from its formation in 1892 until 1895, when he was forced to resign over an editorial policy dispute with the executive board of the Patrons of Industry.

<sup>27</sup>*Advocate*, 10 April 1895.

theory he is a capitalist, in practice he is a laborer and producer, and is largely dependent on capital in our complex society."<sup>28</sup> A radical producerism is paramount here, but the apparent tension between the dominant agrarian identity (farmer as capitalist) and the radical inheritance (farmer as worker) reflects the emergence of a pattern that became increasingly evident after the turn of the century.

It followed, of course, that farmers should learn from the experiences of workers. Trade union organization was viewed as a useful model for agrarian mobilization in the Patron analysis. Employing the radical terms of political power and privilege, the *Advocate* drew attention to the ways in which workers banded together in unions to counteract the overpowering influence "wealth exerts when used by unscrupulous hands." Trade unions improved social conditions for their members and, more importantly, challenged "the right of the political and moneyed classes to frame laws by which Labor has only to contribute and the Capitalist but to enjoy." The Patrons of Industry, it was concluded, could be to farmers what unions were to the wage earner.<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, the necessity and desirability of worker-farmer co-operation was stressed in this analysis. In an *Advocate* piece entitled "Massing for Attack," for example, the Patron policy of excluding non-farmers from the organization was criticized by Clay. It was becoming clear, he argued, that the Patrons should include in their fold "every honest man who earns his bread by labor." Hence, with a view to ultimately joining with labour, all Patron sub-associations were urged to discuss the question of co-operation with trade unions.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, the leadership of the movement addressed a constituency that extended beyond the farm and the countryside. At the 1895 convention in Brandon, Grand President Braithwaite focused on the public debt and the tariff as means of discussing the problems producers were facing. "Think of these things," he urged in his speech to delegates, "analyse them for yourselves and see if it is not the time we farmers and laborers cast aside our old prejudices, and without bias, fear or favor take a common sense view of the situation." It was time, he continued, "to lift our craft and calling out of debt, indifference and apparent serfdom."<sup>31</sup> Patronism, as a form of anti-monopoly radicalism, in fact demanded the mobilization of all wealth producers. But there were organizational and ecological impediments that had to be overcome: there was little or no daily interaction between farmers and workers, and farmers found it difficult to sustain the sort of solidarity that, for workers, grew out of shared work experiences. Although the will existed at one level, then, a successful alliance required a high degree of organization. At another level, however, the will did not exist; a focus on politics as the source of oppression could not sustain the required mobilization around economic and social issues.

<sup>28</sup> *Advocate*, 19 December 1894.

<sup>29</sup> *Advocate*, 5 December 1894.

<sup>30</sup> *Advocate*, 5 December 1894.

<sup>31</sup> "Brandon Convention," *Advocate*, 16 January 1895.

But who were the oppressors in this analysis? Outside the producers, and pitted against them, stood the monopolists, combinesters, and parasites who manipulated politics and the state in order to rob the producers and enrich themselves. The most significant actors here were the railway corporations, mortgage companies, financiers, and manufacturers, but the analysis also included lawyers and other professionals, especially in their roles as politicians and “party wire-pullers.” In one particularly vivid rendition of this perspective, an *Advocate* correspondent appealed for potential members to join the Patrons:

FELLOW WORKERS: ...Canada does not belong to the people of Canada who by their labour and toil produce its wealth. No! Canada does not even belong to the British Crown, but to a handful of financiers, capitalists and bondholders in England and some other countries who have for their agents...a gang of titled and decorated snobs and boodlers to whom the people of Canada have unfortunately too long entrusted their affairs.

He went on to charge that every year the tariff and other forms of taxation took millions out of the unpaid labour of workers and “the depreciated produce of the toilers of the soil.... Look at the unemployed in cities and towns, the laborer without work, the farmer toiling without hope, and all the time the salaries and incomes of the drones and parasites who live at our expense remain the same.”<sup>32</sup> While weaving elements of an older with a newer analysis (the image of aristocratic privilege alongside a working class salutation), this passage touched a number of the bases in Patronism.

In this analysis, the oppressors constituted a discrete social group who were defined negatively as those who did not produce. In some cases, a distinction was drawn between the “classes” and the “masses.” For Spender Percival, the masses had been divided between two political parties, while the classes — “Capitalists, Manufacturers, Combinesters, Directors of Railroads, Loan Companies, and Lawyers” — were united in sucking the people dry.<sup>33</sup> In other Patron statements, a dominant and a subordinate class were identified. “Are mortgages and [the] CPR,” asked an *Advocate* correspondent in 1894,

oppressive to this great Western country, and to the liberty and fraternal bonds cementing Confederation? Are they not the mouldering branches that prevent us from making our little ones as comfortable as Sir John Thompson? Why all the injustice and social inequality between the two classes of society, millionaire [sic] and pauper...?

He appealed to Patrons to “combine against the misrule that has given the country the pile of mortgages and its pile of millionaires,” and he invoked a distant radical heritage in conclusion by demanding “social revolution [to] give us back the liberty of free men.”<sup>34</sup> For Manitoba and Northwestern farmers, according to this analysis,

<sup>32</sup>“Who Owns Canada?,” *Advocate*, 14 November 1894.

<sup>33</sup>*Advocate*, 10 April 1895, 17 April 1895.

<sup>34</sup>*Advocate*, 4 December 1894.

class exploitation felt particularly acute given the conditions under which they arrived in the West. One Patrons of Industry sub-association, in passing a resolution urging the government to take action against the "grain combine," produced a settler's image of class relations:

...this Association views with alarm the action of the grain combine in this country, and we call upon all farmers, especially Patrons, to rise en masse and press upon our governments the urgent necessity of freeing us once and forever from these manipulators of our prosperity in this Western land. The Dominion government brought us here and gave us free homes. Now they allow railroads and combines to rob us (by law) of the products of our industry obtained from our land which makes the gift worse than nothing.<sup>35</sup>

The "manipulators of prosperity" achieved and maintained their dominance through political "chicanery" in this ideology. Lawyers and politicians, serving the combinesters and monopolists, both created and manipulated laws in order to rob the producers. Everything from the tariff, freight rates, and government expenditure to wheat grades, Royal Commissions, and even agricultural education was understood in these terms. The denunciation of this political immorality is what ultimately defined Patronism.

Government expenditure, taxation, and the tariff were manifestations of the legalized robbery facing producers. The "oppressor" rather than the "oppressed," it was said, should be taxed. Corporations received millions of dollars worth of land grants and timber limits for which producers ultimately paid.<sup>36</sup> Public debt was the result of the wealthy enriching themselves at the expense of the people. The 1895 Dominion deficit, for example, projected to be five million dollars, was denounced at a Killarney Patrons meeting as an unjust burden foisted upon labourers and farmers. "Where did the money go?" Brother Hossack asked rhetorically in addressing the assembled crowd:

...spent on harbor works and Curran bridges, and thrown broadcast amongst wirepullers and party heelers.... Now has patience ceased to be a virtue, let us rise up as one man against such red tapeism and be not deceived by their sweet speeches while they sit at banquets, laughing and mocking the clothoppers and hayseeds.<sup>37</sup>

The tariff, the major source of public revenue in nineteenth century Canada, was frequently the focus of producer wrath. Indeed, to many it was the penultimate symbol of plutocracy. A composite image existed in Patronism (and other radical analyses) of the parasitic class, protected behind a legal barrier, growing rich through the labour of others. In a survey of the situation in which farmers were forced to exist in the 1890s, for example, John Fotheringham of Grenfell, Assiniboia wrote:

<sup>35</sup> Report from W.C Paynter, Secretary, Beulah Patrons of Industry, *Advocate*, 18 September 1895.

<sup>36</sup> *Advocate*, 13 March 1895, 27 June 1894.

<sup>37</sup> *Advocate*, 9 January 1895

They found themselves toiling with little results in comfort — small returns and heavy outlay for the necessities of life and labor. Merchants, lawyers and others, especially manufacturers, were serving themselves unmercifully out of their toils. Such classes had come into the possession of legal advantages by which they could line their pockets out of yours.... Good men labor and labor and can scarcely make any preparation for sickness or old age. Why should this be so in a good land like ours? It comes largely or mainly through political causes. Favored industries and parties are protected and become wealthy at our expense, and use their wealth in maintaining and supporting this unhappy situation.<sup>38</sup>

And for some, the fight against the tariff was nothing less than the historic struggle of free-born Englishmen:

From Runnymede to the time the Stuart lost his head and the family the dynasty, the Anglo Saxon has been struggling to be free, from the time of the Tudors to the present the struggle has gone on, and we are more in earnest than ever. Free trade is the cure for a great many of the evils from which we suffer.<sup>39</sup>

In protesting the inequities of the tariff, then, farmers were not simply or calculatively seeking fairer access to markets. Rather, they were seeking the elimination of their oppressor.

It is hardly surprising, given this analysis, that political organizing was central to Patronism. Political oppression, after all, required a political response. The politics of Patronism was based upon the assumption that not only the state, but inherited political practice as well, was corrupted by the influence of capitalists, lawyers, and various other undesirables. Producers, notably farmers, had to create a new politics to take control of their own and the country's affairs. The key to this was non-partisanship. From a twentieth-century perspective — specifically the experience of Brackenism — non-partisanship has a businesslike, apolitical meaning. But the Patrons, as they proclaimed in their rallying cry, were “non-partisan, but intensely political.”<sup>40</sup> To them, non-partisanship meant rejecting parties that were merely media through which non-producers milked producers. “Extreme partizanship,” according to the *Patrons' Sentinel*,

robs the poor. Extreme partizanship is a means for the rich to become wealthy. Extreme partizanship causes the strife and struggle amongst the few for supremacy and causes deadlock and chaos in the House of Commons at the present time and the people foot the bill.<sup>41</sup>

Or, as expressed in the Declaration of the Independent Industrial Association, which succeeded the Patrons in 1898:

Realizing...that the partisan spirit predominating has resulted in enabling combines, trusts and other monopolies to procure legislation and privileges to the detriment of the great mass of the people,...we, the Associated Independents of Manitoba, deem it necessary that all men of free spirit should unite, to

<sup>38</sup> *Advocate*, 1 January 1896

<sup>39</sup> *Advocate*, 27 June 1894

<sup>40</sup> *Advocate*, 20 February 1895

<sup>41</sup> *Patrons' Sentinel (Sentinel)*, 1 April 1896.

arouse and inform public opinion, to terminate the practice of government by party dictators, to frustrate the ominous designs of predatory corporations, to free the community from present exactions which rob the people of the fruits of their labor, and, generally, to take such independent political action as the public advantage may indicate.<sup>42</sup>

The Patrons wanted to transform legislative and parliamentary representation by replacing the lawyers and other professionals with farmer and worker delegates.

The various aspects of Patron political practice were conducted within the terms of non-partisanship and a broader radical discourse. Patron election platforms were cast within the assumptions of the radical inheritance, even though they appear to be moderate, reformist documents from the perspective of the later twentieth century. The Dominion platform demanded that public lands be reserved and preserved for actual settlers, that the tariff exist only to raise revenue, and that legislation be passed to protect farmers and labourers from the undue price increases of monopolies and combines. Furthermore, it sought rigid economy in the public service, simplification of laws, the abolition of the Senate, the disfranchisement of the civil service, and a general reduction in the machinery of government. The provincial programme repeated the call for economy in the public service, while also demanding the "purity and independence of Parliament" which meant, in practice, that no MLA should receive a free railroad pass or a fee beyond his sessional indemnity. Formulated as it was in the 1890s, the local platform also had to address the issue of public schools. On this question, Patrons stood "unalterably opposed to any appropriation of public monies for sectarian purposes." Hence, their position was little different from that of the Liberals, and a significant factor in their demise. For Patrons, however, the provision of public funds for religious schools was a species of special privilege fundamentally at odds with their vision of an uncorrupted state.<sup>43</sup>

The Independent Industrial Association included most of the Patron demands in its platform. They were supplemented, however, by calls for the public ownership of railroads and other "natural monopolies," reflecting the influence of both labourite "socialism" and new school economics.<sup>44</sup> Patronism was, in fact, quite friendly to the socialism it encountered in the Manitoba of the 1890s. In answering the objections many people had to socialism, however, the *Advocate* simply applied the categories of radicalism, interpreting socialism within its terms:

Socialism, pure and simple, means equality before the law.... Socialism does not propose to divide existing wealth, but assume control of all monopolies and sources of wealth and utilize them to put it beyond the power of any man to become a millionaire [sic], and insists every citizen will have equal rights with other citizens.<sup>45</sup>

The *Advocate* response to the specifics of the Labor Party platform, meanwhile,

<sup>42</sup>*Western Canadian*, 11 March 1899.

<sup>43</sup>*TFA*, 5 February 1894; *Advocate*, 8 January 1896.

<sup>44</sup>*Western Canadian*, 18 November 1897, 11 March 1899.

<sup>45</sup>"Objections to Socialism," *Advocate*, 24 July 1895.



was rather sceptical, although all the objectives were viewed as being desirable. But those proposals that involved relations between capital and labour, unmediated by the state, were seen as being difficult to attain. For example, the Labor Party sought "equal remuneration for equal services rendered, irrespective of sex." The *Advocate*, though supportive in principle, felt the proposal did not belong in a "political" programme.<sup>46</sup>

The electoral element in Patron political practice was sustained, to a certain extent, by a utopian undercurrent, which suggests that it had more substance than twentieth-century reformism and a solid connection with earlier utopian variants of radicalism, notably Owenism. The Harmony Industrial Association, formed in Assiniboia in the mid-1890s, was a utopian experiment based upon radical premises. The Vice President of the Association, writing in the *Advocate* in 1895, told Patrons that he and his comrades were laying the foundation of a new social system. "Now the economic development of the present system [competition] produces co-operation," W.C. Paynter argued, "which is compelled by monopoly, [which ultimately results in] government ownership of monopolies. This in turn leads to the 'co-operative commonwealth'." The Harmony settlement was modelled on combines, but unlike monopolies and combines where "all the profits accrue to the shareholders, and none to the men who actually are the producers," the means of production were held in common, each farmer was an employee of the Association, and annual income was divided according to labour performed.<sup>47</sup>

A more specifically Patronist vision of utopia was contained in the fictional story "Home Rule in Manitoba," which appeared in the *Advocate* in 1895. Presented as an 1899 recollection of the insurrection that established "home rule," the narrative began at an auction in Melita. Farmers interrupted the auction, burning machinery and implements so that capitalists could not reclaim them. They then proceeded to Winnipeg, arrested the police, mayor and aldermen, cut the electricity, took over communications, and issued a declaration:

To the Citizens of Manitoba: Most of us have found it impossible to make the barest of living in Manitoba. This is not the fault of the country, but of the laws, the railway freight rates, and the protective tariff.... Let us manage things in future that we get some return for our money and our labor.

Residents of the city were then asked to send delegates to a convention. This assembly of rural folks and urbanites decided to cease sending parliamentary representatives to Ottawa and to no longer receive the federal subsidy nor pay the tariff. Free trade was declared with the rest of the world. After reaching these decisions and others, the assembled producers dispersed to sack the Customs House, the Land Titles Office, and lawyers' offices. Then, upon hearing that the

<sup>46</sup>"Our Labor Party Allies." *Advocate*, 11 December 1895.

<sup>47</sup>*Advocate*, 18 December 1895; an update on the Harmony Industrial Association appeared in the *Western Canadian*, 28 July 1898. W.C. Paynter was also the secretary of the Beulah Patrons of Industry.

North West Mounted Police were moving in from Regina, the rails were torn up at Oak Lake.<sup>48</sup> Although the story ends there, one presumes the associated producers of Manitoba, freed from plutocratic oppression, lived happily ever after.

Patrons constructed an image of themselves, their constituency, and their social world based upon a set of assumptions that had existed as a more or less coherent discourse, in one form or other, throughout the nineteenth century. The image was one of producers creating all wealth within the context of a political system in which they were controlled, oppressed, and robbed by non-producers. The Patron response to this political manipulation was a theory of non-partisanship in which traditional politics, rejected as inherently corrupt, would be replaced by a new morality based upon class rather than party loyalty. With the collapse of the Patrons, this form of analysis began to fade as a unified system of thought. It did not die, however. Many of the categories, and the concepts that linked them together, lived on into the twentieth-century, giving oppositional substance and form to critiques developed in the twentieth-century farm movement.

#### IV

THE TURN OF THE CENTURY did not mark a sudden shift from radicalism to a less oppositional analysis. But by the 1920s there was a new, and more conservative, discursive system at the heart of Manitoba agrarianism. In the period from 1904 to roughly 1916, a more or less coherent radical analysis continued to exist in the mainstream of the movement. From about 1910 onwards, however, dominant categories began to displace radical categories and, by the post-war period, the mainstream discourse of Manitoba agrarianism was subordinate to a dominant rural ideology.<sup>49</sup> This section first looks at the new discursive system (which we will call the new analysis or the new ideology) that became systematized in the later teens and the twenties (from about 1916 to 1925); it then traces some of the radical language that did survive in the history of the movement (from about 1903 to 1925).

The economic discussion that characterized the new analysis was conducted squarely within the context of market production and consumption. Most importantly, co-operative marketing and purchasing, which were central to the grain grower vision of agriculture, were understood simply as strategic interventions in a neutral market in which middlemen, interspersed between producer and consumer, had developed an unfair advantage. The capitalist market was the given terrain upon which co-operation worked. The appeal of co-operation was that it reduced inefficiencies while claiming a larger proportion of the surplus (profit) for agricultural producers. "One of our biggest problems at the present time," President

<sup>48</sup>*Advocate*, July 1895.

<sup>49</sup>This ideology was generated within an educational state structure that developed in Manitoba between 1900 and 1925. A discussion of this history is beyond the scope of this paper, but interested readers may consult chapters 3, 4, and 5 of my "Dominant and Popular Ideologies" (1988) for a full discussion of the topic.

Burnell told the 1924 UFM convention,

is to bring the price of those commodities which we have to buy and which have to do with our cost of production, down to the level of the products of our farms. One factor in the price of these commodities is the costly system of distribution — this can be remedied by co-operation.

Furthermore, it was noted the following year, co-operation would return “to the producer all the profits accrued over the cost of the operations in marketing his product.”<sup>50</sup> Besides these immediate commercial objectives, farmers learned from the MGGa’s *Rural Citizenship* that co-operative organization also drew isolated farmers together in a community of interest, restored agriculture to its proper place of dignity “which has been lost through bad business methods,” and replaced bad business methods with good ones. And at a higher level, Hopkins Moorhouse argued in *Deep Furrows*, the various actors in agriculture (farmers, merchants, railways, etc.) could co-operate to create a truly efficient economy.<sup>51</sup> Ultimately, the Wheat Pool was the archetypical co-operative marketing organization in this new analysis. It was voluntarist, based upon the individual wills and decisions of producers (as opposed to the compulsory “state socialist” Wheat Board). It was completely equitable, basing its price offered for grain on “real” values in the world market. And, finally, it operated on the basis of managerial expertise, hiring the best and most market-wise grain trade managers available. In other words, the Pool combined an efficient management and market sensitivity with democratic producer control.<sup>52</sup>

In a 1921 statement on trade, C.H. Burnell maintained that “the law of supply and demand can only be temporarily abrogated. Ultimately it makes itself felt and adjustments are made in harmony with that law.” The UFM president went on to argue in his convention address that the solution to agricultural depression lay in “adopting a trade policy based on sound economic principles — a policy that will discard the fallacious principle that trade is necessarily war, and will recognise that trade is a matter of mutual advantage to buyer and seller.” Hence, the emphasis in discussions of the tariff and protection had shifted over 25 years from the politics of monopolist oppression to the economics of market distortions and trade impediments. In this new analysis, farmers required wider markets for their productive output and a freer market in the inputs and consumer items they purchased. Protectionism continued to be “essentially inequitable, immoral and vicious” in this ideology, but marketing and trade considerations were paramount:

<sup>50</sup>“United Farmers of Manitoba President’s Address,” *Grain Growers’ Guide (Guide)*, 16 January 1924, 60; Provincial Archives of Manitoba (PAM), United Farmers of Manitoba (UFM) Papers, Box 5, 1925 File, “Some Pertinent Facts About the UFM.” 4.

<sup>51</sup>J.S. Woodsworth, ed., *Studies in Rural Citizenship*, (Winnipeg 1914), 28; H. Moorhouse, *Deep Furrows*, (Toronto 1918), 248.

<sup>52</sup>UFM Papers, Box 1. “For Inter-District Debate, 1923;” *The Scoop Shovel*, 1 (1925).

1. It [the tariff] artificially restricts and hampers the exchange of products — exchange which is natural, legitimate and of mutual advantage....
2. It takes large sums of money from consumers generally without any possibility of their knowing how much is taken, into whose hands it passes, or for what purpose it is expended....
3. It leads business and manufacturing interests to depend upon arbitrary enactment and not upon natural economic conditions and necessities for their industrial progress....
4. It is a system so vicious in its fundamental essence that through all its history, in this country and in other countries, it has invariably been found lending itself to frequent manipulation by class interests for their advantage at the expense of others.<sup>53</sup>

The concepts of productive technique and farm management were part of the movement's economic vocabulary as well, but these were subordinate to issues such as marketing and transportation. The main initiatives of the movement affected management and production in two ways. On the one hand, better farming and better farm business methods were seen to result inevitably from the movement. The Pool contributed to better farming, for example, by allowing farmers to market their crops in an orderly fashion throughout the year, which, it was said, meant farmers were better able to properly husband their land. And, according to the MGGA:

Beside helping you to better farming, the movement is designed to help you to better business success.... The Grain Growers' movement has already done much to improve the business of farming both as regards distribution of supplies and as regards disposing of products.... Now is your opportunity of getting into the movement for the opportunity it affords of bettering your business.<sup>54</sup>

On the other hand, the movement had to be careful not to neglect farm management as it took on the larger questions. The *Guide*, while focussing most of its attention on marketing strategies and politics, editorialized from time to time on the need for farmers to engage in "education, organization and co-operation" in order to conduct their "business on economic lines." Similarly, the UFM president often alluded to the importance of farm management as an area of organizational involvement. In 1925, for example, President A.J.M. Poole implored United Farmers not to overlook "the importance of efficiency in farm management and operation" as "the profit determining factor in agricultural production."<sup>55</sup>

Rural society consisted of a series of problems requiring resolution in the new ideology. The executive of the MGGA urged in 1919 that a department be established at MAC "in order that the varied problems of rural life" be given careful study, the country life report and philosophy figured prominently in the MGGA's

<sup>53</sup>UFM Papers, Box 15. UFM 1921 Yearbook, "President's Address," 21-3; UFM Papers, Box 15, "Canadian Financial Problems As Seen By The Organized Farmers, Joint Committee of Commerce and Agriculture, 7 March 1916," 51; see also *Guide*, 9 January 1918, 51.

<sup>54</sup>UFM Papers, Box 1, "For Inter-District Debate, 1923;" "Manitoba Grain Growers' Association," *Guide*, 21 August 1918, 1791.

<sup>55</sup>*Guide*, 22 July 1914, 886; 21 October 1914, 1174; "President Poole's Address," 14 January 1925, 45; Woodsworth, *Rural Citizenship*, 31-2.

*Rural Citizenship*, and the central question in the UFM's 1928 membership questionnaire was "Is There a Farm Problem."

The central social element in the solution was the notion of community. In a 1918 MGGGA pamphlet, the question "What has the movement done" was posed. The second recorded accomplishment (in a list of ten) was that it had "helped to educate toward real knowledge of public issues and real community consciousness and efficiency." And, in a 1921 *Managra* article, W.R. Wood (UFM Secretary) suggested that one of the primary achievements of the UFM was that it had helped farmers learn the lesson of community life, which was that their lives were interrelated.<sup>56</sup> But the concept of community had variable intonations. There were essentially two types of community. On the one hand, there was the broad national community comprised of different interest groups. On the other hand, there was the rural community inhabited by families and individuals. Within this discourse, the farm movement increasingly saw itself as an instrument for constructing local community cohesion and participating in the pursuit of national community harmony.

At the national level, agriculture and the farm population sought to co-operate with other classes or groups. The sense of farmers being part of a constituency of producers receded, and was replaced by the image of grain growers as one of a series of interest groups on the social terrain. This perspective was present in the MGGGA as early as 1904 but, at that time, it was still cast in terms of radical analysis. "This," President J.W. Scallion proclaimed in justifying the organizing efforts of grain growers.

is an age of huge organizations, combinations and trusts. Every manufacturing industry, every profession is thoroughly united for the purpose of promoting its own special interest by procuring favorable legislation and otherwise: and nearly all legislation is but a compromise between contending interests.

Twelve years later the Council of Commerce and Agriculture (consisting of businessmen and farmers) was launched to provide "a medium whereby interests that have very often appeared antagonistic may be brought into closer touch with each other and given an opportunity of looking at things from each others viewpoint." And, in an MGGGA pamphlet, it was noted that the organization had won "respectful recognition among the organized interests of the nation, and a fuller chance for a square deal." This co-operation and recognition was pursued in the name of community. The first two objects of the MGGGA constitution, for example, sought:

a) The all around development of rural life with a view to making it as satisfying and as effective in the commonwealth as possible, and the establishment of right relationships between rural and urban communities;

<sup>56</sup>UFM Papers, Box 18, Programs and Handbooks File, "MGGGA Pamphlet, 1918;" "The Organized Farmers Educating Themselves," *Managra* 14 (March, 1921), 12. *Managra* was the student journal of the Manitoba Agricultural College.

b) To forward in every honorable and legitimate way the interests of the rural population, not in antagonism to other elements of our population, but in cordial co-operation with all.<sup>57</sup>

At the local, rural settlement level, the movement was actively engaged in the construction of a *pan-community identity*. In the ascent from individual through familial to community self-consciousness, the authors of the "UFM Handbook of Practical Work" maintained, UFM activists should play a prominent role:

The human individual only gradually comes to full self-consciousness. The human community comes much more slowly to its full self-consciousness. Family self-consciousness is reached sooner, but we cannot be satisfied until the community realizes itself and begins to live its corporate life.... Just as a family has its conferences and consultations, so the community must talk over its interests and prospects. If there is a weakness or a difficulty that may be overcome by concerted effort, the community ought to work together on it.... The local board of the United Farmers' Association ought to be leading in the work.... Help your community to full self-consciousness.<sup>58</sup>

Hence, a 1918 convention resolution urged local organizations to:

Unify and inspire the local community for its fullest self-consciousness and its most efficient activity; Enlist the sympathetic co-operation of all the best elements, the finest moral spirit, the best trained intellect in the community for the cause;.... Encourage the development of effective community workers and leaders.<sup>59</sup>

Through organizations such as the Bureau of Social Research, the Grain Growers and United Farmers were linked with other organizations, such as the churches, schools, and agricultural societies, in breaking down "partisan and sectarian walls" and encouraging community enterprises.

The most significant change in the political language of the Manitoba farm movement between the 1890s and the 1920s was the transformation of the Patrons' version of non-partisanship into the citizenship of the UFM. Citizenship was the political equivalent of economic co-operation and social community in the new analysis.

What was rural citizenship, and what was its place in agrarian political practice? In 1921 the UFM President told his convention audience that:

every citizen....must set himself to live for a citizenship of intelligent and conscientious participation in public life, and every group must devote itself to co-operative and sympathetic investigation of conditions and discussion of principles and methods by which evils may be averted and the people's true well-being promoted.

<sup>57</sup>UFM Papers, Box 15, MGGA Convention, 1904, "Proceedings and Resolutions;" Box 15, MGGA Convention, 1916, "Director's Report;" Box 18, Programs and Handbooks File, "MGGA Pamphlet, 1918;" Box 15, MGGA Yearbook, 1918, 71.

<sup>58</sup>UFM Papers, Box 18, "UFM Handbook of Practical Work" (1920-21).

<sup>59</sup>UFM Papers, Box 15, MGGA Yearbook, 1918, 63.

And, his predecessor claimed, the farm movement trained women and men in citizenship "in order to fit them, when the occasion should arise, to be the mouthpiece of their class in farming [sic] such legislation as would tend to place our economic burdens more equitably upon the shoulders of all classes of the people."<sup>60</sup> This residual language of class was somewhat at odds with a language of citizenship. More appropriate was the suggestion in an organizational pamphlet from the early 1920s that the "farmers of this country are not a class; they are the majority of the Canadian people...[and] they are awakening to a fuller consciousness of their responsibility in all that makes for citizenship." Essentially this responsibility meant co-operating and seeking common ground with other groups. R.C. Henders, addressing the 1916 Joint Committee on Commerce and Agriculture, cast agrarian relations with bankers and manufacturers in these terms. He explained that farmers, in seeking to influence legislation, "welcomed the co-operation of other interests, and felt sure that all interests only desired a square deal."<sup>61</sup>

With its entry into electoral politics, the UFM had the opportunity to put this notion of citizenship into practice. In a "legislative review" at the 1926 UFM convention, John Bracken presented his administration's political philosophy through a recollection of the situation that gave rise to the formation of the farmer government. "There had been," he began, "a clash of partisan and class interests in which manufacturer, artisan, farmer, manual labourer, merchant, salaried employee, professional man and others of all classes had sought the advancement of their own interests as opposed to those of other classes." This divisiveness, he continued, coupled with the partisanship of the "historic political parties," produced a situation in which "a businesslike and economical administration of Provincial affairs, with very considerable retrenchment in expenditure, was absolutely necessary to save the Province from disaster." Hence, "the UFM decided to take action politically." The Premier concluded by telling his audience that the aim of his government had been to give the province honest, progressive, efficient, and patriotic administration, which meant the following:

honest, because that is an indispensable quality which any Government should possess as trustees for the people — progressive, so that its whole outlook shall be forward looking and advanced, ...efficient, because the financial condition of the province then as never before demanded a businesslike and economical administration.... and patriotic because it was bound to regard the best interests of all the people and not solely any particular class of people.<sup>62</sup>

The citizenship and service that constituted UFM political practice in both the government and the association, therefore, was subordinate to the broader economic and social imperatives of co-operation and community.

<sup>60</sup>UFM Papers, Box 15, Presidential Addresses, 1921 and 1918.

<sup>61</sup>UFM Papers, Box 18, MGG/UFM Pamphlets, "Let's Get It Together!;" Box 15, Joint Committee on Commerce and Agriculture, 1 and 2 December 1916, "Minutes of Conference."

<sup>62</sup>PAM, Bracken Papers, Box MG 13 11, Addresses and Radio Talks File, 1926-44, "A Legislative Review," 2-4.

But, precisely because they were social phenomena, co-operation, community, and citizenship had to be consciously constructed. Hence, the most important aspect of organizational work in the new analysis was the education of members and potential members. According to W.R. Wood, general secretary during the later 1910s and early 1920s, a shift had taken place in the movement's history:

In the early days of our organization, our time and thoughts were principally concerned in dealing with the grievances and disabilities in connection with the marketing and transportation of our produce, but now, while we do not neglect these things, we recognize our obligations in regard to developing a fully efficient citizenship on the part of our people, and much of the energy of our local associations is being directed toward educational development and efficiency in rural leadership.<sup>63</sup>

Under Wood's impressive direction, numerous local and provincial educational programmes were organised. "As rural people," one pamphlet noted,

we must be in touch with what is happening in the world. We must know about our relationship with other interests and other groups of citizens. We must understand the tendencies of trade and industry, and be prepared to take our rightful place in working out equitable adjustments.

This process was called "education for citizenship," which meant:

[knowing] not only how to grow wheat, but how to market it..., [knowing] how to act as a member or an officer of an agricultural society or a school board.... [being] acquainted by practice with working in association with neighbors... [and knowing and feeling that one] exists to serve his community.... In a word, Education in our democracy must practically prepare for co-operative participation in the ordinary service of the community life.

Therefore the UFM political platform called for the whole educational process to be imbued with "the ideal of preparing for co-operative service and civic duty," with rural schools working toward "the unifying of our population, the development of community efficiency and the raising of the standard of citizenship."<sup>64</sup> Education, then, was the way in which individuals were moulded into social beings. By first awakening people to the fact they were social, then training them to act socially, the movement would, it was hoped, produce an economically, politically, and socially conscious collectivity.

In the end, these various levels produced a reformed public persona for farm men. In *Deep Furrows* (1918), which might be described as an "official" association history of the farm movement, Hopkins Moorhouse contrasted the organized "New Farmer" with the pre-Sintaluta "Hayseed." To the farmer of old, he wrote,

<sup>63</sup>UFM Papers, Box 15. UFM Yearbook 1921, "Director's Report;" see also M.H. Staples, *The Challenge of Agriculture* (Toronto 1920), 44 for the significant role of education in the UFO, and UFM Papers, Box 1, letter from W.R. Wood to A.J.M. Poole, 10 October 1923, re. "Fundamentals of the Farmer Movement."

<sup>64</sup>UFM Papers, Box 18. 1922-23 Pamphlets File, "Local Educational Programs;" "Education for Citizenship." *Guide*, 25 December 1918; UFM Papers, Box 15, 1922 Yearbook, "UFM Political Platform."



it appeared that he had no business! He merely grew the grain. Apparently the farmer was a pair of pants, a shirt and a slouch hat that sat on a wagon load of wheat, drove it up the incline into the elevator and rattled away again for another load!

But this began to change with the Manitoba Grain Act and the Sinaluta case. For the railways, the court decision on car distribution meant "that the time had come to recognize the fact that there was a man inside the soil-grimed shirt." Farmers, meanwhile, "began to appreciate...the task which faced these energetic men in successfully handling the giant organization for which they assumed responsibility." They both, therefore, "began to entertain for the other a greater respect." Ten years later, during the "Siege of Ottawa," the Grain Growers were popularly referred to as "Sod-Busters." "It was rather startling to find them," Moorhouse noted, "merely a new type of Business Farmer...." It was, he concluded, "a far-seeing, clear thinking New Farmer who has come forward in the last decade. Through his associations, his marketing experiences, his contact with railways and banks and manufacturers and governments, he has become a student of economics."<sup>65</sup>

The ignorant, biased, and individualistic sodbuster and hayseed gave way to the knowledgeable, respectful, and organized rural businessman in Moorhouse's account. In the MGA and UFM organizational literature, the businessman was also a community citizen. Through improvements in business organization and community life, it was said, "we have raised the whole social status of farm life until today, the farmer is no longer termed a moss-back, or hayseed, but is recognised as a citizen equally competent and efficient with all others in the community." And, more forcefully:

He knows the place of agriculture among national industries. His range of thought is enlarged. His views are listened to by members of other groups. He is, in the fullest sense of the word, a man among men.<sup>66</sup>

He was, simply, the ultimate product and personification of the movement. The movement, after all, had become more concerned with socializing and raising the status of farm people than with facilitating radical social change. The farm man, given an apparently equal standing with corporate officials on the economic terrain or a legitimate claim to democratic citizenship on the political terrain, was a worthy and fulfilled man. Ironically, however, the ideal UFM man ceased to be recognizable as a farmer in any meaningful sense; he simply became another citizen, community participant, and businessman, albeit a rural and agricultural one.

Although accommodationist categories had mostly displaced radical categories in popular agrarian ideology by the 1920s, a radical analysis continued to be evident in the Manitoba farm movement throughout the first quarter of the twentieth century. To be sure, it was stronger earlier in the century and weaker

<sup>65</sup>Moorhouse, *Deep Furrows*, 39-40, 58, 282, 277.

<sup>66</sup>UFM Papers, Box 5, 1925 File. "Some Pertinent Facts About the UFM," 12; Box 18, "UFM Handbook of Practical Work."

later, but it was present nevertheless. It is possible to discern a pattern of post-Patronist radical discourse that, while less overtly political, utopian, and resistant than its nineteenth-century predecessor, was a significant, though increasingly subordinate, component of Manitoba agrarianism.

In proposing a resolution in favour of government ownership of elevators at the 1908 MGGGA convention, the mover declared that "[t]he time has come for farmers to assume the control of their own storage facilities and derive for their labor its full returns." Two years later, W.D. Lamb of Plumus, Manitoba, provided this statement with some analytical depth in a letter to the *Guide*. To answer the question "Will government elevators pay," which was frequently posed in those years, Lamb responded by asking rhetorically "Who pays for the elevators?" It was farmers and workers, of course. An elevator, he maintained, was a product of human labour. Labour produced the lumber, nails and paint, and put the building together. "It is not capital that erects elevators," then, "but labor. Capital itself is a labor product and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. The capitalists are men with money, the stored up labor of other people." Furthermore, the labour of farmers produced the crops, without which the elevators (and railways and implement companies) would have no business. "But farmers 'own' none of these things, although it is their labor that produces them...." Hence, he concluded, government elevators would "pay" in the sense that farmers would finally own and control, through the government, the wealth they had created.<sup>67</sup> A labour theory of value continued to be employed in the movement, then, although with a slightly more agrarian tone than had existed in the 1890s. In a broader indictment later in 1910, the President of the Gilbert Plains Grain Growers' Association asked the rhetorical question "Why is Canada prosperous?," and answered using explicitly producerist language:

Your government had \$100,000,000 of a revenue last year. Where did the money come from? Your manufacturers are millionaires. Where did their money come from? Your railroad magnates and charter mongers are rolling in wealth, even your merchants are prosperous. Is it because Liberals or Conservatives rule? Or is it because of the millions of toilers who are producing the wealth from mother earth? The miners, [the] lumberjacks, the mossbacks are producing the wealth of Canada.<sup>68</sup>

This oppressive and exploitative class was defined, for the most part, in terms of monopoly, although, by the century's second decade, "interest" was beginning to displace "monopoly" in many speeches and texts that were otherwise governed by radical premises. Early MGGGA convention discussions and resolutions, for example, were often framed in terms of monopoly, as in a 1910 speech by J.D. Hunt on the background to the elevator question: "railroad monopoly has come in a great many different disguises. Its latest and sweetest form was a great big wooly

<sup>67</sup>UFM Papers, Box 15, MGGGA Convention, 1908, "Proceedings and Resolutions;" *Guide*, 20 April 1910, 13-14.

<sup>68</sup>J.B. Parker, "The Farmer in Politics and Commerce," *Guide*, 31 August 1910, 10.

Elevator combine."<sup>69</sup> The single tax, meanwhile, a popular cause in the farm movement, was an important medium for discussing monopoly in the early twentieth century. J.H. Richards of Chater argued in 1914 that monopoly and combination, but especially the land monopoly, "is the power that enslaves our people and fills the land with poverty and want." But, he claimed, "when the Single Tax is fully and completely adopted...the toiler will then receive the just reward for his toil, and his limbs will no longer bear the fetters of industrial slavery." And, as late as 1920, the UFM page of the *Guide* contained a song entitled "Big Interests," which was clearly radical in inspiration:

We have in this country a wonderful thing,  
 Though scarcely a topic of which one should sing;  
 The fact is, though strange how it e'er came to pass,  
 We live 'neath the sway of a Governing Class.  
 ...And so from the toilers from poor and from rich,  
 From labor, from farmer, with never a hitch.

They draw them a tribute to pile in their banks,  
 And never a soul who contributes get thanks.<sup>70</sup>

More significant than these scattered references were the persistent radical definitions of oppressors and oppression in MGGGA Presidential addresses. At the 1911 meeting, R.C. Henders drew attention to "a lack of interest and sympathy that seems to exist between the governments of our country and the great wealth producing class of our population, while on the other hand capitalistic and combination interests seem to experience very few if any of these disabilities and inconveniences." The following year, reverting to the language of monopoly, he made the connection between political power and economic domination more explicit:

Oppression by an aristocracy of industrial monopolists is as bad as oppression by an aristocracy of political monopolists.... We are governed by an elective aristocracy which in its turn is largely controlled by an aristocracy of wealth. Behind the governments and the legislatures are the corporations and trusts. Behind the machines, the rings, and the bosses are the business monopolists, the industrial combinations, and the plutocrats; behind the political monopolists are the industrial monopolists.

Later in the decade, Henders analysed the causes of the high cost of living. Class legislation and economic injustice, he claimed, began with the acquisition of land. Land fell into the hands of a few, and its rising value created fortunes. Since the creation of wealth was social, however, some people suffered when others took more than their share out of the common product. He concluded, therefore, that the "power to extort surplus and unearned increment is at the root of every economic

<sup>69</sup>*Guide*, 12 January 1910: UFM Papers, Box 15, MGGGA Convention, 1908, "Provincial Ownership and Operation of a System of Line Elevators."

<sup>70</sup>*Guide*, 8 July 1914, 845; *Guide*, 21 July 1920, 1630.

and social wrong because...it not only creates poverty in one class, but it lessens the total wealth of the community."<sup>71</sup>

The tariff, while increasingly viewed as simply a market impediment in the twentieth century, did continue to be viewed within the Manitoba farm movement, by some and at times, as a political instrument of class exploitation. "The protective system," the MGGGA leadership told Laurier in 1910, "creates a class whose interests are essentially different from the people at large," and, J.W. Scallion added, it was "a breeding ground and shelter for combines and trusts which prey upon the individual life of the people."<sup>72</sup> This class, created by political means, secured and enforced laws to protect its economic interests. "Therefore," Grain Grower delegates were told in 1913, "if we have a class which owns a large part of the national wealth we may expect that that class will see to it that the vast power exerted by the machinery of government is exerted in its interests," and most notably by means of the tariff. Farmers and workers were compelled "to contribute a large percentage of the products of their labor to the privileged and protected classes" through the tariff. This method of "collecting taxes," which put "the burden on the backs of working people" and exempted the rich, resulted in a concentration of wealth that had "become the mightiest undercurrent in national life." According to one grain grower, this "power to tax" was "the power to destroy one class to build up and enrich other classes." And the tariff's significance in economic and social life, the MGGGA President said in 1913, was that, "in short, we cannot enjoy economic equality without political equality."<sup>73</sup> The tariff, therefore, symbolized and was the most significant manifestation of a corrupted state.

A corrupted state, of course, was accompanied by corrupted political practice, and, finally, a radical sense of both inherited politics and the possibilities of a new producerist politics lived on in the MGGGA as well. J.B. Parker, in his 1910 account of "The Farmer in Politics and Commerce," sketched a portrait of the old style political farmer:

At Grandview I saw one of our farmer candidates on his own political platform, with a muzzle on, and two corporation lawyers were pleading his case for him. One of these lawyers...said that when he read Sam Hughes was elected, we would hear him cheering all the way from Winnipeg. The love of these corporation lawyers for the farmers' candidate is very touching.

J.W. Scallion, in addressing the 1912 MGGGA convention as honorary president, decried the lingering party divisions among farmers. "All other classes can unite for their common benefit," he lamented, "[but] farmers alone are divided and conquered by the predatory interests and their political tools, and just as long as farmers are more concerned for the success of a political party than for their common good, present economic conditions will continue." "The interests," on the

<sup>71</sup>UFM Papers, Box 15, MGGGA Conventions, 1911, 1912, 1917, "Proceedings and Resolutions."

<sup>72</sup>"The Grain Growers' Case," *Guide*, 27 July 1910, 7-8.

<sup>73</sup>UFM Papers, Box 15, MGGGA Convention, 1913, "President's Report;" "Wanted: Government for the People," *Guide*, 9 March 1910; "Class Legislation," *Guide*, 25 May 1910.

other hand, supported any party or government they could use as a business asset and opposed those they could not use.<sup>74</sup> But this sort of partyism would be transcended by the people — farmers and workers — uniting to create a new politics. So, in 1918, a *Guide* contributor could write:

...let us get close to labor.... We are the same people, we all work for a living.... Legislation that is bad for one is bad for the other; and what is more important, if farmers remain as a class by themselves and wage earners in another class by themselves, neither caring for the others interests, neither will be able ever to combat the power of the big interests.<sup>75</sup>

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THE ANALYSIS that was pre-eminent in the post-war Manitoba Grain Growers Association and the United Farmers of Manitoba subordinated inherited Patronist elements to accommodationist categories. By the 1920s, market, community, and citizenship displaced class, politics, and producerism as the main organizing principles of Manitoba agrarianism. Patronism had been characterised by the determining unity of the political. In the twentieth century this unity was deconstructed, and then reconstructed around the discrete elements of economy, society, politics, and education, in which the economic and social were determinant. The market and co-operation defined the economic, the social was viewed in terms of community and cohesiveness, citizenship and service defined the political, and the educational encompassed the subjective acquisition of these various aspects of knowledge. The new unity, personified by the ideal MGGG/UFM man, subordinated the popular movement to practices that supported rather than challenged the structures of power. Radicalism, while subdued, was not defeated, however. It lived on as a subtext of the movement, laying the linguistic foundation for the left insurgencies of the 1930s and 1940s.

<sup>74</sup>J.B. Parker, "The Farmer in Politics and Commerce," *Guide*, 31 August 1910, 10; UFM Papers, Box 15, MGGG Convention, 1912. "President's Address."

<sup>75</sup>J. Kennedy, "Immediate Action Necessary," *Guide*, 30 October 1918, 2288.