

## **The Career of a Canadian Trade Union Leader: C.H. Millard 1937-1946**

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Volume 43, Number 3, 1988

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/050435ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/050435ar>

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### Publisher(s)

Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval

### ISSN

0034-379X (print)

1703-8138 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

### Cite this article

Macdowell, L. S. (1988). The Career of a Canadian Trade Union Leader: C.H. Millard 1937-1946. *Relations industrielles / Industrial Relations*, 43(3), 609-632. <https://doi.org/10.7202/050435ar>

### Article abstract

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# *The Career of a Canadian Trade Union Leader*

*C.H. Millard 1937-1946*

**Laurel Sefton Mac Dowell**

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In Canadian political history the primary focus of historians has been on leading politicians<sup>1</sup>. Less has been written about other leaders, although Michael Bliss has published biographies of doctor Sir Frederick Banting and a leading businessman, Sir Joseph Flavelle<sup>2</sup>. Other business leaders have been popularized in the work of Peter Newman and Pierre Berton<sup>3</sup>. Trade union leaders have been virtually ignored in Canadian history. There is little scholarly writing on their lives, and hence our political history is defined very narrowly<sup>4</sup>.

Why is this? Unlike business men, Canadian union leaders have little social prestige and most often support a political party that has not been the government. But, while trade union leaders are not public persons in the same sense as are politicians, at the same time their decisions and actions can and do affect government policy. Hence an understanding of their character and activities can illuminate some significant events such as the 1946 steel strike and important developments, such as the emergence of industrial unions and a legislative framework for industrial relations.

The career of C.H. «Charlie» Millard is a case in point. Beginning in 1937 he spearheaded the drive to organize workers into industrial unions. During World War II he became Canada's most prominent trade union leader and forced the steel industry to change its wage structure<sup>5</sup> and to recognize his union, the United Steelworkers of America. Simultaneously, he operated in both the union world and in the national political economy,

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pressuring government, and negotiating with business and political leaders in pursuit of his members' interests. Millard's visible, assertive presence made him a force to contend with in wartime Canada as his trade union career helped to transform Canadian society.

### EARLY LIFE AND THE DEPRESSION YEARS

Charles Hibbert Millard was born in 1896 in St. Thomas, Ontario<sup>6</sup>. His father was a railway employee and a loyal Conservative. In 1904, when Millard's father contracted tuberculosis, the family moved to Gravenhurst where there was a sanitarium. Thereafter, Millard was forced to assume responsibility at an early age. He left school at age 14, and took up carpentry. When the war broke out, he enlisted in the army and served in France for four years. His leadership abilities were recognized and he rapidly rose to the rank of Company Sergeant Major. At the end of the war he was honourably discharged. In later years, when he was being publicly portrayed as a militant radical, he pointed with pride to his war record as proof of his patriotism.

After his father died during the war, Millard settled with his mother in Oshawa where he went to work in a body shop at General Motors. In 1921, he married, and established a small business — the C.H. Millard Company of Oshawa — which produced door frames and had several employees. Had the economic boom of the 1920's continued, Millard might have become a successful entrepreneur.

The Depression was a formative experience in his life. By 1930, it had forced him out of business and onto relief and taught him about the indignity and despair of being unemployed. «To a young father with two small sons, this was a traumatic experience<sup>7</sup>.»

During the 1930's, General Motors was the main employer in Oshawa. It closed down in the summer and sometimes remained closed for almost six months. The laid off workers had to apply for relief benefits and many of them met Millard who by this time was developing a reputation as an activist among relief recipients.

The Depression spawned a variety of educational, political and other self-help organizations in Oshawa as elsewhere. Among these organizations were associations of unemployed, and cooperatives in the retail and grocery trade. The Workers' Educational Association conducted a regular Sunday Night Forum, which discussed the problems arising from the Depression<sup>8</sup>. Some of these organizations were short-lived but Charlie Millard was an en-

thusiastic participant and he began to develop the organizational skills and personal contacts which would be useful to him. Early on he met Communists with whom he would compete and conflict periodically throughout his career. They were also working amongst the unemployed in the industrial centres<sup>9</sup> and were organizing the employed into the Workers' Unity League (WUL).

Besides the Depression, Christianity was an important influence in Millard's life. Before the war, he had been active in youth groups in the Methodist Church. In Oshawa, he was a prominent layman in the King St. United Church — the «workingman's church» — which was attended by many General Motors employees. Millard became the superintendent of the area's Sunday schools<sup>10</sup>.

If the Depression experience made him a socialist, his deep religious convictions ensured that he would be a Christian Socialist. This is hardly surprising. The Methodist and later the United Church produced many reformers such as Salem Bland, J.S. Woodsworth, William Ivens and William Irvine. They too became CCFer's and generally supported the goals of the trade union movement. Millard was in that tradition<sup>11</sup>.

Millard believed that organized labour could be a practical expression of Christian principles and as important an instrument as organized religion in making a Christian society a reality<sup>12</sup>. He thought that the church should respond more actively to the needs of the worker, and sought a «working relationship»<sup>13</sup> between the churches and the labour movement. Even in his busiest years, he wrote articles in church newspapers and spoke to church groups. He served on the Board of Evangelism and Social Service of the United Church and later promoted the work of the Religious Labour Foundation which was established by the Rev. E. Harold Toye in 1943, to foster greater understanding between the churches and organized labour. Millard's Communist opponents derided such activities, charging that «Charlie Millard is the pet of the parlour-pink parsons; there's nothing he likes better than speechifying before a group of ministers»<sup>14</sup>. Nevertheless, Millard's role as an active churchman, (like his war record) gave him a respectable stature that bolstered his credibility among those who were dubious about labour leaders and isolated from workers and unions.

As a child, Millard has wanted to be a missionary. «In the trade union movement, he found a new mission which he pursued with zeal<sup>15</sup>.» There was an evangelical quality about the new industrial unions of the 1930's and 1940's. Whether or not their leaders were practising Christians or confirmed socialists (and some like Millard were both) they believed it was important to organize not only to achieve economic gains but also to «uplift» the

workers. For Millard, the labour movement and the CCF were practical expressions of Christian principles, and economic and political action were two sides of the same coin. He combined party and union activity — promoting trade union endorsement of the CCF and encouraging direct trade union affiliation with that party. In so doing he antagonized trade unionists who were sympathetic to the Communist Party (CP).

### THE YEARS OF TRADE UNION ACTIVISM

In these formative years, Millard's religious sense, his abhorrence of the conditions created by the Depression and his political commitment all led him into an active role in the labour movement. Always a union supporter, he rose to prominence in the United Automobile Workers' Union (UAW) as a leader in the 1937 Oshawa strike.

In 1937, Canadian workers in the Oshawa plant invited UAW organizer Hugh Thompson in Detroit to assist them. There had been several attempts at organization earlier in the decade — always with setbacks<sup>16</sup>. This time, within a month of his arrival, Thompson had recruited 4000 members.

Millard was elected President of the newly chartered Local 222, UAW because he was better known than his opponents. In 1935 he had run unsuccessfully for local alderman. His oratorical skills, good character and respectable image — he did not smoke or drink — attracted support in the Local 222 election. As a result of his union activity, the company transferred him from the body shop to a lower-rated job in the maintenance department<sup>17</sup>.

Millard's role in the strike expanded to become the chief negotiator and main union spokesman after company officials refused to meet with Thompson on the grounds that he was an «outsider», and therefore not a legitimate representative of the employees<sup>18</sup>. Millard's roles as President of Local 222, newly appointed UAW Staff Representative and negotiator contributed to his prominence. In the public's mind, he became closely identified with the emerging Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) movement in Ontario.

This was not a comfortable position as public opinion was largely opposed to the CIO. During the Oshawa strike, Premier Hepburn and the press both portrayed it as a Communist dominated organization led by foreign agitators<sup>19</sup>. However Millard's personal character was a defence against these attacks.

In order to fight slander, intimidation, the accusation of being Communist and foreign what better weapon than a forty year old Canadian-born war veteran who was an active church-goer.<sup>20</sup>

It is not necessary to discuss the details of the historic 1937 Oshawa strike. That has been done by others<sup>21</sup>. It was a learning experience for Millard. The union negotiators' were «merely a bunch of amateurs»,<sup>22</sup> at the beginning of the talks. But Millard and his committee gained confidence as the strike continued. Premier Hepburn's adamant opposition gave the strike a distinctly political character. When Hepburn intervened in the contract talks, Millard negotiated directly with him and displayed both persistence and initiative in his efforts to gain a settlement. At the same time he learned to be a strategist. He had to restrain his members' enthusiasm and actions to ensure that the pressure of the members was skillfully applied.

When the strike was settled, both sides claimed a victory. Hepburn announced that the CIO had been stopped, since the company had only recognized a union of its own employees and not the UAW. But this was political posturing as the company had acceded to its workers' demands. The strikers passed a resolution «affirming the alliance with the UAW and the CIO with which our union is affiliated» and sent a copy to Hepburn<sup>23</sup>. As Irving Abella has confirmed:

The Oshawa strike was a turning point in the history of the Canadian labour movement. It marked the birth of industrial unionism in Canada... It was a land mark in Canadian history.<sup>24</sup>

It also had political consequences. Despite his victory in the 1937 Ontario election in which he campaigned against the CIO, Hepburn's position alienated the labour vote from the Ontario Liberal party and paved the way for growing labour support for the CCF<sup>25</sup>. Furthermore, the building of the UAW union in Oshawa led directly to other developments such as the organization of a credit union, a labour newspaper (the *Labor Leader*), in which Millard's name figured often and prominently, and labour candidacies in the 1938 municipal elections. All such activities politicized the city's workers<sup>26</sup>. Moreover, the strike had been conducted, financed and settled largely by Canadians, and Millard was the most important new Canadian leader to emerge, although as it turned out, this would not be a guarantee of support even within his own union.

After the strike, Millard was elected Canadian Director at the 1938 UAW convention and he was re-elected President of Local 222. In that same year, he was elected to the CCF's provincial executive, and began to promote closer links between labour and the CCF. In doing so, he encountered opposition from both the Communist Party (the CCF's rival for

working class support) and those who opposed all political activity by trade unions. The Communists were his most formidable opposition. Millard would prove equal to their challenge for while he carried a Bible in one hand, he held a hatchet in the other. He was as tough as his adversaries and as a result won their undying enmity.

The basis of the antagonism between CCF and Communist trade unionists was more subtle than just a political adherence to different parties. It involved a different view of the relationship between a political party and the labour movement. Millard saw the Communists as undemocratic and liable to manipulate union members to support union policies that were not only in conformity with CP policy, but sometimes even dictated by CP leaders. This violated Millard's conviction that unions were democratic organizations and should be autonomous from any political party and that union leaders should be accountable only to their union membership. Millard believed that labour had political interests and these could be expressed most effectively through support of the CCF. But all trade union policy following Millard's approach would be arrived at independently and democratically within the union. Unions would thus have a cooperative relationship with the CCF. They might arrive at similar policy positions but they would operate within their separate spheres. When Millard held official positions within the CCF, he literally changed his 'hats'. While he was prepared to discuss issues in which the party and the union movement were both interested, he would have deeply resented any attempt by CCF leaders to «instruct» him to act in a particular way in his union. CCF leaders like David Lewis understood this position and they respected it<sup>27</sup>. Long-time labour reporter Wilfrid List remembered that trade unionists like Millard who opposed the Communists

felt that there was an ideological issue involved as well as one... of pure power... They felt that the Communist Party was attempting to usurp the role of the trade union and was attempting to use the trade union for its own advantage.<sup>28</sup>

In the late 1930's, Millard's views did not prevail because within the UAW, the Communists were better organized than the CCF supporters. Millard's efforts to promote support for the CCF within the union received a setback in 1939 at the union's convention in Cleveland. Recognizing that Millard's aims were a threat to their continued influence in the union<sup>29</sup> the Communists in the big Oshawa and Windsor locals were able to mobilize enough support to ensure that George Burt, the Treasurer of the Oshawa local, was elected to replace Millard as Canadian Director of the UAW<sup>30</sup>.

However, «the vigorous and forceful Millard was not one... to remain long out of office»<sup>31</sup>. After his defeat, he was offered a position as a UAW representative-at-large but, instead, he preferred to become a Canadian

organizer for the CIO. Millard had attended the 1938 CIO convention in Pittsburgh and in April 1939, he was appointed by John L. Lewis (from the United States) Secretary of the Canadian CIO Committee,<sup>32</sup> at a salary of eight dollars a day. He thus maintained his high profile in that position<sup>33</sup>. The head of the Canadian CIO Committee, Silby Barrett, was based mainly in the Maritimes so Millard (located in Ontario) became the effective leader of the CIO forces in Canada. From that position he worked for his vision of a stronger, more political labour movement.

A first step was to promote labour unity, especially amongst industrial unions. Following the expulsion of the industrial unions from the craft-dominated Trades and Labor Congress (TLC) in 1939, Millard and Barrett initiated negotiations with A.R. Mosher, head of the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL)<sup>34</sup> and a proponent of both industrial unionism and the CCF. In September, 1940 discussions led to a merger of the Canadian CIO committee and the ACCL in the new Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL). This merger has been interpreted as a way to limit Communist influence within the labour movement. This was undoubtedly a factor but Millard was also strongly committed to organizing. In his view, the CCL would be a vehicle to assist new unions to organize more effectively and demand collective bargaining and social legislation<sup>35</sup>. In deference to the ACCL tradition of Canadian nationalism, the CCL was to exercise autonomy from its international union affiliates on political and legislative questions. The Congress also settled jurisdictional disputes. There were several such disagreements between the UAW and the Steelworkers' union which brought Millard and Burt — two seasoned adversaries — into conflict<sup>36</sup>.

Millard's leading role in creating the CCL led to a seat on the Congress executive. In 1940, he also became President of the Ontario CCF and in these positions, he tried to forge a closer link between the CCL and the CCF. He encouraged local unions to affiliate to the CCF — a pattern set in District 26 of the UMW by his colleague Silby Barrett. In the Congress he was supported by Mosher, but encountered some resistance from other executive members, like Pat Conroy and Norman Dowd who had a less political conception of the role of the CCL<sup>37</sup>.

After 1939 Millard focussed on organizing. There was a war economy of full employment, and while the labour shortage assisted organizers, at the same time employer opposition impeded their efforts. As a patriot and a socialist, Millard supported the Allied war effort against Nazi Germany. But he also endorsed CCL demands for greater government consultation with labour particularly about the war production effort. He pressured for collective bargaining legislation like the American Wagner Act (1935) to ac-



commodate the droves of war workers joining unions which many employers refused to recognize. He urged the government to develop a labour policy which recognized labour as a partner and not a servant of industry<sup>38</sup>. He opposed wage controls because they were contrary to free collective bargaining and in his view were administered unfairly.

When the King government failed to respond to these demands, Millard took action. In April 1941, he resigned as a labour representative from the National Labour Supply Council (NLSC) because he was powerless<sup>39</sup>. In the absence of collective bargaining legislation, he supported the right to strike in wartime and mobilized support behind countless strikes for union recognition<sup>40</sup>. His aggressive stance appeared radical to a public which believed that strikes in wartime were unpatriotic. It again brought him into conflict with Communists who, after the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union in 1941 which brought the USSR in on the side of the Allies, favoured an all-out war production effort. They pursued a 'no-strike pledge' policy in the unions which they controlled. Millard led two major strikes in the steel industry (in 1943 and 1946) designed to circumvent or contravene the wage control policy. In general, Millard was supportive of the war effort but not at the expense of workers' rights. It was a war for democracy and that principle had to be extended to the workplace in Canada<sup>41</sup>. As he told his colleagues on the Congress Executive Board,

I have been stressing the idea that our people are in the fighting forces for a principle... As a veteran of the last war, I have a responsibility to see that those who come back will have a better Canada.<sup>42</sup>

He disagreed with many politicians and government officials who thought that labour should help win the war first and then demand collective bargaining legislation and wage increases.

In the war years, Millard embarked on the great challenge of organizing the steel industry. His union was assisted by an increased demand for labour in the steel mills and factories, and increased financial support for organizing in Canada from the international union. But first some internal problems needed to be sorted out. Millard's appointment as head of the Canadian CIO threatened the Communist faction in the Ontario region of SWOC (the Steelworkers' Organizing Committee)<sup>43</sup>. Millard had sent reports to Philip Murray, the President of SWOC, who after a visit to Hamilton ordered an enquiry into the Ontario situation. Early in 1940, Millard was appointed by the international union to be the Executive Director of SWOC with the responsibility of reorganizing the union to prevent fragmentation and «bring the various elements into line»<sup>44</sup>. Millard was convinced that the 'party-line shenanigans' of certain staff men associated with the Communist Party were holding back organization. Accordingly, in

pursuit of his mandate, in June, 1940 he fired Dick Steele and Harry Hunter and replaced them with organizers who were loyal to him and were supporters of the CCF.

Steele and Hunter retaliated. Millard's appointment had caused dissension within the union. «The occupant of high office coming from the outside was not relished by those within the union who had heretofore been active in controlling policy<sup>45</sup>.» Communist elements in Steel, similar to those who had engineered Millard's defeat in the UAW, challenged his leadership again — as well as that of Silby Barrett. As H.A. Logan has described the conflict,

Sections of the membership became negative. Motions of censure were passed and resolutions to remove both leaders were presented to the international. During the summer of 1940 communist disruption tactics came to full expression. Unauthorized strikes took place in Toronto and Oshawa. Ontario locals largely withdrew and stopped paying dues to the international, turning them over instead to a new body which they styled the «Ontario Executive» with Harry Hunter, a Hamilton alderman as president and Richard (Dick) Steele as secretary.<sup>46</sup>

At the close of 1940, the union was divided into two factions which would not be reconciled without further intra-organizational rivalry, efforts at conciliation and the entry of the Soviet Union into the war in the spring of 1941, which focussed the Communists' efforts on war production levels. Eventually the dissident locals returned to the fold. Nevertheless, Millard's «housecleaning was accomplished with such thoroughness that he became a favourite target of Communist attack from that time on»<sup>47</sup>.

Throughout this period of dissension, Millard further replenished his staff with «idealists, social democrats rather than Communists»,<sup>48</sup> and thus reinvigorated the union. He succeeded in increasing the union's membership from 15,000 in 1941 to 50,000 in 1944<sup>49</sup>. His leadership style was an asset for not only was Millard himself energetic and self-confident, but his new recruits were intelligent effective organizers to whom he could delegate responsibilities. Under his guidance, there developed a pool of future leaders. Millard expected his organizers to be loyal to him and preferred them to share his political objectives. Indeed, several of them emerged from the CCF's youth group, the CCYM. Margaret Sedgewick, who worked with her husband, Morden Lazarus on the CCF newspaper, the *New Commonwealth*, became Millard's secretary for the rest of his career in the USWA. Her job was to «help keep him pointed in one direction at a time — in his case not nearly as easy as it sounds».

She had a profound grasp of the meaning of trade unionism and of the goals of socialism, and she applied a sharp and creative mind to every problem. She also applied a sharp tongue to any attempt at doubletalk or obfuscation, and her boss was not the only appreciate victim of her gift.<sup>50</sup>

Murray Cotterill and Eamon Park became the key public relations and education personnel in the union's National Office, and Park later became the Assistant National Director<sup>51</sup>. Eileen Talman was hired as an organizer and in the early 1950's went on to organize the first Eaton drive for the CCL<sup>52</sup>. Bill Sefton emerged from the John Inglis local and became a Steelworkers' organizer and an active CCF politician. His brother Larry Sefton, was a local leader in Mine Mill's 1942 Kirkland Lake strike which was lost<sup>53</sup>. He was blacklisted in Northern Ontario and was recruited by Millard to the USWA staff. He led the 1946 Stelco strike in Hamilton and in 1953 became Director of District 6. Bill Mahoney received his leadership training in the Algoma local and eventually succeeded Millard as the National Director of the USWA.

In addition, Millard chose not to use the services of lawyer J.L. Cohen who had worked with several Communist influenced unions. Instead, he retained two younger labour lawyers, Ted Jolliffe and Andrew Brewin. In 1943, Jolliffe became the leader of the Ontario CCF and the Leader of the Opposition after the election. Brewin, a frequent contributor to *Canadian Forum* and an active civil libertarian, was an able advocate who later became a NDP Member of Parliament.

In 1942, SWOC continued to organize hundreds of workers in small plants such as the John Inglis Company and Research Enterprises Limited,<sup>54</sup> and in that year it became the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). At the founding convention Millard was elected the new union's National Director in Canada. He retained that position until he resigned in 1956.

While Millard's primary responsibility was for the Canadian steelworkers, in 1941 he became the CCL's Regional Director of Organization in Toronto<sup>55</sup>. In that position (which he held briefly)<sup>56</sup> and later in an unofficial capacity, he coordinated the organizing activities of committees of office, textile, rubber and shoe and leather workers. His union contributed twenty-five thousand dollars to the CCL organization fund to facilitate this work. In 1942, Millard was named Canadian Director of the Packinghouse Workers' Organizing Committee (PWOC) and he instigated the successful organization of the packinghouse industry in Canada,<sup>57</sup> working closely with his protégé, Fred Dowling. In 1943 PWOC became the United Packinghouse Workers of America and Dowling was elected its Director. Millard also provided money, and advice to Mine Mill which was engaged in a titanic struggle for union recognition in the mining communities of Northern Ontario. The challenge of these years made tremendous demands on the people involved, as Millard's secretary conveyed in a letter to David Lewis, the National Secretary of the CCF.

We've been working almost every night on either SWOC, PWOC, or OPWOC, and sometimes in (to) the hours before the dawn also. When Canada Packers has a meeting we get out there with handbills by 6:15 a.m.<sup>58</sup>

Such hectic activity was repeated in union offices across the country.

Millard was rapidly rising to a position of national prominence as a man of influence both in the labour movement and in the CCF. He was a man in the right place at the right time. The immense task of mobilizing workers in the mass production industries was the perfect outlet for his energy and his organizational ability. He was a catalyst who motivated people. He was a co-ordinator, who could simultaneously innumerable activities but who retained his own vision of the broader picture and the ultimate objectives<sup>59</sup>.

Social improvement for workers depended upon organizing broad industrial unions, developing a coordinated bargaining strategy sensitive to regional concerns, and mobilizing an effective response when governments sought to restrict the collective bargaining process. It was this last requirement that was tested in the 1943 steel strike.

1943 was a watershed year. Trade union organization reached a new high point, and industrial conflict was greater than at any time except 1919 — the year of the Winnipeg General Strike. The CCF's national popularity peaked; a Gallup poll in September indicated that it might be on the verge of assuming power — and in Ontario it nearly did so, when it became the Official Opposition. To use Gerald Caplan's phrase, these were «the golden years» for the CCF<sup>60</sup>. The CCL-CCF link was forged as that Congress officially endorsed the CCF as 'the political arm of labour'. Millard contributed to all of these industrial relations and political developments. He himself was one of the 3 steelworkers and 19 trade unionists (10 from the TLC and 9 from the CCL) who ran successfully as CCF candidates and were among the 34 CCF members elected to the Ontario legislature<sup>61</sup>.

In the area of industrial relations, the most serious challenge of 1943 was wage controls, which were proclaimed by orders-in-council as part of the government's program of wartime economic regulation. Labour opposed them because they were contrary to free collective bargaining and might simply freeze substandard wages. Millard tried to circumvent wage controls by testing government machinery administering the controls. When this strategy ultimately failed, as a last resort, in January, 1943 he led 13,000 steelworkers out on strike against wage controls,<sup>62</sup> in an important but ultimately unsuccessful steel strike. The strike was part of the union's plan adopted in 1939 to promote the establishment of a uniform, industry-wide

wage standard with a minimum base rate throughout the Canadian steel industry — a plan which it was expected would also attract new union members, particularly at Stelco in Hamilton.

The strike involved Millard in tough negotiations with the steel industry's leaders but particularly with the Prime Minister and the federal cabinet. For the government, the strike was a direct challenge to the wage control policy and it prompted government intervention to an unprecedented degree. King's objectives were to contain this militant union and maintain industrial production by achieving a settlement, which, as a sympathetic gesture, would raise wages slightly but not so much as to undermine the wage control policy or change the existing wage structure of the steel industry which involved regional differentials. In order to distance the government from this process, the shrewd Prime Minister created a new independent National War Labour Board (NWLB) to administer the controls. This was an expedient move as the labour movement preferred a board which was outside the Minister of Labour's jurisdiction. The previous board had been chaired by the Minister himself.

In the dispute, Millard showed himself to be persistent, and a strategist with consistent policies. But he was also naive, and because he placed too much faith in King's word he was outmanoeuvred by the wily Prime Minister who has been admired by historians for his political dexterity and his personal deviousness. Hing proved to be more subtle than Mitch Hepburn had been in 1937, and Millard found himself at a disadvantage.

At the end of 1941, Millard instructed steel locals to make plans «for an attack on the wage structure in the steel industry in Canada; the time has arrived to put these plans into action»<sup>63</sup>. In 1942, a strike was forestalled. The Ontario and Nova Scotia regional labour boards had turned down the Algoma and Dosco locals' applications for higher wages on the grounds that their wages were not out of line with other wages in their respective regions. The union responded that the steel industry was a national and essential war industry and should have one national wage scale. Millard sought government intervention, but the Cabinet opposed «any yielding to Millard»<sup>64</sup> or any federal interference with the decisions of regional wage boards. Instead, as a result of Millard's efforts, the government did establish a Royal Commission to investigate the dispute.

While this commission, chaired by Justice F.H. Barlow, deliberated, Millard advised a restless membership to «exercise whatever additional patience is required to get a final decision» and to continue operations at peak production levels in order to increase public support<sup>65</sup>. At the same time he continued to apply political pressure on business and government by asser-

ting his union's as yet unofficial association with the CCF. In addition, the union ran a publicity campaign to educate the public about the low wages, long hours and poor housing conditions of steelworkers<sup>66</sup>.

The commission's majority report recommended that the base wage rates not be adjusted. This was a great disappointment to the union even though the minority report written by King Gordon<sup>67</sup> eloquently supported the union's case. The union's immediate response was the strike of 13,000 steelworkers in Sydney, Trenton and Sault Ste. Marie. This time Millard did not try to stop the men but instead he wrote in a militant mood to his members:

I am convinced that every attempt has been made to avoid... disruption of production; but the patience and goodwill of our people have been shamefully rewarded. The intolerable conditions... in our steel industry could no longer be endured by self-respecting Canadians. The members of Locals 1064 and 2251 have been forced to seek a satisfactory settlement by strike action. Their action is fully endorsed and must be fully supported.<sup>68</sup>

Only the Stelco workers in Hamilton, where the union was weak, remained at work. Immediately, Prime Minister Mackenzie King became actively involved in trying to settle the 1943 steel strike in order to get steel production rolling again. King regarded Millard as an extremist and an opportunist<sup>69</sup>. He disliked Millard's CCF politics and distrusted his motives. He was very sensitive to the CCF's increasing political support, and its close association with the new unions. But the Prime Minister also recognized that the union had bargaining power and that the strike challenged the wage stabilization policy. King sought a solution, acceptable to both a militant trade union and his unsympathetic Cabinet colleagues.

In a series of meetings between the 12th and 23rd of January, 1943, King persuaded his Cabinet colleagues to refer the matter to a reconstituted NWLB which would be an independent administrative tribunal, separate from the Department of Labour with the power to adjust wage rates. The full Cabinet had 3 meetings with the parties to the dispute in which Millard and King negotiated a «Memorandum of Understanding». The union and Millard believed that this agreement acknowledged the principle of a national wage standard and would be subject to review by the reconstituted NWLB. The intention of the settlement and the thrust of the discussions preceding it were later much disputed. The union interpreted the board's *authority* to accede to the union's request as an indication that it would do so. From the government's point of view there might be slight wage increases in the steel industry but it had preserved the integrity of its control policy in the rest of the economy, and the settlement had ended the strike.

Millard had the difficult task of getting his suspicious members back to work, but he sincerely assured them that the terms provided the necessary machinery to achieve their objectives<sup>70</sup>. He expected a favourable decision from the reconstituted NWLB — chaired by The Hon. Mr. Justice C.P. McTague with J.B. Bench, K.C. as the management representative and J.L. Cohen, K.C. as the labour representative — especially since these new appointees had the approval of the labour movement<sup>71</sup>. On 31 March 1943, the NWLB released a unanimous decision. It did not implement the Memorandum but reinterpreted it. It maintained regional wage rates — at a slightly higher level — but refused to make them a national standard or to accept the union's submission that the steel industry should be treated as an exception to the existing structure of wage controls.

Millard reacted with disbelief and a sense of betrayal. In his view «instead of giving effect to what was solemnly agreed upon in good faith between the union and the government», the board had failed to «carry out the definite undertakings given last January». Ted Jolliffe has maintained that Millard, while often a shrewd tactician, could sometimes be gullible<sup>72</sup>. Whatever verbal assurances King might have conveyed, the Board decision was consistent with the terms of the understanding and the existing law, and the Board being «independent» could not be successfully challenged. Millard never wavered from his position, and his feeling of betrayal was to mark his future dealings with the government and affect his strategy during the 1946 steel strike.

In the aftermath of the 1943 strike, Millard swore affidavits attesting to his version of the story, partly because he felt his credibility with his members had been undermined. He clearly had been outmanoeuvred. The union failed to achieve its goals, and Millard's freedom of action was limited because he could not utilize the rising tension in the steel centres,<sup>73</sup> through any means short of a strike. Unrest meant little to the government so long as there was no work stoppage.

The 1943 strike did not resume. The CCL unions were under attack by a hostile press and could not command public support. Also, the union movement was hopeful of obtaining gains after the government announced on April 9, 1943 that there would be a general inquiry into labour relations and wage conditions. Organized labour did not want to jeopardize the possible enactment of national collective bargaining legislation. This inquiry would involve a considerable amount of Millard's attention both as a trade unionist and as a member of provincial parliament (MPP). Although the workers were outraged by the NWLB decision, Millard realized that their discontent was partly allayed by the wage increases they had received.

Instead of leading a second strike therefore, Millard focussed his attention on increasing union membership while he lobbied for legislation to entrench the right to collective bargaining. The chief target was Stelco, the one still largely unorganized company in the basic steel industry. It was here that Millard needed to solidify his union's membership before a second assault on wage controls and to gain management's acceptance of the union in Hamilton. Millard had learned a lesson and would not repeat his previous mistakes. When the government again tried to impose wage guidelines, Millard refused to become enmeshed in either the wage boards or negotiations with the government. Instead, in 1946 he defiantly relied on his members' militancy, solidarity and bargaining power to produce a settlement which was consistent with the union's policy goals, successfully undermined the wage control policy and established the USWA in Hamilton.

After the 1943 strike, Millard added the burden of being a CCF-MPP (representing York West) to his busy schedule. During his term he came to be considered the ablest CCFer in the legislature. While he did not live in the riding, the CCF constituency organization had approached him to run as they believed that he had a good chance of winning there. The riding encompassed many newly organized industries of Mimico and New Toronto. As a leading trade unionist, Millard was a known attractive candidate in this industrial area. He was elected in the CCF sweep and represented the riding between 1943 and 1945 and again from 1948 to 1951. In his first period in the legislature, frequently participated in debates on subjects, including old age pensions, a shorter work week and education. But when he spoke about the collective bargaining legislation emerging from both the Ontario and federal governments, his words carried added weight because of his senior position in the labour movement. He believed that such legislation was deficient and urged amendments along lines suggested by organized labour and the CCF. Nevertheless, he accepted those enactments as a necessary first step<sup>74</sup>.

Millard's approach as a legislator was consistent with his role as a trade unionist. He was a principled man with respect for ordinary people, and in both jobs he expressed his will to create a more democratic and equitable society<sup>75</sup>. He spoke often about education which would «have our farmers and our work-people just as well-educated as any other section of society». It was necessary to educate all people to be citizens in a democratic country<sup>76</sup>. He also wanted Parliamentary institutions and the political system to be well administered, and genuinely representative of the needs of the people<sup>77</sup>.

The bulwark of a democratic society was of course a strong labour movement and at the war's end, trade unions became preoccupied with



maintaining the wartime gains of increased membership and the right to collective bargaining. These concerns gave rise to the issue of «union security» because without a secure membership base and financial support, employer action could undermine a union's position. The demand for a «union shop» and automatic dues «checkoff» was confronted in the 1945 Ford strike in Windsor. As an executive officer of the CCL, Millard supported that strike which became the occasion of further confrontation between himself and the Communist trade unionists. Millard was critical of those Communists who sought to call what in his view would have been an unauthorized one day general sympathy strike at a point when there was a possibility of getting an arbitrated settlement which would recognize the union security principle<sup>78</sup>. He filed charges with the Congress against UEW leaders C.S. Jackson and George Harris after they made what he considered to be malicious statements indicting the Congress' National Ford Strike Committee and slanderously attacking «the Congress, the Steelworkers, and Brother Conroy and myself personally»<sup>79</sup>. He called for the suspension of the UEW until the Congress was assured that that union's officers would cease such attacks. A break in solidarity in the face of a crisis like the Ford strike was unforgivable to Millard because the issue was of basic importance to all. It would become a part of the battle with Stelco in 1946

In 1946, a new strike wave erupted, as workers reacted to the continuation of wartime restrictions and controls.

The tensions of the time were cumulative. The longer hours characteristic of the war years had been projected into peace; the cost-of-living index was under condemnation; the government was allowing price increases on certain goods, one of them being \$5. a ton on steel. The time was ripe with the renewal of contracts, so labour believed, for a re-examination of standards.<sup>80</sup>

Steel again was in the spotlight when Millard called a strike against the three largest steel producers.

This time the steelworkers were not alone. Loggers in the west, organized rubber and electrical workers in central Canada were also striking for higher wages with the support of the CCL which established a National Wage Coordinating Committee in which Millard participated<sup>81</sup>. The unions' demands were substantially the same but because of their size, the steel companies would set the pattern. The spectacular conflict in Hamilton became «the crisis point of the whole union struggle»<sup>82</sup> and «a symbol for every working man and woman in Canada»<sup>83</sup>. The Steelworkers' called for a return to the 40 hour work week in place of 48 hours, with a wage increase of 19 1/2 cents an hour.

With the wage control policy still in effect, the union's action was on doubtful legal ground. The government announced a wage ceiling of 10

cents an hour. It warned the union that if there were a strike, it would appoint a steel controller for the industry which it did. As Millard told a parliamentary committee «the appointment of the controller was an attempt to impose the tencent increase and close off further negotiations as to wages, and... the government knew that the union was not prepared to accept that figure»<sup>84</sup>.

Millard's activities were primarily at the centre. Prior to the strike, he kept the government informed about what became abortive discussions with Stelco,<sup>85</sup> after which he oversaw the preparation of the union's case before a conciliation board. He remained in frequent touch with his local members and had votes conducted in April and May by which the workers gave their union a clear mandate to strike<sup>86</sup>. In June, he met with Commissioner Roach who was appointed by the government to investigate the dispute. When the commissioner approved the government's wage ceiling, the USWA's National Advisory Committee issued a statement to the effect that if satisfactory progress towards a settlement were not made by July 12 «the National Director would be authorized to give appropriate notice at that time to the three companies [Stelco, Algoma and Dosco] that strike action would be taken shortly thereafter»<sup>87</sup>. The government's response on July 10 was to appoint the controller, and on July 15 the strike in the steel industry began.

After its commencement, the government made a conciliatory gesture of reviving the Parliamentary Committee on Industrial Relations in order to begin a public investigation. Millard appeared as a witness for the union as did the President of Stelco. The hearings gave the parties a public platform. But Millard was not prepared to allow a government committee to set the bargaining agenda. This time he ignored all government warnings and did not make a case for a wage increase to either the National or Regional War Labour Boards. He decided to conduct an illegal strike, if necessary, to achieve an acceptable settlement.

Millard delegated the running of the strikes at the local level to his staff and local union leaders. At Sydney and Algoma the stoppages were complete. In Hamilton the union was certified but still organizing and was opposed by the company. The Stelco strike became one of the most confrontational in Canadian history.

It was industrial warfare between two determined sides. The union members were solid but Stelco decided to keep its operations running. It housed and fed 1000 non-union workers inside the plant gates. Picket lines were tightly drawn around the company to discourage the entry of workers and materials, so that even from Hamilton Bay, the union was lent a launch

named «the Whisper» to «picket» the bay. When the company built an airstrip to fly in supplies to the men inside, the union rented its own airplane to fly over the plant and drop leaflets urging the workers inside to support their co-workers on the picket line. Both airplanes were operated by experienced pilots recently returned from Europe. On more than one occasion they engaged in «dog-fights» over the plant,<sup>88</sup> which were watched by the spectators below. Thus the crisis atmosphere of wartime was carried over in this post-war labour dispute in Canada's industrial heartland.

The man overseeing the strike at Stelco was Larry Sefton whom Millard had sent to Hamilton in late 1945 as USWA area supervisor. Freeman writes, «He brought with him a reputation as a tough organizer, a competent administrator and a dynamic personality who could weld people together»<sup>89</sup>. Millard had wanted to strengthen the Hamilton local 1005. Where previous organizing attempts had failed, under Sefton there was a breakthrough. He forged some CCFer's into an effective plant group, much as Millard himself would have done. They moved to limit Communist influence in the local. Whereas, the CP continued to advocate a policy of 'no strike pledges', in the interest of an all out war production effort, the CCFer's actively supported the war but refused to relinquish the strike weapon so long as there was employer resistance to trade union organization. The CCFer's in Local 1005 pursued the most militant policy and spearheaded the union membership drive. Reg Gardiner ran against CPer Tom McClure for the Presidency of Local 1005 and won.

Sefton was a catalyst uniting the local people behind the union. He worked closely with the new local executive and together they developed an excellent steward body as organization proceeded in the plant.

It is interesting that Millard selected Sefton to lead the strike in Hamilton, for it became the basis for higher union office for him just as the Oshawa strike had been for Millard nine years earlier.

Charlie had a certain antipathy (to Sefton)..., but I think he recognized his great talent. He recognized in him... a threat, and he was very right of course as it turned out. But he also recognized his talent.<sup>90</sup>

The young organizer would later challenge Millard's position in the Canadian section of the union. But in 1946, Millard was at the peak of his power and prestige.

The Stelco strike was settled on favourable terms. The union won recognition and acceptance from one of the most intransigent employers in the country. There was a residue of bitterness in the community after the 3 month strike but the union thereafter consolidated its position, and within 6 months had signed up 3000 members<sup>91</sup>.

Millard's leadership of the USWA in the war years accomplished much. By 1946 the union had approximately 45,000 members and 42 collective agreements with union security provisions and 86 with check-off clauses. All contracts had grievance-arbitration procedures and there were improvements in wages and vacation benefits. Practically all workers in basic steel were union members as were about 60% of those in the steel fabricating plants. In addition there were some 3000 members employed in the fabricating industries<sup>92</sup>. It was an impressive, pragmatic legacy and a long way from the situation in 1937 during the Depression at the beginning of Millard's trade union career. The CIO industrial union movement was a mass movement built from the grass roots but it was assisted in Canada by the leadership of Charlie Millard. With his particular abilities he was able to tap and channel the energy and militancy of workers who were joining unions during the war.

The great Canadian historian Donald Creighton once observed that every historical study is an 'encounter between character and circumstance'<sup>93</sup>. Millard's trade union career between 1937 and 1946 reflected this truth. He was a man suited to the time. In a situation of crisis, when Canadian workers were organizing, Millard had the talent, determination and vision to understand organized labour's opportunity and to act. His personality was therefore an important factor. His image of respectability gave him appeal. Even his politics which were not traditional — his anti-Communism coupled with a strong commitment to democratic socialism — were not a liability at that time of growing public support for the CCF, followed by the cold war atmosphere at the end of the war. His energy and his eclectic contacts served his organizational aim. His increasing knowledge of industry and the economy assisted his lobbying and legislative activities. His leadership style was aggressive when faced with opposition from Communists or Cabinet Ministers. But it also included delegative powers which could accommodate and mobilize substantial numbers of talented people. This ability was particularly suited to the job of trade unionist in a period of growth. He made miscalculations and mistakes but he learned from them, did not repeat them and developed new tactics when necessary.

In his day, the press, the Prime Minister, CCF Leader David Lewis and religious leaders all viewed Millard somewhat differently. Today, we can bring some perspective to bear on Millard's career. Many of the events in which he participated and did much to effect have had lasting consequences. In history, he thus becomes a significant figure. Between 1937 and 1946, he, more than any other individual helped promote the emergence of the modern industrial union movement. That movement had an immediate

goal in which he believed — the economic and social betterment of Canadian workers. It also had a long-term political goal which Millard shared — the desire to bring about political change through a democratic socialist party in favour of a CCF/NDP government and a more egalitarian society.

## NOTES

1 There are biographies of most Canadian Prime Ministers. The Ontario Historical Studies Series has commissioned biographies of Ontario's premiers, which include Charles W. HUMPHRIES, *'Honest Enough To Be Bold': The Life and Times of Sir James Pliny Whitney*, Toronto 1985; J.M.S. CARELESS (ed.), *The Pre-Confederation Premiers*, Toronto, 1980; Peter OLIVER, *Hon. G. Howard Ferguson, Toronto, 1977*; A.K. McDOUGALL, *Robarts*, Toronto, 1986. Other recent studies include David J. MITCHELL, *WAC: Bennett and the Rise of British Columbia*, Vancouver, 1983; L.H. THOMAS (ed.), *The Making of a Socialist: The Recollections of T.C. Douglas*, Edmonton, 1982; Peter OLIVER, *Unlikely Tory*, Toronto, 1985; Paul MARTIN, *A Very Public Life*, 2 vols., Ottawa, 1983; 1985; Donald FLEMING, *So Very Near: The Political Memoirs of the Honourable Donald M. Fleming*, Toronto, 1985.

2 Michael BLISS, *Banting: A Biography*, Toronto, 1984, and *A Canadian Millionaire: The Life & Times of Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart. 1858-1939*, Toronto, 1978.

3 Pierre BERTON, *The National Dream*, Toronto, 1974; Peter NEWMAN, *Company of Adventurers*, Markham, 1985.

4 A popular biography of Kent Rowley has been written, but Rowley was not a major figure in the Canadian labour movement. Rick SALUTIN, *The Organizer: A Canadian Union Life*, Toronto, 1980. Short biographies of union leaders have been written in Morden LAZARUS, *Up From the Ranks*, Toronto, 1977; *The New Canadian Encyclopedia*, Winnipeg, 1985.

5 Laurent Sefton MACDOWELL, «The 1943 Steel Strike Against Wartime Wage Controls», *Labour/Le Travail*, Vol. 10, Autumn 1982, pp. 65-85 and Bryan C. WILLIAMS, «Collective Bargaining and Wage Equalization in Canada's Iron and Steel Industry 1939-1964», *Relations Industrielles/Industrial Relations*, Vol. 26, No. 2, 1971.

6 Morden LAZARUS, *Up From the Ranks*, Toronto, 1977, p. 85.

7 Eleanor O'CONNOR, «Charles Millard: A Socialist in the Trade Union Movement», unpublished essay, York University, n.d., p. 3.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 8.

9 John MANLEY, «Communists & Autoworkers: The Struggle for Industrial Unionism in the Canadian Automobile Industry, 1925-36», *Labour/Le Travail*, Vol. 17, Spring 1986, p. 122.

10 Eleanor O'CONNOR, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

11 Arthur LOWER, «Nationalism and the Canadian Historian», *CHR*, LXVI, No. 4, Dec. 1985, p. 542. «The left-wing party, the former CCF, was in many respects its (Methodism's) child. Few who were brought up as Methodists in the early twentieth century can have escaped this socializing influence. Methodism, no doubt, carried its negative attitudes too far. It found too many things to be against, but that does not subtract from the enormous influence it wielded in shaping the genius of Canadian society.»

- 12 Eleanor O'CONNOR, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
- 13 C.H. MILLARD, «Church-Labour Relations», March 1946, File 138, E. Harold Toyne Papers, United Church Archives, Toronto.
- 14 Quoted in Eleanor O'CONNOR, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 45. Reg Gardiner, President of Local 1005, USWA confirmed this view, saying, «In those days the union was evangelical, it was missionary. We had the feeling we were building something for posterity, that we were charged with a mission», Wayne ROBERTS ed., *The Baptism of a Union: The Stelco Strike of 1946*, Hamilton, 1981, p. 7.
- 16 John MANLEY, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-120.
- 17 Irving ABELLA, ed., *On Strike*, Toronto, 1974, p. 96.
- 18 Often companies said that they would deal with an 'in-house' employees committee but not a union, when they really opposed any employee representation. They realized that a local committee was likely to be weak and often not independent of management. This management position was clearly articulated and analysed in my study, Laurel Sefton MACDOWELL, 'Remember Kirkland Lake': *The Gold Miners Strike 1941-42*, Toronto, 1983.
- 19 Neil MCKENTY, *Mitch Hepburn*, Toronto, 1967.
- 20 Eleanor O'CONNOR, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
- 21 Irving ABELLA ed., *On Strike*, Toronto, 1974.
- 22 Irving ABELLA, *ibid.*, p. 99.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 120.
- 24 *Ibid.*, p. 121.
- 25 Neil MCKENTY, *Mitch Hepburn*, *op. cit.*, p. 136. David Croll, who differed with Hepburn on his CIO policy, won and in Oshawa the Liberal vote dropped sharply and most of it was picked up by the CCF.
- 26 *Labor Leader* (Oshawa), 24 November, 1938.
- 27 David LEWIS, *The Good Fight*, Toronto, 1981, p. 296.
- 28 Typescript conversation by the author with Wilf List, 27 March, 1985.
- 29 H.A. LOGAN, *Trade Unions in Canada*, Toronto, 1948, p. 255.
- 30 George Burt had been elected Treasurer of Local 222, UAW with Communist support. He would remain Canadian Director of the UAW from 1939 until 1968. Morden LAZARUS, *Up From the Ranks*, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
- 31 H.A. LOGAN, *op. cit.*, p. 255.
- 32 Irving ABELLA, *Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour*, Toronto, 1973, p. 33.
- 33 *Kitchener Record*, 17 February 1939. He visited Kitchener to support a strike of rubber workers as a CIO organizer «who was active in the General Motors strike two years ago».
- 34 Irving ABELLA, «The CIO, the Communist Party and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour 1936-41», *CHAR*, 1969, p. 127.
- 35 M. LAZARUS, *op. cit.*, p. 86.
- 36 For examples of jurisdictional conflicts, see Millard-Conroy Correspondence, July, October and November 1942, Vol. 44, File 12: USWA, C.H. Millard 1940-42 Part 1, CLC Papers, PAC, Ottawa. There were also jurisdictional squabbles between the USWA and the UEW, and between Millard and Conroy over how to handle directly chartered locals of the CCL.
- 37 P. Conroy to A.R. Mosher, 18 December, 1940 and N. Dowd to P. Conroy, 20 December, 1940; Vol. 118, File 11: C.H. Millard 1940-45, Part 1, CLC Papers, PAC. See also Gad HOROWITZ, *Canadian Labour In Politics*, Toronto, 1968. This study describes the labour — CCF relationship as it developed in the wartime years.
- 38 Executive Committee Minutes, CCL, 21 October, 1941, Vol. 99, CLC Papers, PAC.
- 39 C.H. Millard to A.R. Mosher, 14 May, 1941, Vol. 118, File 12, CLC Papers, PAC.
- 40 *Globe and Mail*, 5 December, 1941, p. 2.

- 41 Executive Committee Minutes, CCL, 21 October, 1941, Vol. 99, CLC Papers, PAC.
- 42 *Ibid.*
- 43 Bill FREEMAN, *1005: Political Life of a Union Local*, Toronto, 1982, p. 39.
- 44 H.A. LOGAN, *op. cit.*, p. 255.
- 45 *Ibid.*
- 46 *Ibid.*, p. 256.
- 47 Morden LAZARUS, *The Long Winding Road — Canadian Labour in Politics*, Vancouver, 1977, p. 100.
- 48 Robert KUTTNER, «Man of Steel», *Saturday Night*, February 1985, p. 14.
- 49 H.A. LOGAN, *op. cit.*, p. 255.
- 50 David LEWIS, *The Good Fight*, *op. cit.*, p. 137.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 300.
- 52 Eileen Talman SUFRIN, *The Eaton Drive*, Don Mills, 1982.
- 53 Laurel Sefton MACDOWELL, «Remember Kirkland Lake...», *op. cit.*
- 54 Newspaper advertisement and letter from L. Sefton to P. Conroy, 7 October, 1942, Vol. 44, File 12, USWA; C.H. Millard 1940-42 Part 1, CLC Papers, PAC.
- 55 N. Dowd to C.H. Millard, 19 February 1941, Vol. 118, File 11, CLC Papers, PAC.
- 56 C.H. Millard to A.R. Mosher, 14 May, 1941, Vol. 118, File 12, CLC Papers, PAC. Millard resigned from the position.
- 57 Eleanor O'CONNOR, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
- 58 *Ibid.*, p. 24.
- 59 In a study of union leadership, Charles Anrod pinpointed some characteristics which trade unionists as a social type have in common. They are often gregarious. They are usually highly motivated and political. They are persuasive managers of people. Millard had all of these qualities in abundance. Anrod concluded that, «Not many men in the country are exposed to greater challenges than labour leaders. They must be men... of high moral standards and great intelligence. They must be leaders with marked political gifts. They must be persuasive orators. They must have a vast fund of knowledge and considerable professional competence in a variety of fields», in Charles ANROD, «Reflections on Union Leadership», in E.W. BAKKE, C. KERR, C.W. ANROD, *Unions, Management and the Public*, New York, 1967, p. 160.
- 60 Gerald CAPLAN, *The Dilemma of Canadian Socialism: The CCF in Ontario*, Toronto, 1973.
- 61 The Ontario election was in August, 1943. The CCF polled 32.4% of the vote, the Liberals 30.9% and the Conservatives 36.7%. Of the 19 elected trade unionists 10 were from TLC and 9 from CCL unions. Gad HOROWITZ, *op. cit.*, p. 77.
- 62 For a detailed discussion of this strike, see Laurel Sefton MACDOWELL, «The 1943 Steel Strike Against Wartime Wage Controls», *Labour/Le Travail*, Vol. 10, Autumn 1982, pp. 65-85.
- 63 Memo, C.H. Millard to locals, 1941, Vol. 1, File 10, USWA Papers, PAC.
- 64 W.L.M. King to C.H. Millard, 26 August, 1942, Vol. 330, King Papers, PAC.
- 65 C.H. Millard to Mitchell, Hessian, Mahoney, Dalrymple, MacNeil, 22 December, 1942, Vol. 3, File 6, USWA Papers, PAC.
- 66 For example, the union pamphlet «Victory Needs Steel».
- 67 Mr. Gordon was a former professor at McGill University and was associated with Farrar and Rinehart publishing house in New York. He had participated in the League for Social Reconstruction and Fellowship for a Christian Social Order movements. Apparently Eugene Forsey recommended him to the government as the labour representative on the Commission.
- 68 C.H. Millard to Officers and Members of the Union, 13 January, 1943, Vol. 4, File 7, USWA Papers, PAC.

- 69 W.L.M. King's Typescript Diary, 25, 26, 27 August, 1942, PAC.
- 70 C.H. Millard to Locals 1064, 2251, 1231, 23 January, 1943, Vol. 4, File 7, USWA Papers.
- 71 Mr. Justice C.P. McTague was appointed a Justice of the High Court of Ontario in 1935 and in 1938 he was appointed to the Appellate Court of Ontario. Since 1940, he had acted as chairman of the War Contracts Depreciation Board, and had served on conciliation boards. J.L. Cohen, K.C. was a prominent labour lawyer for the union side.
- 72 Ted Jolliffe, conversation with the author 26 March, 1981.
- 73 Millard wrote that the tension in the steel centres was at the breaking point. C.H. Millard to Joe Noseworthy, 1 June, 1943, USWA Papers.
- 74 Speeches on pensions and the workweek, 11 March, 1944; on school taxes, 10 March 1944, on Ontario Collective Bargaining Act, 18, 19 February 1943; on the National Labour Code, 3, 28, 31 March, 1944. Debates; Legislative Assembly, Ontario. The USWA submission was made by Tom McClure, Local 1005 and union counsel Andrew Brewin 9 March, 1943. Ontario, *Proceedings of the Select Committee regarding Bargaining between Employers and Employees*, p. 524, Ontario Legislative Library, Toronto.
- 75 Debates, Legislative Assembly, Ontario v. 3(1), 1949, p. 515.
- 76 *Ibid.*, p. 526.
- 77 *Ibid.*, p. 517.
- 78 C.H. Millard to A.R. Mosher, 21 November, 1945, Vol. 118, File 113, CLC Papers, PAC.
- 79 *Ibid.*
- 80 H.A. LOGAN, *op. cit.*, p. 266.
- 81 *Proceedings*, Sixth Annual Convention, CCL September 1946, Toronto, p. 24.
- 82 Desmond MORTON & Terry COPP, *Working People, op. cit.*, p. 191.
- 83 *Proceedings*, CCL 1946, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
- 84 Canada, House of Commons, Standing Committee on Industrial Relations, *Minutes*, 18 July, 1946, p. 25.
- 85 *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- 86 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- 87 *Ibid.*, p. 22.
- 88 *Information* (USWA Publication), Vol. 17, No. 2, September 1969, p. 24.
- 89 Bill FREEMAN, *1005: Political Life of a Union Local*, Toronto, 1982, p. 47.
- 90 Transcript of a conversation between Elaine Sefton and the author, 5 March, 1982, p. 20.
- 91 In 1953, against Millard's wishes, Sefton was acclaimed in an uncontested election as Director of District 6 which at that time encompassed all of Canada west of the Québec border. The two men worked together uncomfortably for three years. Sefton refused to allow the National Director to overshadow him as Millard had done with Sefton's predecessor. In 1956 Millard resigned to work for the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and his chosen successor, Bill Mahoney, took over his job. Wayne ROBERTS ed., *Baptism of a Union: The Stelco Strike of 1946*, Hamilton, 1981, p. 7.
- 92 H.A. LOGAN, *op. cit.*, p. 262.
- 93 John S. MOIR ed., *Character & Circumstance*, Toronto, 1970, p. xx.



## *La carrière d'un dirigeant syndical canadien* *C.H. Millard, 1937-1946*

Dans l'histoire politique du Canada, l'intérêt principal des historiens a été centré sur les chefs politiques marquants. On a pratiquement ignoré les dirigeants syndicaux. Toutefois, ces derniers sont des personnages publics en ce sens que leurs décisions et leur activité influencent la politique des gouvernements et les développements sociaux importants.

La carrière de C.H. «Charlie» Millard arrive à point nommé. Elle commença en 1937 à l'occasion de la grève d'Oshawa. Ce socialiste chrétien fut le fer de lance de la campagne de recrutement des salariés dans les industries de production de masse, en vue de former des syndicats dits de type industriel. En cours de route, son syndicalisme activiste et son appui au C.C.F. l'entraînèrent dans des conflits sans fin avec les membres du parti communiste. Ils l'évincèrent de l'*United Auto Workers*, mais il eut raison de leur opposition quand on l'a choisi comme secrétaire du Comité canadien du Congrès des organisations industrielles, comme membre du bureau de direction du Congrès canadien du travail qu'il aida à créer en 1940 et, finalement comme directeur du Syndicat des Métallurgistes.

Pendant la deuxième guerre mondiale, Millard devint l'un des chefs syndicaux en vue au Canada et il força l'industrie de l'acier, à la suite de deux grèves en 1943 et en 1946, grèves qu'il dirigea personnellement, à changer la structure des salaires et à reconnaître son syndicat. Sous sa direction, ce syndicat, les Métallurgistes-unis d'Amérique, grandit rapidement. En même temps, Millard s'engagea brièvement en politique pour le C.C.F. en Ontario où il connut l'expérience personnelle de l'ascension rapide et du déclin subséquent de cette formation politique en l'épaulant durant le temps de la guerre et dans les années immédiates qui la suivirent. Pendant tout ce temps, il s'occupa à la fois du syndicalisme et de l'économie nationale au pays en pressant le gouvernement d'agir et en négociant avec les dirigeants politiques et les employeurs sans jamais négliger les intérêts des membres de son syndicat. La présence bien visible et radicale de Millard en firent une puissance à abattre dans un Canada profondément engagé dans la guerre. En outre, sa carrière syndicale contribua à la transformation de la société canadienne.

Le grand historien canadien, Donald Creighton déclara un jour que chaque étude historique «est une épreuve de force entre un caractère et les circonstances». La carrière de Millard entre 1937 et 1946 confirma cette association. Il fut l'homme de son époque. Dans une situation de crise, alors que les travailleurs canadiens en étaient à établir leurs syndicats, Millard eut le talent, la détermination et la vision de comprendre que l'heure du syndicalisme était arrivée et il a agi en conséquence. Sa personnalité fut aussi un facteur important dont il fallait tenir compte et, dans l'histoire, il est devenu une figure de proue. Entre 1937 et 1946, c'est lui, plus que tout autre, qui concourut davantage à l'émergence du mouvement des syndicats industriels modernes. Ce mouvement avait un objectif immédiat dans lequel il croyait: l'amélioration de la situation économique et sociale des travailleurs canadiens. Il y avait aussi un dessein politique à plus long terme que Millard partageait: la volonté de procéder à un changement dans la vie politique qui visait à l'arrivée au pouvoir d'un parti socialiste démocratique par l'élection du C.C.F. devenu le N.P.D. en vue de l'établissement d'une société plus égalitaire.