

**FOR WHOSE KINGDOM?
Canadian Baptists and the
Evangelization of Immigrants and Refugees
1880 to 1945**

by

Robert Richard Smale

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education
Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education
The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the
University of Toronto

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Abstract

This study of Canadian Baptists focuses on their attitudes and actions to matters of immigration and refugee policy during the formative years of nationhood in Canada from 1880 to 1945. This thesis seeks to round out the portrait of Baptists in Canada already begun by J. Brian Scott, Brent Reilly, Walter Ellis, John Grant, Philip Griffin-Alwood and Stuart Ivison, the pioneer among Baptist historians. At the same time the work seeks to fill in some of the historiographical gaps in terms of “denominational approaches” to immigration issues by augmenting the studies of Cumbo/Semple/ Airhart (Methodists), Fraser (Presbyterians), Perin (French-speaking Catholics), and McGowan (English-speaking Catholics). Baptist history and theology played a significant role in shaping the denominational attitudes and actions towards immigrants during these years. Inspired by a sense of religious duty, millennialism, fear of Roman Catholicism and a growing sense of national and civic duty, Baptists met the challenge of immigration with a range of

attitudes and programmes that sought to assimilate the “foreign element” in Canada or prevent their admission into the country altogether. Baptists were as much drawn into schemes of Christianization and Canadianization as their Protestant counterparts, seeking to mould the nation into “His Dominion.” This vision of Canada was shared by both liberal and fundamentalist Baptists and was only seriously questioned in the 1930s, when a Baptist intellectual, Watson Kirkconnell, began to question the moral fortitude of assimilationist and protectionist policies and in their stead bestowed the virtues of ethnic pluralism as the father of multiculturalism in Canada.

Acknowledgments

At long last this thesis has finally come to completion. I approached this subject of Canadian Baptists and Immigration from the perspective of an insider, as one raised in the Baptist tradition. At the same time, I was not immune to the experiences of either immigrants or refugees. Having taught in schools where large numbers of these two groups attended, I was at least aware of the problems they encountered in trying to adjust to a different life in a new country. And though not myself the child of immigrants, my grandparents on the maternal side of the family did immigrate to Canada during the time period under discussion in this thesis. The result, then, is a work which bears, to borrow Professor John Stackhouse's phrase, "for good and for ill, some marks of a 'family history.'" My approach, however, was not to simply chronicle that history, but to look at it analytically and critically. The extent to which I have succeeded in that regard is my responsibility alone, as are the central arguments, ideas, and conclusions of this dissertation.

While acknowledging the preceding, it is incumbent upon me to recognize the contributions that other individuals made to the completion of this work. Without their assistance the culmination of many years of hard work and research would have been even more difficult. First a heartfelt thanks to Professor Harold Troper for all of his advice, comments and suggestions, which only served to make the work more lucid and scholarly. He has in his own way and as we often joked contributed to this thesis on Baptist history. Professor Mark McGowan's comments, suggestions and insights on Roman Catholicism

were extremely helpful, as were the personal insights and experiences of Professor Chris Olsen for whom much of this thesis is also a family odyssey. Chris also laboured far beyond the call of duty to make the final product look “professional” before it went to the bindery. To each of these members of my thesis committee I owe a deep debt of gratitude.

Much of the research for this thesis was completed at the Canadian Baptist Archives, McMaster Divinity College, in Hamilton Ontario. A special debt of appreciation is owed to Dr. Ken Morgan (and his staff) for all the assistance, comments, conversations and suggestions that he offered. Without the accommodations that Ken made to allow for access to archival materials this thesis likely would not have been completed. Thanks, Ken, for all of your assistance. Appreciation is also expressed to the archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, Jarvis Street Baptist Church, The National Archives of Canada, and the Watson Kirkconnell Room, Acadia University, all of whom provided access or materials used in the research and writing of this dissertation.

A word of thanks as well to the members of the Brampton Underwater Hockey Club, who provided me with the necessary “octopush” I needed in times of procrastination to ultimately complete this work and to those of my colleagues in the teaching profession, too numerous to mention here, who also encouraged me to “get the damn thing done.”

Gratitude is also expressed to Ms. Lorraine Cramp and Mrs. Rose Smale who suffered through some of the worst handwriting known to humanity in order to type several of the early draft chapters. Their efforts saved me a great deal of time and made my task of editing and rewriting that much easier.

Finally, the writing of this dissertation and the pursuit of this degree would not have been possible without the love of history and the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of knowledge that my parents, Robert Clarence Smale and Rose Smale, instilled and encouraged me to pursue at a young age. And to the many great teachers of history, under whose tutelage this passion for knowledge was refined, and who in their own small way laid the necessary foundation that allowed for this undertaking to be prosecuted in the first place, I express thanks for the skills and knowledge you helped to nurture. In some small way this thesis represents a debt of appreciation to them for fuelling this love of academia. I only hope that I can instill a similar passion for knowledge and history in my own students. Due to that passion for knowledge, strong, constant, virtuous, and necessary, I dedicate this thesis to my parents.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

"Few national issues have given rise to so many different shades of opinion as has immigration."¹ In recent years, issues surrounding matters of immigration/refugee policy have once again entered the arena of public debate in Canada. The 1993 federal election saw immigration policy emerge as one of the key issues of the campaign with the Reform Party calling for significant reductions in annual targets by more than 50,000.² Since that election, a record number of highly publicized opinion polls have further highlighted a growing concern over immigration.³ The polls reflect an increasing public resentment towards immigrants and refugee claimants. This resentment came to the forefront in the summer of 1999 when several hundred Chinese men, women and children arrived on the west coast of Canada in search of asylum. The arrival of this new "load of boat people" sparked a fierce debate over Canada's so called "open-door" refugee policy, which critics

¹W.B. Hurd, "The Case for a Quota," *Queen's Quarterly*, 36, 1928, 147.

²The Reform Party asserted that the annual figure should be lowered to 150,000 as compared to the Liberal target of 250,000 for 1994 and a 1995 total between 190,000 and 215,000. See Anthony Wilson-Smith, "Debating the Numbers," *Maclean's*, November 7, 1994, 23. The Reform Party further charged that government support for multicultural programs should be scrapped since Canadians should not be "defined, or divided, along racial or ethnic lines." See also Brian Bergman, "Pride and Prejudice," *Maclean's*, November 3, 1994, 34.

³See Brian Bergman, "Pride and Prejudice," *Maclean's*, November 3, 1994; A. Wilson-Smith, "Debating the Numbers," *Maclean's*, November 7, 1994; J. Miller, "Are We More Intolerant? Depends on Who you Ask," *The Toronto Star*, March 22, 1994; Tim Harper, "Yalden Slams Intolerance of Immigrants," *The Toronto Star*, March 22, 1995; Elaine Carey, "Young Immigrants Cite Racism," *The Toronto Star*, June 20, 2000.

charged extends a virtual invitation to illegal migrants. Opponents of Canada's immigration and refugee policies, such as Canadian Alliance Party member Leon Benoit, charged "that Canada is known as a soft touch – where virtually anyone can easily claim refugee status."⁴ Conservative Senator William Kelly contends that the flood of migrants into Canada is out of control. "The Immigration Act," Kelly argues, "has got to be revised because the problem is much larger than anyone wants to admit. The difficulty is every time someone tries to raise the issue, they are accused of being a racist."⁵ Neil Bissoondath, author of *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*, asserts that many people are simply echoing publicly "what they've been thinking in private for a long time."⁶ Former ambassador William Bauer, who once served as a member of Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board from 1990 until his resignation in 1994, asserts that abuse of the refugee policy is not only alienating ordinary Canadians, but at the same time is turning the country into a haven for criminals and terrorists. Bauer contends that

[i]t is easy to feel compassion about the illegal Chinese migrants arriving on Canada's shores. The issue here, however, is not compassion, but criminality. A rusty freighter load of 131 migrants netted some fat-cat gangster about \$7 million . . . who find human trafficking an extremely profitable adjunct to their drug smuggling and a lot safer. The issue is also corruption of a noble concept – political asylum. The migrants will claim to be refugees because the criminal syndicates organizing their trips told them that this is how they can gain entry into Canada . . . receive money and accommodation, and obtain publicly paid legal assistance. Some Canadians argue that the latest arrivals deserve sympathy and lenient treatment, because they are fleeing tough economic conditions. This is commendable, perhaps, but silly. Logically, the same could apply to 100 million unemployed Chinese who are worse off than these

⁴See Tom Fennell, "Canada's Open Door," *Maclean's*, August 23, 1999, 13.

⁵As cited in Fennell, "Canada's Open Door," 17.

⁶As cited in Brian Bergman, "Pride and Prejudice," *Maclean's*, November 7, 1994, 32.

migrants from Fujian province . . . Canadians are a generous and compassionate people, and are rightly proud of their record of welcoming the persecuted of the world during the past 50 years. Their pride could, however, turn to bitterness if this cynical abuse of their good intentions is allowed to continue.⁷

The arrival of these ships was, therefore, seen by some as a “menace” and a severe threat to national security mandating swift action on the part of the courts and Parliament in defence of Canadians’ collective interest to defend their interests against these illegal aliens. Historian Irving Abella, on the other hand, admonishes Canadians to “get a grip,” arguing that this handful of asylum-seekers from China are no threat to Canada. He contends that Canadians are not the “suckers” that some critics have claimed. Abella notes,

[i]n an average year, Canada accepts 25,000 refugees. And in a nation whose population is approaching 30 million, that is hardly excessive, especially compared with some European countries that have absorbed hundreds of thousands. In a world overflowing with millions of refugees, Canada’s contribution is certainly not exorbitant.⁸

Abella argues that it is clear that Canada’s immigration and refugee laws need to be reviewed and new legislation introduced. But what is also clear, he points out, is that many Canadians have a “very jaundiced view of our refugee policy.”⁹ Unfortunately, many Canadians have begun to imbue immigration policy and the administration of that policy with a series of responsibilities that are beyond its scope. National security is not the unique objective of immigration policy, nor do violations of the Immigration Act or its regulations constitute the most serious or most threatening criminal activities facing the

⁷William Bauer, “A Time for Tough Measures,” *Maclean’s*, August 23, 1999, 19.

⁸Irving Abella, “Let’s Get a Grip,” *Maclean’s*, August 23, 1999, 20.

⁹The arrival in 1986 of 155 Sri Lankans off the coast of Newfoundland, and 174 Sikhs from India in 1987 prompted a similar “frenzy of rhetoric” in which Parliament was recalled in order to deal with a matter of “grave national importance.”

nation. Furthermore, associating problems of crime, poverty or unemployment solely with immigration is pure nonsense. Canada's need for open and expansive immigration is indicated by the demographic challenges facing the nation. According to Statistics Canada the birth rate has steadily declined for the past twenty years. Clearly, it is in the interest of Canada to shift the debate to a much broader discussion on how the nation can actualize its potential as a modern, pluralist country with the necessary economic and intellectual scope, and at the same time, ensure that no victims of persecution are turned away from the nation's shores.¹⁰ As Irving Abella maintains,

Canada is a law-abiding nation, and until the laws are changed, everyone arriving here – no matter how they arrived – has a right to a hearing . . . Canada must balance its humanitarian commitment to real refugees against the challenge to our system by ruthless smuggling rings. Let's punish the smuggler, not the sanctuary-seeker. To do anything else would be un-Canadian.¹¹

This debate is not without precedent and these Chinese were not the first arrivals who found a less-than-ready welcome. Less than a century ago, Canadians confronted what some charged was an influx of a "hungry, poverty-stricken, skin-clad population of wild-eyed Asiatics and Eastern Europeans" who posed a serious threat to the nation. In 1929 one commentator remarked,

[t]he admission of any race that cannot blend satisfactorily is a menace, and may become an increasing menace both socially and politically in the future.

¹⁰Since the arrival of almost 600 migrants off the West Coast of Canada in 1999, so far 113 have been returned to China. More than 300 refugee claims were rejected thus far, and about fifty migrants are awaiting travel documents in order to be deported back to China. See Dene Moore, "90 Illegal Migrants Deported to China," *The Toronto Star*, May 11, 2000, A11. See also Tom Fennell and Sheng Xue, "The Smugglers' Slaves," *Maclean's*, December 11, 2000, 14-19; Paul Mooney, "The Impossible Dream," *Maclean's*, December 11, 2000, 20-21.

¹¹Abella, "Let's Get a Grip," 20.

Race problems in Canada are sufficiently serious at the present without increasing them unnecessarily.¹²

Many Canadians of the day saw the continued influx of “foreign hordes” as a serious threat to their political, social and economic institutions and way of life. They charged that the foreign peril – the coloured races – would “submerge the white races just as the dusky sons of the Arabian deserts and the savage hordes of Tartary submerged the Roman Empire.”¹³ The effect of the growing preponderance of foreign groups within society was feared, therefore, not only because it would lead to a mixing of the races, which for some was “biological suicide,” but also because these foreign groups failed in other respects to measure up with the basic stock of the country. “Clearly, then, the Southeastern and Central Europeans as a class are our least desirable immigrants, not only from the stand point of intermarriage and educational status, but from that of obedience to the laws of our land.”¹⁴

In other words, these groups were feared by some as intellectually and biologically inferior, more prone to deviant, subversive and criminal behaviour, largely unassimilable, advocates of alien ideals and philosophies and more likely to become a financial burden upon the state. As such, both public opinion and policy accepted that “national interest and social harmony required selective admission of immigrants on an ethnically based sliding scale of desirability.”¹⁵ As a result, both the government and many influential

¹²W.A. Carrothers, “The Immigration Problem in Canada,” *Queen’s Quarterly*, 36, 1929, 521.

¹³Sir Donald Mann, as cited in W.B. Hurd, “The Case for a Quota,” *Queen’s Quarterly*, 36, 1928, 147.

¹⁴Hurd, “The Case for a Quota,” 156. See also H. F. Angus, “Underprivileged Canadians,” *Queen’s Quarterly*, 38, 1931, 455-456.

¹⁵Zlata Godler, “Doctors and the New Immigrants,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 9, 1977, 7.

mainstream Canadians agreed that admission preference should be given to settlers from the United Kingdom, the United States and northwestern Europe. Since these groups were largely Protestant and *white*, public sentiment deemed them “far superior in quality to foreigners – central, southern and Europeans, Jews, Orientals [and] Blacks.”¹⁶

The Protestant churches of the nation also entered this debate on immigration policy. The presence of large numbers of “undesirable immigrants,” the vast majority non-Protestant, in the nation’s urban centers left many reforming clergy uneasy. At first the churches sought to head off this influx by opposing immigration and upholding the virtue of rural life. When this failed, they set out energetically to establish their presence within the mushrooming immigrant communities sending missionaries to convert them if possible, but more urgently to convince them to adopt the virtues of “Solid Canadian Ways.” Like the majority of “native” Canadians, church clergy believed that if immigrants were going to be admitted to Canada, the country’s welfare depended upon the rapid assimilation of immigrants, especially all of those non-Protestant “foreigners” from southern and eastern Europe.

However, such assimilation was not a “natural and inevitable process.” Along with educators, public health officials and other government agencies, Protestant clergy believed they were called to assist and guide the newcomers. The issue of what to do with

¹⁶Godler, “Doctors and the New Immigrants,” 7; See also Carrothers, “The Immigration Problem in Canada,” *Queen’s Quarterly*, 36, 1929, 519. It would be interesting to know if those groups who were subjected to such discriminatory attitudes and actions, in the past, are among the outspoken critics of current immigrants/refugees, labelling them with the same stereotypical behaviour and attitudes that their own forefathers were similarly indicted. See for example the comments of Gordon Chong, a Toronto city councillor in 1997 with respect to Gypsies and the negative effect he charged they would have on the city. Jack Lakey, “Councillor Apologies For Remarks On Refugees,” *The Toronto Star*, September 3, 1997, A6; Lisa Cherniak, “Xenophobia Alive and Well in World’s Best Country,” *The Toronto Star*, August 30, 1997, B3.

large numbers of immigrants was a major challenge for both conservative (traditionalists) and progressive clergy alike. Religious concerns, thus, became closely tied to broader cultural issues, especially the fear that “foreigners,” with their foreign ways, would corrupt national institutions and traditions. Religious assumptions, therefore, reinforced political insecurities, since so many of the immigrants were Catholic and thus, members of a church characterized by Protestants as autocratic, hierarchical, and undemocratic. Others were targeted for home mission work because of their ‘misguided’ form of Protestantism. This was the case with Russian Mennonites, whom Baptists regarded as “fallen-away or gone-astray Baptists.”

Often it is commonplace to link such attitudes and concerns surrounding this nationalist vision with conservative religious forces. Certainly T.T. Shields, the fundamentalist Baptist leader, “subscribed to the powerful idea of ‘His Dominion.’”¹⁷ as did other conservative Protestant (and Baptist) leaders. Yet, progressives were also among the chief proponents of assimilation. Caught up in the enthusiasm of the “social gospel,” these progressive Protestant churchmen and women also combined xenophobic social fears and anti-Catholic bigotry in their efforts to proselytize in the cities. Since the majority of immigrants found their way to the cities, evangelizing them often became linked to the “new evangelism” of the social gossellers and their efforts to serve society.¹⁸ Conservative Evangelicals may have stressed personal salvation, while liberal Evangelicals emphasized

¹⁷Robert A. Wright, “The Canadian Protestant Tradition 1914-1945,” *The Canadian Protestant Experience 1760-1990* (Burlington: Welch Publishing Company, 1990), 151.

¹⁸P. Airhart, “Ordering A New Nation and Reordering Protestantism 1867-1914,” *The Canadian Protestant Experience 1760-1990* (Burlington: Welch Publishing Company, 1990), 130.

the redemption of society at large, but both parties agreed Canada ought to be fashioned into “God’s Dominion” – a Protestant Christian and preferably British nation from sea to sea.¹⁹

As Richard Allen argues in *The Social Passion*, the social gospel called for a functional and aggressive form of Christianity in which servants of Christ would “find the meaning of their lives in seeking to realize the Kingdom of God in the very fabric of society.”²⁰ The social gospel made Canadian social reform movements “part of a widespread attempt in Europe and North America to revise and develop Christian social insights and to apply them to the emerging forms of a collective society.”²¹ In this context, the social gospel did not arise fundamentally as a response to the catastrophic changes of the period, though Allen notes that slums and immigration “prompted the larger part of the institutional response of the social gospel.” Rather, it was an intellectual expression of contemporary ideas in vogue at the time.²² Protestant churches that were caught up in the enthusiasm of the social gospel were major players in the social reform movements of the period. Urbanization, industrialization and immigration were the three large scale problems that warranted action from within the churches. As N.K. Clifford noted,

[t]he inner dynamics of Protestantism in Canada during the first two thirds of the century following Confederation was provided by a vision of the nation as ‘His Dominion.’ This Canadian version of the Kingdom of God had significant nationalistic and millennial overtones, and sufficient symbolic power to

¹⁹Wright, “The Canadian Protestant Tradition,” 151.

²⁰Richard Allen, *The Social Passion* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 4.

²¹Allen, *The Social Passion*, 3-4.

²²Allen, *The Social Passion*, 11.

provide the basis for the formation of a broad Protestant consensus and coalition . . . The vision of Canada as 'His Dominion' implied a homogeneous population which shared a heritage of political democracy and evangelical Protestant Christianity.²³

In their determination to ensure that Canada became "His Dominion" from "sea to sea," many Protestant church leaders, guided by a sense of national righteousness, set out to engage these three social phenomena, which they saw as a threat not only to the denominational and national strength of the nation, but also to the deep-seated rural values they held so dear. As John Stark warned the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, "[a]ll that is choicest and best in our national life is trembling in the balance."²⁴

However, while the initial reaction of the churches to what they regarded as a threat to the religious and civil order was one of concern and alarm, it also became apparent that such changes afforded new opportunities for service in establishing the "Kingdom of God" from "sea to sea." In this regard, the vision of "His Dominion" provided Protestant church leadership with both an ideological and theological framework from which to launch a campaign of moral and spiritual activism against these evils, that seemed poised to undermine the best of Canadian identity. As N.K. Clifford asserted,

[t]he Protestant reaction to these newcomers reveals how the vision of Canada as 'His Dominion' helped not only to define the threat of immigration, but also to direct their response into a crusade to Canadianize the immigrants by Christianizing them into conformity with the ideal and standards of Canadian white Anglo-Saxon Protestants.²⁵

²³N.K. Clifford, "A Vision in Crisis," *Religion and Culture in Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1977), 24.

²⁴Baptist Yearbook, 1900, 47.

²⁵Clifford, "A Vision in Crisis," 24.

Their critical challenge was the social assimilation of immigrants, to which the majority of this treatise will focus its attention, although an understanding of this issue cannot be properly addressed without taking into account its interrelationship with urbanization and industrialization. Since many of the new city dwellers and industrial workforce were immigrants, the problems of urbanism and industrialism and assimilation coalesced as one. The task confronting the churches was indeed colossal, for in the west and Ontario, the population grew at a rate previously unprecedented in either Canada or the United States. Protestant denominations felt obligated to reach out to this "wave of newcomers" with missionary zeal. A Methodist missionary publication of 1908 aptly summarizes Protestant denominational attitudes towards immigrants: "It is our duty to meet them with the open Bible and to instill into their minds the principles and ideals of Anglo-Saxon civilization."²⁶

Since increasing numbers of these immigrant newcomers neither shared a heritage of political democracy or evangelical Protestant Christianity, Protestants saw the immigrant presence as a potentially ominous threat to the realization of their vision for the nation.²⁷ Thus, in addition to demanding conformity to the Protestant way of life, some also advocated restrictions on immigrant admission into Canada. J.S. Woodsworth, a leading Methodist clergyman, judged the foreign presence to be "a serious menace to our

²⁶J.S. Woodsworth, *Strangers Within Our Gates* (Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, rpt. 1972), XVIII.

²⁷As W. Burton Hurd noted "by 1921 the South-eastern and Central Europeans out-numbered the North-western Europeans by two and a half times . . . Official figures for 1927-28 show that 30.4% of all immigrants entering Canada in that year were of South-eastern and Central European origin compared with 33.6% of British derivation, 19.1% North-western Europeans and 16.5% from the United States." Hurd, "The Case for a Quota," 148.

Western Civilization." All major Protestant denominations of this period housed similar nativist reactions to those immigrant groups whom they judged a threat to their vision of Canada as "His Dominion." While some extremists advocated exclusion of these groups, and a radical fringe pressed for massive deportation, especially after World War One, the majority of Protestants were confident of their ability to make these newcomers embrace the values and standards of Anglo-Saxon Protestantism. For many of these Protestants, being Canadian and Protestant were one in the same. To them it seemed impossible that one could be a 'real' Canadian and not be Protestant [French Canada aside]. This inevitably led to a home mission crusade designed to Canadianize the immigrants by Christianizing them. The churches, therefore, felt it their God-given duty to implant Canadian ideals of citizenship. One Baptist spokesperson believed that the "'Open Bible' approach would prepare people for citizenship by weaning them away from the superstition and extravagant rites that characterized many Old World religions."²⁸ In this regard, 'Canadianism' became a favourite term in Protestant circles, "imply[ing] both a loyalty to British institutions and conformity to Victorian moral standards."²⁹ Thus, in their efforts to both evangelize and Canadianize, which were one and the same to them, Protestant church leaders believed they were acting in the best interests of the nation and the immigrant population.

Until quite recently, there has been very little historiographical interest in either Canadian church history or the role of religion in shaping the development of Canada.

²⁸See Lillian Petroff, "Macedonians: From Village to City," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 9, 1977, 30.

²⁹J.W. Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era* (Burlington: Welch Publishing Company, 1988), 96.

H.H. Walsh in his article, "The Challenge of Canadian Church History to Historians,"³⁰ asserted that the study of religion in Canada was one of the most neglected phases of Canadian history. According to Professor J.W. Grant, this defect was due to a lack of maturity on the part of scholars in Canada who failed to recognize both the magnitude and the relevance of religious studies. As sociologist S.D. Clark asserted in his seminal work, *Church and Sect in Canada*, there are few countries in the Western world in which religion has exerted as great an influence on the development of community as that in Canada. As Clark noted:

The religious development of Canada throughout the period 1760 to the present day offers a convincing demonstration of the importance of the religious interest in securing a sense of social solidarity, of society. The religious institution as an integral part of the whole institutional complex of the community served as one of the means of entering into social relationships and of becoming a part of a recognized group life.³¹

Grant further argued that a distinctively Canadian approach to church history needed to be developed.³² Thus, while academic study of Canadian church history was slow to develop and gain acceptance, T.R. Millman reminded his readers that "... the story of churches and churchmen is part of the whole Canadian story, and that Canadian history cannot be fully or accurately represented without giving to the churches a larger place than they have been accorded hitherto."³³

³⁰H.H. Walsh, "The Challenge of Canadian Church History to Historians," *CJT*, July 1959, 162, 169.

³¹S.D. Clark, *Church and Sect in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948), 433.

³²See J.W. Grant, "Asking Questions of the Canadian Past," *CJT*, Vol. 1, No. 2, July 1955, 100.

³³T.R. Millman, "Study of Canadian Church History," *CJT*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April, 1955, 28.

Thanks largely to the efforts of such eminent scholars as J.S. Moir, H.H. Walsh, J. W. Grant, S.D. Clark, S. Crysdale, Richard Allan, and George Rawlyk, the process of assessing the role churches (and religion) played in the development of Canadian society was initiated. Pursuant to the work begun by these scholars, this treatise examines a largely unknown aspect of this historical record, namely, the role Protestant churches played in addressing matters of immigration/refugee policy in the years from 1880 to 1945.

Generally, Canadian social and political historians have tended to ignore the responses of churches to issues of nativism, immigration, and refugee policy, and racial ideology. Such an omission "although typical of Canadian historiography, should be surprising." Mark Noll, in his *History of Christianity in United States and Canada*, asserts that Canada has "despite a national history without the ideology of a special divine blessing . . . an even better objective argument for being considered a 'Christian nation' than does the United States" arguably until the end of the Second World War.³⁴ Churches were among the largest and most pervasive institutions in Canada and were extremely influential in shaping not only cultural but also social reform and government policy in English as well as French Canada. Consequently, their attitudes and reactions to immigration and refugee policy merits careful consideration. Some critical work has already been carried out amongst several denominations (Methodist, Anglicans, and Presbyterians) in this area. Canadian Baptists, have largely been ignored. While denominational studies such as C.J. Cameron's *Foreigners or Canadians?* (1913) and C.C. McLaurin's *Pioneering in Western Canada: A Story of the Baptists* (1939) exist, they are

³⁴Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992), 546.

essentially denominational tracts, dated and lacking critical reflection. The only three critical studies dealing with Baptist work amongst immigrants are essentially introductory in nature. They consist of Jarold K. Zeman's introductory essay "They Speak in Other Tongues: Witness Amongst Immigrants," David T. Priestley's essay "The Effect of Baptist 'Home Mission' among Alberta German Immigrants" and a chapter in J.B. Scott's dissertation on "Responding to the Social Crisis: The Baptist Union of Western Canada and Social Christianity 1908-1922."³⁵

This lack of critical scholarship is not surprising, even though the Baptist church has been regarded as a mainline Protestant denomination for several generations. Prominent Baptists such as Tommy Douglas, Stanley Knowles, John Diefenbaker and many others, have made important contributions to the development of the nation. But the size of the denomination (ca. 200,000 members), one of the smallest in Canada, has been a contributing factor.

Two other reasons for this neglect are perhaps more significant. The first has to do with church ecclesiology. Since each local assembly is independent and autonomous, there is no overarching Baptist "church" to speak of in Canada. At various times, some of these independent churches have united to form loosely associated denominations, such as The Baptists Convention of Ontario and Quebec or The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada. Nevertheless, a multiplicity of churches all carrying the name

³⁵J.K. Zeman, "They Speak In Other Tongues: Witness Among the Immigrants," *Baptist in Canada: Search for Identity Amidst Diversity*, (Burlington: G.R. Welch Co., 1988), 67-86; David T. Priestley, "The Effect of Baptist 'Home Mission' among Alberta's German Immigrants," *Memory and Hope: Strands of Canadian Baptist History* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press 1996), 55-68; J.B. Scott, *Responding to the Social Crisis: The Baptist Union of Western Canada and Social Christianity, 1908-1922*, unpublished Ph.D., dissertation, University of Ottawa, 1989.

“Baptist” confound critical study. Furthermore, source material is widely dispersed rather than concentrated. Thus, it’s not surprising that no definitive history of Baptists in Canada has yet been written.³⁶

Secondly, and perhaps more important is the traditional anti-academic stance adopted by many Baptist churches, largely in response to the modernist/fundamentalist controversy of the 1920s. The legacy of this schism, especially among the more conservative churches, has been an inherent distrust of academia. Consequently, until very recently, there has been very little critical scholarship on Canadian Baptist themes outside the domain of doctrine and theology (the area which fostered this schism in the first place).³⁷

A number of recent symposiums like the “Conference on the Believers’ Church” held in Winnipeg in 1978, the 1979 Acadia University Conference on “Baptist in Canada,” McMaster’s “Canadian Baptist History and Polity Conference” (1982) and “Celebrating the Canadian Baptist Heritage” (1984), the 1987 “Baptist Heritage Conference” at Acadia University, plus the formation of the Canadian Baptist Historical Society, which presently

³⁶At present the only comprehensive survey of Baptists in Canada is Harry A. Renfree’s *Heritage and Horizon: The Baptist Story in Canada* (Mississauga: Canadian Baptist Federation, 1988).

³⁷Professor Kenneth R. Davis notes that “[s]ince Canadian evangelical Baptist denominations have not been very historically-minded, most of the records of even major past events are limited to tersely recorded minutes totally lacking in commentary . . . The few written histories are either brief surveys or irenic popularizations.” See Kenneth R. Davis, “The Struggle for a United Evangelical Baptist Fellowship, 1953-1965,” *Baptists in Canada* (Burlington: G.R. Welch Company Limited, 1980), 237. The issue of academic freedom was very much at the heart of the McMaster University controversy in the 1920s and as W. Gordon Carder remarked: “The result of this tragic conflict and schism of the 1920s is still very much in the bloodstream of Canadian Baptists.” I recall my own experiences at Northwest Baptist Theological Seminary in the 1980s, when the college was moving in the direction of affiliating with Trinity Western University. Several pastors and a few professors harkened back to the 1920s and saw this affiliation as the beginning of liberals inroads into not only the Seminary, but the churches as well.

exists as an organization only within the province of Ontario,³⁸ would tend to indicate that a new age of critical reflection has emerged in the area of Baptist historiography. As historian John Stackhouse notes, perhaps no Protestants in Canada since 1970 have been as busy in the examination of their history as were those of the Canadian Baptist Federation and even the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches, which though devoting less attention to history, has also produced some useful work.³⁹

Thus, a critical analysis of Canadian Baptist responses to immigration/refugee policy in the years from the 1880 to 1945 is most definitely warranted. It is a theme too long neglected in the annals of Canadian church history and one which must be undertaken in order to fully comprehend how Protestant churches in this period and Baptists in particular responded to major social changes, in part, brought on by mass immigration.

Invariably, the response and action of the church leaders during this period were linked to a broader issue of national identity "an issue with which Canadian religious communities have had to wrestle ever since the colonies of British North America showed promise of developing into a nation or nations."⁴⁰ John W. Grant noted, however, that when Stewart Wallace wrote his pioneer work, *The Growth of Canadian National Feeling*, he did not find it necessary to outline the contribution of churches to the nation-building

³⁸At their annual meeting in May 2000, held at McMaster Divinity College, the Baptist Historical Society set as one of its goals for the coming year the expansion of the society into a truly national academic society committed to the study and promotion of Baptist history both in Canada and abroad.

³⁹J.W. Stackhouse, "The Protestant Experience in Canada since 1945," *The Canadian Protestant Experience 1760-1990* (Burlington: Welch Publishing Company, 1990), 245-246.

⁴⁰J.W. Grant, "Religion and the Quest for a National Identity: The Background in Canadian History," *Religion and Culture in Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1977), 8.

debate. Nor, for that matter, did others who followed his work.⁴¹ Consequently, the contribution of the churches to the development of a distinctively Canadian awareness and the cultivation of a specifically Canadian consciousness has generally been viewed as “somewhat peripheral to the interests of the churches.”⁴² However, “[i]f the churches have occupied themselves only fitfully with the quest for a Canadian *identity*, they have been deeply engaged from the beginning in an attempt to create a Canadian *character*. Their interest has been less in the existence of Canada than in its essence, their concern not so much *that* Canada should be as *what* it should be.”⁴³ As one Baptist publication of the era recorded:

[O]n our Baptist churches in Canada rests a challenging responsibility for the building of the Canadian character. Baptist churches are Christian democracies, and, in the opinion of many, the nearest approach to Christian democracies which are possible. Christian democracies alone can lead the world to its highest and best efforts. Our responsibility, then, as Canadian Baptist churches, for our own Canada, for Canada as part of the Empire, and for Canada as part of the world, is as clear as daylight. If we are as true to our responsibility as our predecessors have been, we shall not fail.⁴⁴

As such, the missionary impulse of Protestant church leaders at home (as real as abroad)⁴⁵ were influential in the shaping of a Canadian character. The turn of the century

⁴¹Grant, “Religion and the Quest for a National Identity,” 8.

⁴²Grant, “Religion and the Quest for a National Identity,” 8.

⁴³Grant, “Religion and the Quest for National Identity,” 8-9.

⁴⁴E.A. Hardy, “Canada’s Historical Background,” in *From Sea to Sea: A Study in Home Missions* (Toronto: Publications Committee of the Women’s Baptist Missionary Society of Ontario West, 1940), 6.

⁴⁵For an analysis of Protestant foreign missions during this period see Rosemary R. Gagan, *A Sensitive Independence – Canadian Methodist Women Missionaries in Canada and the Orient 1881-1925* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1992), 177ff., which deals with attitudes to immigrants. See also Ruth Compton Brouwer, *New Women for God: Canadian Presbyterian Women and Indian Missions, 1876-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 22ff., which notes that Presbyterians began their

infatuation of Protestant church leaders with the manifest destiny of the Anglo-Saxon people lead inevitably to a crusade for the Christianization of national life in which all barriers to the establishment of Christ's Kingdom in Canada had to be addressed. As Jennie M. Pearce, a Canadian Baptist missionary, remarked:

'And He shall have Dominion also from sea to sea and from the River unto the ends of the earth.' And then Canada shall have fulfilled her 'manifest destiny.'⁴⁶

The churches, as such, established a programme the goal of which was the creation of a national character. Massive immigration was merely one of many threats or challenges to a way of living and thinking churches held as Christians and Canadians. The Protestant churches, thus, adopted a theology of tribalism, which equated their own conception of piety with patriotism. Ultimately, their vision proved to be an inadequate framework for thought and action in an emerging pluralistic society. However, without an understanding of its symbolic and formative power it is difficult to begin to assess the nature of Protestant aspirations and their impact upon Canadian society. Surely a church which remains narrowly captive to the culture of the mainstream cannot address and welcome the whole human family. History would seem to reflect that whenever Christians attempt to promote a Christian culture, distinction between church and state disappears. The church, married to notions of state, therefore, loses its independent existence and its critical stance as will become clear later in this dissertation.

mission work first overseas and only later turned their attention to home mission, unlike the Methodists and the Anglicans. See also Alvyn J. Austin, *Saving China: Canadian Missionaries in the Middle Kingdom 1888-1959* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986).

⁴⁶J.M. Pearce, "From Ontario West," in *From Sea to Sea*, 262.

Immigration remains an emotionally divisive topic. Critical examination suggests that while religious considerations may no longer loom large to understanding contemporary attitudes, opposition to immigration is largely tied to issues of national *character* – what Canada should be. But, I would argue, public attitudes to immigration, today as in the past, are not totally divorced from parochial religious views, and may explain why Baptist churches today are still perplexed about how to deal with the realities of both immigration and ethnic pluralism.⁴⁷

This study involves the analysis of how Canadian Baptists (the Ontario/Quebec Convention) addressed issues related to immigration/refugee policy in the years from 1880 to 1945. Like other Protestant denominations, Canadian Baptists believed they had a unique calling, a role to play in shaping the nation in these formative years into “His Dominion.” This vision expressed itself in a determination to establish the Kingdom of God in the new country. But the Baptists response was to some degree atypical to those of other Protestants. The Baptists vision of Canada as “His Dominion” found practical expression in a unique set of Baptist missionary activities, reform movements, voluntary societies, educational programs, and institutions. In this manner, Canadian Baptists sought to socialize immigrants into the mainstream of Canadian life to the extent they deemed that was possible. Only by Christianizing the “foreign element” could they be

⁴⁷This is especially true given the emergence of religion-based political agendas that have become part of the Canadian political landscape. William Walker, Ottawa Bureau Chief for *The Toronto Star* writes: “Jesus is reasserting his influence in Canadian politics but, as with all things political, there is a difference of opinion about what he wants done . . . [n]ot since World War II, when historians say Canada shrugged off Victorian-era religiosity and entered what is now considered a post-Christian era, has there been so much renewed interaction between religion and politics.” William Walker, “In God’s Hands,” *The Toronto Star*, August 5, 2000, K1, K4.

Canadianized and thereby, the essence of an Anglo-Saxon Protestant Dominion be not only preserved but expanded. As a result, throughout this period Baptists exhibited a staunch anti-Catholic bent bordering on outright bigotry, since they believed the influx of large numbers of Catholic immigrants posed the greatest single threat to the preservation of this Anglo-Saxon Protestant Dominion. Thus, for most Baptists of the period, religion was deemed more important in assessing immigrants ability to be assimilated than the relation of the immigrants ethnic origin to Anglo-Saxon culture.

It is not the purpose of this dissertation to record the history of individual Baptist churches in Canada nor provide a comprehensive review of all major efforts of Baptist outreach among immigrants. The record of ethnic churches now deposited in the Canadian Baptist Archives at McMaster University are so few and fragmentary that the preserved record is essentially useless for any comprehensive treatment of Baptist outreach to ethnic communities. For this reason, this thesis will focus its analysis upon five principle Baptist publications: *The Baptist Yearbook*, *The Canadian Baptist*, *The Baptist Link and Visitor*, *The Gospel Witness*, and *The Western Baptist*,⁴⁸ the collective published voice of Baptists in Canada, in order to ascertain how Canadian Baptists responded to the vision of "His Dominion." I wish to focus attention on Baptist identity, history, theology, and mission which shaped the Baptist responses to immigrants and refugees from the years 1880 to 1945. At a time when many Baptists are sympathetic, if not inclined to support the agenda

⁴⁸*The Western Baptist* is used to a less significant degree in this study due to the dissertation's focus on Baptists in Ontario and Quebec. It has nevertheless been consulted and cited at times because of the mission work carried out and sponsored by Baptists from Ontario and Quebec in the Northwest during this period. The publications of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces have generally not been consulted due to the relative small numbers of immigrants who settled in this region during the period under review in this study.

of the right on matters related to immigration and refugee policy, a critical analysis of the past may also shed insight on some of the hidden motives for contemporary responses and their underlying appeal.

Historically, Baptists were radicals having originated within the sacrifices and persecutions of the Radical Reformation. As a result, Baptists reject the medieval notion that a monolithic culture was prerequisite for social stability, as well as political and theological integrity. Baptists, as such, were pluralists socially, politically and religiously. But, eventually Baptists became identified with the cultural, political, and economic establishment. In the process they too became promoters of a monolithic culture under the guise of "Canadianization." Today, new forms of monolithic pressure plague the Canadian scene. In this way do Baptists merely voice their defense of diversity and liberty while adopting a pattern of inaction and irresponsibility relative to much of the Gospel, as they have done in the recent past? It seems that Baptists need a renewed identification with their historical roots – a recommitment to the elements of radicalism that produced them. Contemporary Canada calls upon Baptists once again not only to express their commitment to pluralism, diversity, self-determination, individualism, and the appreciation for the cultural values of others, but to lead the way in the struggle to ensure the preservation of such values. Traditionally, Baptists had resisted Protestant monolithic uniformity as much as they resisted Catholic monolithic uniformity. However, in the years 1880 to 1945, that vision was blurred as Baptists, like their Protestant counterparts, sought to transform the nation into "His Dominion." Their distinctive ecclesiology should have impinged directly upon the notion of fostering a uniform

Canadian national identity. However, when combined with their identity as evangelicals, their anti-Catholic sentiments, their predominant post-millennial eschatology, “practical Christianity,” and a loss of their own historic experience, Baptists strove instead with fervent zeal to create a monolithic culture – an Anglo-Saxon Protestant Canada.

Chapter 2

The Historical and Theological Impetus for Baptist Evangelization of Immigrants

Baptist history and theology played a critical role in shaping churches' attitudes and responses to immigrant/refugee questions in the years 1880-1945. After all, history and theology shaped Baptist identity – it defined who they were and what they believed. But more than that, history and theology defined Baptist mission – how they perceived their role in establishing the Kingdom of God and of relating to and dealing with society at large. Consequently, when large numbers of non-Protestant immigrants began arriving on Canadian soil in the latter part of the nineteenth century, Baptists' reactions to this phenomenon were not forged in a social or political vacuum. They reflected an inherent sense of Baptist identity and mission.

This chapter does not present a comprehensive survey of Baptist history or theology. Instead it examines those aspects of this history and theology that were critical in shaping the attitudes and responses of Canadian Baptists to immigration/refugee questions in the years 1880-1945. In the final analysis, the behaviour and attitudes of any religious group cannot be properly understood or accessed without an understanding of the group's own experience and beliefs – and this is certainly no less true when applied to Baptists.

In 1914, J.L. Gilmour, a prominent Baptist leader of the time, offered an illuminating description of Baptist life and faith. It provides a vivid insight into Canadian Baptists sense

of identity and mission at the turn of the century. Gilmour noted that Baptist doctrine and procedure were not rooted in creeds, but grounded solely in Biblical teaching and practice. Baptists stressed the autonomy of the local church, insisted upon “credible evidence of regeneration as a prerequisite to church membership,” and held that the only Scriptural mode of baptism was by immersion. Ordinances, such as baptism and the Lord’s Supper were not sacraments, Baptists maintain, but rather “outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace,” which can embody only “those who have intelligently and personally received it.” Separation of church and state, a cornerstone of Baptist distinctives from the outset, nurtured support for the principles of a “free church in a free state,” liberty of conscience, and “duties of loyalty and good citizenship.” Baptists are opposed therefore to “state support for religious work” and the establishment of any one religious group to the exclusion of others. In the area of polity, Baptists maintain that there are two kinds of church officers, pastors and deacons, and hold to “independence and voluntarism, so that any encroachment on the autonomy of the individual church is met with prompt and decisive opposition.”¹

Dr. Gilmour’s description offers a number of perceptions of Baptist identity and mission. Several of his remarks clearly identify Baptists as part of the Evangelical wing of the Protestant tradition. As David Bebbington notes,

there are . . . four qualities that have been the special marks of Evangelical religion: *conversionism*, the belief that lives need to be changed; *activism*, the expression of the gospel in effort; *biblicism*, a particular regard for the Bible; and what may be called *crucicentrism*, a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the

¹J.L. Gilmour, “Baptists in Canada,” *Canada and Its Provinces* (Toronto: Glasgow Brook and Company, Vol. XI, 1914), 346-348.

cross. Together they form a quadrilateral of priorities that is the basis of Evangelicalism.²

Evangelicalism was a movement within the Protestant branch of Christianity and a product of the Enlightenment. Among many theological disagreements with Roman Catholics Evangelicals expressed strong aversion to the sacramentalism and meritorious works teachings of Catholic theology. Historian George Marsden's definition of Evangelicalism closely parallels that of Bebbington. Evangelicals are Christians "who typically emphasize 1) the Reformation doctrine of the final authority of Scripture; 2) the real, historical character of God's saving work recorded in Scripture; 3) eternal salvation only through personal trust in Christ; 4) the importance of evangelism and mission; and 5) the importance of a spiritually transformed life."³

Each of these characteristics defines Canadian Baptists. They would also come to delineate Baptist efforts to "Christianize" the new Canadians. The case can be made that

²David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 2-3: Bebbington offers a fuller description of each of these characteristics on pp. 5-17. Historian Richard Loughheed notes that while these same terms also exist in Catholicism, "evangelical conflict with Rome increased the gulf until these marks came to be understood as distinctly evangelical." See Richard Loughheed, "Anti-Catholicism among French Protestants," *Historical Papers 1995: Canadian Society of Church History*, 162-163.

³George Marsden, "Introduction," *Evangelicalism and Modern America* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984), ix-x. See also Michael Gauvreau discussion of Evangelicalism in "Protestantism Transformed: Personal Piety and Evangelical Social Vision, 1815-1867," in G.A. Rawlyk (ed.) *The Canadian Protestant Experience, 1760-1990* (Burlington: Welch Publishing Company, 1990), 50-57. David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 2-3: Bebbington offers a fuller description of each of these characteristics on pp. 5-17. Historian Richard Loughheed notes that while these same terms also exist in Catholicism, "evangelical conflict with Rome increased the gulf until these marks came to be understood as distinctly evangelical." See Richard Loughheed, "Anti-Catholicism among French Protestants," *Historical Papers 1995: Canadian Society of Church History*, 162-163. George Marsden, "Introduction," *Evangelicalism and Modern America* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984), ix-x. See also Michael Gauvreau discussion of Evangelicalism in "Protestantism Transformed: Personal Piety and Evangelical Social Vision, 1815-1867," in G.A. Rawlyk (ed.) *The Canadian Protestant Experience, 1760-1990* (Burlington: Welch Publishing Company, 1990), 50-57.

for many Baptists, Evangelicals were in fact the only Christians. This is largely predicated on their views of conversion and particularly for Baptists the mode and significance of baptism. Evangelicals would assert that conversion was an act of grace and dismiss the meritorious works doctrine of Catholic theology. Hence their desire was to convert immigrants to their own specific definition of Christianity – namely Evangelicalism. The issue of baptism is a little more complex and views on it were not the same among all Evangelicals as to mode, though they generally rejected that it dispensed grace and cleansed the individual of original sin thereby admitting them into Church fellowship. The exclusivism of Baptists is closely tied to their views of baptism, which in turn is inextricably linked to their ecclesiology. The mode of baptism is the principal sign of their desire to initiate New Testament churches. The first Baptists believed that “believer’s baptism was an important point of departure for the reconstitution of the true and Apostolic Church.” In 1608, John Smyth engaged in a heated debate with fellow Separatists who accepted the mode of baptism of the Church of England. Smyth proposed two arguments from which he dismissed infant baptism and asserted that antichristians are admitted to the true Church following conversion through baptism. Smyth maintained that the sacramental tradition was invalid and the Church of England a false church. He thus concluded that within the Anglican, Puritan and Separatist traditions there was “no true baptism and that a New Testament church could not be organized until New Testament terms of admission were met.” Believer’s baptism became the “adjectival for Baptists of the seventeenth century,” and has historically been one of their key doctrinal

and denominational distinctives, critical in the formation of their sectarianism.⁴ There can be little doubt that Baptists were Evangelicals seeking to evangelize the immigrants.⁵

As part of the Evangelical tradition that began to emerge in the 1730s, Baptist identity in Canada “was forged from its British Baptist and British Free Church antecedents, with little historical awareness of the parallel Anabaptist tradition.”⁶ This meant that Canadian Baptist identity was largely British in orientation. As Robert S. Wilson has noted, this influence became much more significant after 1820, due to the influx of Scottish Baptists and the arrival of some clergy in Canada. Wilson maintains that the major focus of that influence was in the area of education, where increased finance and personnel fostered emphasis upon trained professional clergy. Denominational structures, especially in central Canada, were supported by pastoral leadership that had been largely trained in Britain. Areas of leadership requiring written and oral skills saw British Baptists come “to the fore” as was the case with denominational papers, pamphlets, position papers and books, which all tended to have a largely British tone. Wilson asserts, that “[w]hen the large numbers of British periodicals, sermons and books are added, it is

⁴See William H. Brackney, *The Baptists* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 53-54; See also J. Gordon Jones (Chairman of Editorial Committee), *Our Baptist Fellowship: Our History, Our Faith and Polity, Our Life and Work* (Toronto: Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec Jubilee Editorial Committee, 1939), 3-15 discusses origins, distinctives and persecution.

⁵Evangelicalism refers to a movement that began in the 1730s, while the term evangelical is often used to mean ‘of the Gospel.’ See Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 1.

⁶S.J. Mikolaski, “Identity and Mission,” *Baptists in Canada* (Burlington: G.R. Welch Company Ltd., 1980), 3; See also Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1950), 17-83.

apparent that British Baptists helped to shape Canadian Baptist thinking in theology, missions, church-state relations and denominational development.”⁷

Canadian Baptists’ theology and mission therefore reflected its British antecedents. This resulted in a characterization of Canada that was fundamentally British to its core, and which Canadian Baptists strove to maintain. Hence, their mission to “Canadianize” the immigrant, meant essentially to “Christianize” them with British values and ideals. Baptists views of government, the state, and citizenship, to which Gilmour’s statement makes reference, were all shaped by their religious heritage and experiences in Britain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Their commitment to the principle of religious liberty, freedom of conscience, separation of church and state, and a commitment to the principle of democratic government would all shape the nature of the Baptist mission to immigrants, although not always applied with the same standards and integrity that their forebearers or they themselves advocated.

The Evangelical tradition to which Baptists belong underwent a tremendous rift during the early decades of the twentieth century. The origins of this schism were largely rooted in the emergence of higher criticism, a term applied to the historical-literary analysis of Scripture, as distinguished from lower or textual criticism, which focused on the close study of details such as words.⁸ Higher criticism was essentially a new

⁷Robert S. Wilson, “British Influence in the Nineteenth Century,” *Baptists in Canada*, 36-37; Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, 135-160; E.R. Fitch, *The Baptists in Canada* (Toronto: The Standard Publishing Co., 1911).

⁸Other scholars such as Stewart Cole, Norman Furniss and Walter Ellis place more emphasis on socio-economic factors as the root of this schism. See Walter Ellis, “Gilboa to Ichabold: Social and Religious Factors in the Fundamentalist-Modernist Schisms Among Canadian Baptists, 1895-1934,” *Foundations*, Vol. XX, 1977, 109-126.

hermeneutic that sought to re-interpret traditional Christian beliefs in light of the post-Enlightenment understanding of reality. The intent was to establish the relevance of the gospel in the age of modernity. Baptist theologian Clark Pinnock maintains that these

liberal theologians themselves felt that they were only acting responsibly in the face of changing cultural conditions when they moved in the direction of a fresh re-interpretation of the gospel. They did not see their efforts at all in terms of any betrayal of the truth of God . . . At the same time, one must say, the theological method they were employing involved quite a clean break with the time-honoured assumption that the concepts of Christian revelation were normative categories whose truth was binding upon Christian thinkers.⁹

Those Christian thinkers who supported the more traditional hermeneutic were outraged by this revolutionary new theology charging that the German rationalists had succeeded in overthrowing the authority of the word of God.¹⁰ In time these two schools of thought came to be known as “Modernism” and “Fundamentalism.”

The term “Modernism” was first applied to the neo-scholastic movement which arose during the pontificate of Leo XIII and which was condemned by his successor, Pius X in 1907. Later the term was applied to describe the Broad Church Movement in Britain and following the First World War was commonly applied to refer to “liberal” theology. By the middle of the 1920s liberals made use of the term to refer to their own theological position.¹¹

⁹Clark H. Pinnock, “The Modernist Impulse at McMaster University, 1887-1927,” *Baptists in Canada* (Burlington: G.R. Welch Company Ltd., 1980), 195.

¹⁰For further discussion of the impact of higher criticism on Christian theology from a conservative theological perspective see Bruce Demarest, “The Bible in the Enlightenment Era,” *Challenges to Inerrancy: A Theological Response* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 11-47.

¹¹J.B. Richards, *Baptists in British Columbia: A Struggle to Maintain ‘Sectarianism’* (Vancouver: Northwest Baptist Theological College and Seminary, 1977), 68; D. Clair Davis, “Liberalism: The Challenge of Progress,” *Challenges to Inerrancy: A Theological Response* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 67-88; H.D. McDonald, “The Bible in Twentieth-Century British Theology,” *Challenges to Inerrancy: A Theological*

The word "Fundamentalism" originated in the United States to describe the position of those who sought to defend the orthodox doctrines of the Christian faith, although not all conservative evangelicals liked the term or would refer to themselves as fundamentalists.¹² A series of booklets called *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth* were published between 1910-1915, from which the movement later derived its name.¹³ The *Fundamentals* did not halt the liberal trend, but instead widened the theological gulf within churches by rallying conservative forces against the perceived diversion of this "social gospel" theology. Fundamentalism was "a militant response to religious liberalism, constructed out of the abundant materials supplied by the traditional confessions, including scholastic reformed theology ably propounded at Princeton Theological Seminary before 1929, and notions forwarded out of the more recent millennial reading of the prophetic Scriptures developed in the last half of the nineteenth century."¹⁴ The image of the fundamentalist as upholder of "the traditional interpretation of Christian truth" is a "total misperception." These so-called 'conservatives' were themselves

Response (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 89-119.

¹²J. Gresham Machen, a professor of theology at Princeton University avoided use of the term arguing that it implied Christian subcategories of which liberalism might be one. In Machen's view this was simply not the case; if it was not fundamental then it was not Christian. See William R. Hutchinson, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976), 262. It should be pointed out that not all conservative evangelicals are fundamentalist even though the two groups are often lumped together and commonly referred to interchangeably in most literature.

¹³ In 1920 an American Baptist newspaper editor called for a conference of those ready "to do battle royal for the Fundamentals" and hence the term "fundamentalism" entered standard usage. See Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 182; Canadian contributors to *The Fundamentals* included Canon Dyson Hague and Dr. W. Griffith Thomas, both of Wycliffe College of the University of Toronto, and Rev. John McNicol of Toronto Bible College. See Richards, *Baptists in British Columbia*, 69; Hutchinson, *The Modernist Impulse*, 196-199.

¹⁴Pinnock, "The Modernist Impulse at McMaster University," 195-196.

advancing theological positions that had only recently been formulated. Their views on verbal inspiration and literal biblical interpretation were derived “by the impinging of Romanticism on a section of Evangelical opinion in the early nineteenth century.” Likewise for those conservatives who advocated premillennialism (adventism) the “knot of innovators around [Edward] Irving” and the dispensationalism of J.N. Darby were both products of the nineteenth century. The rift in Evangelicalism therefore appeared “because of different responses to the same cultural mood.”¹⁵

In Canada the earliest open manifestation of this debate between liberal/modernist and conservative/fundamentalist occurred within the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. In 1910, Dr. Elmore Harris, pastor at Walmer Road Baptist Church in Toronto, objected to the higher critical methods being espoused by Professor Issac G. Matthews at McMaster University. The charges led to an investigation, and Matthews was exonerated at the Convention of 1910. In 1919, he resigned from McMaster and was replaced by a conservative. This, however, did not put an end to the charges of modernism being hurled against other McMaster faculty in subsequent years, especially Professor L.H. Marshall who was appointed in 1925.¹⁶

Matthews’ resignation was not without controversy. The October 2, 1919 edition of the *Canadian Baptist*, the official voice of the Convention,¹⁷ carried an unsigned editorial

¹⁵Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 183-184, 73-94, 188-194. For an outline of those liberal practices that greatly aggravated fundamentalists, see B. Ramm, *The Evangelical Heritage: A Study in Historical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), 90-91.

¹⁶Clark Pinnock points out that the modernist impulse was present at McMaster from the very founding of the institution. See C. Pinnock, “The Modernist Impulse at McMaster University,” 197-198.

¹⁷The *Canadian Baptist* was pioneered in October 1854 as a weekly printed and published in Brantford Ontario. The paper moved to Toronto in July 1859 and the following January (1860) changed its name

that may have been the work of Matthews entitled, "The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture." The article assumed a highly liberal stance and expressed admiration for the higher critical methods that British Baptists appeared willing to adopt. On October 16, T.T. Shields, pastor of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, responded in "protest" to the claims of the unsigned editorial in the *Canadian Baptist*, although he had already condemned it from his pulpit on October 5 in the first sermon he preached following his trip to England. In his written reply to the *Canadian Baptist* Shields asked why the editorial had not been published as a signed article representing the opinion of a single individual rather than those of the entire denomination.¹⁸ The *Canadian Baptist* continued its liberal stance when it printed another editorial on October 23, 1919 "citing A.H. Strong and his willingness to recognize certain imperfections in the biblical text." At the "Great Ottawa Convention" of 1919 Shields scored a major victory when the Convention declared "its disapproval of the editorial in *The Canadian Baptist*, of October 2nd" and ordered it to get back into line with the conservative theological stance of the churches.¹⁹ This, however, did not put an end to

from its original *The Christian Messenger*, to its present affiliation. The *Canadian Baptist* became the official organ of the Convention in 1882, although in strictly legal terms not until 1887, when it was gifted by the will of William McMaster. The purpose of the paper was to provide "open, free and frank discussion of questions" that affected the work of the Convention churches "as far as space permitted." Furthermore it was to uphold "through its columns the work of all the Boards, appointed by the Convention, and defend and propagate the New Testament doctrines upon which our churches are founded." *Minutes of the Canadian Baptist 1904-1938*, Annual Report October 1924, Canadian Baptist Archives, Hamilton, Ontario. Circulation figures for the paper are as follows: 1900 – 5,506; 1910 – 6,524; 1916 – 5,819; 1921 – 8,090; 1939 – 4,280. These figures were garnered from Harold U. Trinier's history of the *Canadian Baptist* entitled, *A Century of Service* (Toronto: The Board of Publication of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, n.d.), 126. For discussion of editors and editorial policy see 50-127.

¹⁸See the reprinting of this response in T.T. Shields, *The Plot that Failed* (Toronto: The Gospel Witness, 1937), 131-136.

¹⁹Shields, *The Plot that Failed*, 144-147. The pages of the *Canadian Baptist* throughout the summer of 1919 were filled with "controversial discussion" that prepared the way for all that followed in the history of the Convention. See the *Canadian Baptist*, June 26, 1919; *Canadian Baptist*, July 10, 1919; *Canadian*

the growing schism that was developing within the ranks of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. The liberal theology that the *Canadian Baptist* espoused had in fact been part of its editorial policy in varying degrees for more than forty years. As John Moir has argued “under the editorial guidance of [E.W.] Dadson, [J.E.] Wells and [George R.] Roberts *The [Canadian] Baptist* displayed an awareness of and sympathy for many of the ideas propounded within the Social Gospel movement.” This policy continued under the “supposedly more conservative” W.J. McKay, who espoused a “full Gospel” of individual and social salvation²⁰ and his successor Lewis Kipp who likewise advocated liberal theology in his tenure as editor of the *Canadian Baptist*.²¹ Kipp’s strongly liberal tendencies unleashed the wrath of T.T. Shields and fueled a bitter and heated controversy within the pages of the *Canadian Baptist*.²²

Baptist, July 24, 1919, *Canadian Baptist*, August 14, 1919; *Canadian Baptist*, September 11, 1919; *Canadian Baptist*, October 9, 1919; Shields, *The Plot that Failed*, 99-120.

²⁰J.S. Moir, “*The Canadian Baptist and the Social Gospel Movement, 1879-1914*,” *Baptists in Canada* (Burlington: G.R. Welch Company Ltd., 1980), 147-159.

²¹W.J. McKay died in 1922. C.E. MacLeod served as interim editor for five months until Kipp officially took over the position on January 1, 1923. See the *Minutes of the Canadian Baptist 1904-1938*, Canadian Baptist Archives, Hamilton Ontario, 115.

²²The Editorial Board of the Convention expressed approval of Editor Kipp’s attitude toward Dr. Shields and also expressed its disapproval at the “unkind and misleading statements made by Dr. Shields in the *Gospel Witness*.” *Minutes of the Canadian Baptist 1904-1938*, July 3, 1924, 130. On December 3, 1925, after Kipp had withdrawn from the meeting a lengthy discussion ensued as to the editorial policy of the *Canadian Baptist*. This meeting led to the formation of a committee composed of B. Merrill, Dr. Graham and C. Smith “to go carefully into the whole policy” of the paper. Eventually, an Editorial Committee was formed to serve in an advisory role to the editor. The Board nevertheless affirmed to its Editor their “continued confidence in his Christian integrity and our gratification with the courageous stand taken by him in furthering the cooperative work of our convention.” This faith was reaffirmed even after the Convention split in 1927. *Minutes of the Canadian Baptist 1904-1938*, 144-179. The *Baptist Visitor* was edited from 1890-1915 by Mrs. A.R. McMaster. In May 1915, Mrs. C.J. Cameron became editor. In July 1891, the *Visitor* became the property of the Board of publication of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec although its management remained unchanged. Its purpose was to focus attention on women engaged in Home Mission work so as to provide women in the churches with an “idea of what as a body our Home Mission Societies are trying to do.” In November 1927, the

It was largely in reaction to the modernist theology of the *Canadian Baptist* that Shields launched his own paper *The Gospel Witness* in 1922. This paper became the official voice of fundamentalism in Canada. Through its pages Shields engaged in what he characterized as "holy warfare" with modernism and its proponents, including those within the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec and the *Canadian Baptist*.²³

The 1924 Convention once again saw the fundamentalist-modernist controversy come to the forefront of debate following McMaster University's awarding of an honorary doctorate degree in 1923 to William H.P. Faunce, a prominent Baptist educator and President of Brown University, who was a pronounced theological liberal. Once again the Convention rebuked the University for its lack of discretion in honouring Faunce and passed a resolution instructing it "not to repeat its error, again demonstrating that those at the university who had decided to award the degree were out of touch with the more conservative views of the churches."²⁴

Following the convention there was a brief respite in the controversy, but this came to an end with the announced appointment of Rev. L.H. Marshall to the Chair of Practical Theology in the summer of 1925. Following the appointment a bitter controversy raged in the religious and secular press in which both sides unleashed inflammatory language

paper was merged with its foreign missions counterpart *The Link* to form the *Link and Visitor*. Circulation figures for the *Visitor* are as follows: 1902 – 6000; 1906 – 7000; November 1922 – 9000; November 1923 – 8,281. See the *Link and Visitor, Outline History of the Visitor 1884-1934 File*, Canadian Baptist Archives, Hamilton, Ontario.

²³Shields, *The Plot that Failed*, 347-350.

²⁴Shields, *The Plot that Failed*, 367; L.K. Tarr, "Another Perspective on T.T. Shields and Fundamentalism," *Baptists in Canada* (Burlington: G.R. Welch Company Ltd., 1980), 211-212; Pinnock, "The Modernist Impulse at McMaster University," 200.

and hurled personal insults. In the end Shields and his supporters were defeated when thirteen churches were voted out of the Convention “for non-cooperation” in 1927. A further seventy withdrew in support of this conservative evangelical position. Clark Pinnock maintains that even though Shields had “the majority of Baptists with him” he was defeated not because his charges against modernism at McMaster were unfounded, but because the churches were “deceived about Marshall and because Shields was too eager to do battle with modernism.”²⁵ By making *persona* rather than issues the focus Shields was effectively undermined and ousted from the Convention. “Fundamental” Baptist was the term employed by those Baptist ministers and churches who refused to go along with the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec [and Western Canada], and who pulled their churches out of the convention on the grounds that the traditional doctrines of the faith were being watered down by a modernist-liberal theology that was un-Christian.

Historically, Baptists had viewed themselves as Dissenters or Separatists. The origins of Baptists can be traced to the Free Church movement of Christianity, which became most articulated in the sixteenth century Anabaptist tradition of continental Europe, and in the Puritan Separatist and Non-Separatist traditions of England. This Free Church movement consisted of Christians of varying theological beliefs and ecclesiastical backgrounds who, nevertheless, sought to restore the New Testament emphasis of the Church as a Spirit-filled community of faith. Consequently, the Free Church movement

²⁵Pinnock, “The Modernist Impulse at McMaster University,” 202. There were 504 churches in the Convention in 1927. Therefore, about 1/7 left though many of those who stayed were sympathetic to the more conservative evangelical position.

placed paramount importance upon a person-to-person confrontation (conversion experience) with God, arguing that liturgy, formalism, organization and creedalism were of secondary importance.²⁶

One of the main theological contributions of Baptists was their emphasis upon the principle of liberty of conscience. In their defence of this principle, Baptists suffered severe persecution. As well, they were often held in contempt by other Christians or deprived of their rights and privileges by the state. As a direct result of such persecution from a government increasingly hostile to non-conformists, John Smyth, generally regarded as the 'founder of modern Baptist Churches,' was forced to seek refuge in Holland,²⁷ which since 1595 welcomed groups of Separatists fleeing religious persecution in England.²⁸ It was not until the 1689 Act of Toleration, that widespread persecution against Protestant Dissenters ended; although scattered incidents continued well into the eighteenth century. Dissenters, however, were still denied admission to universities and professions and the ecclesiastical courts still possessed the authority to enforce payment of the tithe to the state church, as well as other parochial duties. Even with the passage of the Act of Toleration, Protestant Dissenters had only succeeded in winning a degree of religious freedom.²⁹ It is not necessary for the purposes of this discussion to go into the remaining details of how

²⁶Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1950), 17.

²⁷Smyth left England in 1607 along with Thomas Helwys and other Separatists and established a work in Amsterdam which offered them refuge.

²⁸Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, 34.

²⁹Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, 54.

these Protestant Dissenters were finally able to achieve religious and political freedom in England.³⁰ The extent of this persecution has led one Baptist commentator to remark that,

the savagery and thoroughness of the persecution can hardly be imagined [of Anabaptist by Catholics and Protestants]. Indeed, probably no persecution of history, with the exception of the Nazi atrocities toward the Jews, has produced such a black record.³¹

While Tarr's point may be somewhat overstated, the fact nevertheless remains that Baptists were indeed victims of severe religious persecution.

The view of Baptists on liberty of conscience, their distinctive ecclesiology and the emphasis they placed upon the need for freedom to obey God, while shared with other Congregationalists, "distinguished them from other Protestants."³² In Canada this led Baptists in the mid-1820s to oppose the position of the Church of England's Bishop John Strachan on the Clergy Reserves issue. According to Gerald M. Craig, under the provisions of the Constitution Act 1791 lands had been set aside "for the maintenance of a Protestant clergy." The exact meaning as to which Protestant clergy was not entirely clear, although in the minds of Lieutenant Governor John G. Simcoe and later Bishop Strachan it meant the Church of England as established under law in England. The Church of Scotland, however, was also an established church and had been recognized as such at the time of union in 1707. Since Canada had been acquired after the union, the Church of Scotland was as "much established there as the Church of England." In spite of this Simcoe

³⁰For a discussion of this in the case of Baptists, see Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, 61-134.

³¹L.K. Tarr, *This Dominion His Dominion* (Willowdale: The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada, 1963), 30.

³²Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, 30.

"stubbornly reserved the lands for Anglicans alone." The claim of the Church of England to being the "sole beneficiary" was strongly challenged by both the Church of Scotland and other sects. Efforts to find a compromise ended without success. In 1826, the Assembly advocated the secularization of the reserves by selling them and devoting the proceeds "to the purposes of education, and the general improvement of this Province."³³ Walter Pitman, former Director of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, concluded:

The Baptists had won a real victory. In a sense they had led the way in creating a climate of opinion which would accept this solution, leading many who were Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian, to a realization that the existence of such support for religious enterprises was a disadvantage even to the denomination that benefited. There is little doubt that those who maintained no formal connection with the church were also influenced by the logic of the Baptist argument. In spite of the opposition of every major denomination, the Baptists saw their principal of voluntarism and their ideal of the separation of church and state triumph.³⁴

Due to this opposition Baptist gained the notoriety of being "decidedly radical in politics and religion." Given their reputation as "republican" and "revolutionary" Baptists were implicated in the troubles of 1837-38. The Church of England published letters accusing Baptists of disloyalty to the Crown.³⁵ While Baptists probably did support reform,

³³Gerald M. Craig, *Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 1784-1841* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1963), 169-175. For further discussion of Baptist opposition to the Clergy Reserves see Walter G. Pitman, "Baptists Triumph in Nineteenth-Century Canada," *Foundations*, 3 (1960): 157-165; Edward M. Checkland, *Religious Liberty in Canada: A Study in the Relations of Church and State*, unpublished B.D. thesis, McMaster Divinity College, 1946, 56-81; Harry A. Renfree, "Church and State in Canada: Cooperation and Contradiction," *The Believer's Church in Canada*, J.K. Zeman and Walter Klassen eds. (Waterloo: The Baptist Federation of Canada and the Mennonite Central Committee, 1979), 207-219.

³⁴Walter Pitman, "Baptists Triumph in Nineteenth Century Canada," 157-165; Renfree, "Church and State in Canada," 215; For further discussion on Baptists and the Clergy Reserve issue see W.G. Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada, 1840-1867* (New York: Arno Press, 1980), 73-98.

³⁵Paul R. Dekar, "Baptists and Human Rights, 1837-1867," *Baptists in Canada* (Burlington: G.R. Welch Company Ltd., 1980), 110, fn. 8-10.

relatively few supported the radicals who rebelled in either Upper or Lower Canada. Baptists regarded the events of the rebellions as “dangerous” and a “nuisance.” Several factors, nevertheless, lay behind this mistrust of Baptists: their revivalism, voluntarism and opposition to laws which favoured the Church of England.³⁶ As a result of their defence of the principles of voluntarism and liberty of conscience “Canadian Baptists were once widely regarded as being the ‘champions of the oppressed.’”³⁷

Increasingly, however, Baptists would identify themselves with “the mainstream of Protestant life” and culture. During the latter half of the nineteenth century Canadian Baptists came to believe that they were proponents of the dominant religion in the most important state in Western civilization.³⁸ As such, they readily identified with the cultural, political and economic mainstream. When mass immigration of non-Anglo-Saxons began around the turn of the century, Baptists viewed them as a direct threat to established religious and community values. Consequently, Baptists gradually abandoned their historically antimonolithic and pluralist views in favour of attitudes and responses that sought to preserve and protect the values and ideals of the dominant culture. George Rawlyk has noted that in the post First World War period, advocates of radical societal reform within the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec were very much on the

³⁶Dekar, “Baptists and Human Rights,” 110-111.

³⁷George A. Rawlyk, “The Champions of the Oppressed? Canadian Baptists and Social, Political and Economic Realities,” *Church and Canadian Culture* (Lanham: University Press of America Inc., 1991), 105.

³⁸*Canadian Baptist*, May 15, 1919, 13; March 18, 1920, 1; February 25, 1925, 3; S.D. Clark argued that sectarian groups in Canada who favoured liberal or reform politics subsequently moved in a more conservative direction and consistently formulated “a distinctive conservative influence in the community.” S.D. Clark, *The Developing Canadian Community* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 162; *Church and Sect in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948), 224-259.

defensive, largely due to the Shields, Brandon College and MacNeill controversies, which fostered splits in both central and western Canadian Baptist churches.³⁹ Rawlyk maintains “that taking all Canadian Baptist groups in Canada in the post-1930 period into account, there was a perceived movement towards the right of the ideological spectrum.”⁴⁰

As part of this shift towards mainstream acceptance Baptists pursued active involvement in the Laymen’s Missionary Movement. The Movement was a response to the “crying need for intensive home mission work” in western Canada and urban centres brought about by the influx of large numbers of immigrants into these areas at the end of the nineteenth century. At the same time the Movement was an attempt to arouse greater interest among men in the churches to the social and political problems posed by mass immigration, which were being primarily addressed by women’s organizations like the Temperance movement and women’s home mission circles. The Laymen’s Missionary Movement sought to apply “the same processes and techniques that succeeded in the business world” to the activities of the church in order to bring about “[t]he Christianization of Our Civilization.” Herein, it was hoped, would reside the appeal to men. The Movement was highly successful in this regard attracting many prominent

³⁹For further discussion of these controversies in the modernist/fundamentalist schism see Pinnock, “The Modernist Impulse at McMaster University,” 193-207; Richards, *Baptists in British Columbia*, 66-93; W. Gordon Carder, *Controversy in the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec 1908-1929*, unpublished B.D. thesis, McMaster Divinity College, 1950; Walter Ellis, “What Times Demand: Brandon College and Baptist Higher Education in Western Canada,” *Canadian Baptists and Christian Higher Education* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1988), 63-87.

⁴⁰Rawlyk, “The Champions of the Oppressed?” 111; Rawlyk notes that this shift would garner even greater momentum in the post-Second World War era as the process of Americanization profoundly reshaped the contours of Canadian life, including the evangelical tradition. “Much of what would be preached by the new prophets of evangelical consumerism and greed, would in fact, be the antithesis of nineteenth century evangelicalism.”

Protestant lay leaders of the day, including Baptists. Among the Baptist supporters were the former mayor of Toronto T. Urquhart, a member of Walmer Road Baptist Church, James Ryrie, R.D. Warren, Dr. William Findlay, W.C. Senior and C.C. Jones, a graduate of McMaster University, who served as Chancellor and President of the University of New Brunswick. As the Minutes recorded: "We feel that this opportunity of widening and deepening the interests of the men of our denomination in Our Home, Western and Foreign fields must be seized and seized now."⁴¹

While Baptists were willing to cooperate with other Protestants in seeing the message of Christ proclaimed their commitment was to ensure that it largely came from "the lips of Baptist ministers and missionaries." One purpose "was uppermost" to those Baptist laymen who got involved in the Laymen's Missionary Movement "namely, to do as much as possible to advance the Master's will and kingdom along those lines of missionary operation that the Baptists of Ontario and Quebec have been prosecuting for a good many years with the marks of Divine approval."⁴² These lay leaders were

⁴¹*Minute Book: Executive Committee Toronto, Baptist Laymen's Missionary Movement of Ontario and Quebec, December 1907-January 1908, Canadian Baptist Archives, Hamilton, Ontario.*

⁴²*Minute Book: Executive Committee Toronto, Baptist Laymen's Missionary Movement of Ontario and Quebec, December 1907-January 1908, Canadian Baptist Archives, Hamilton, Ontario.* See the remarks of Jos. N. Shenstone, a Baptist businessman and member of the International Committee of the LMM, appointed permanent Chairman of the General Committee and Executive Committee of the Baptist LMM of Ontario and Quebec at the December 13, 1907 meeting. In referring to the missionary fields both home and abroad, Shenstone asserted: "Brethren, the problem of giving to each of these people an adequate opportunity to hear the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ is Ours and Ours alone. No other Baptists and no other denomination will help us. If these heathen . . . are ever to have a chance to know the true God it must be through our own missionaries." While the focus of the movement in the United States was essentially foreign, the LMM had emerged in New York City in November 1906, the focus in Canada was primarily on home missions due to the mass influx of immigrants pouring into Canada during the last decades of the nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth century. Accordingly all funds raised by the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec were distributed to mission work on the following basis: 2/7 Home Missions; 2/7 Foreign Missions; and 3/7 Western Missions. A.A. Ayer of Montreal also expressed concerns over the Movement's weakening of the independence of

convinced that the application of business principles to church mission policy would see the evangelization of the world “accomplished within the present generation.” Their aspirations, “permeated with the here-and-now perfectionism of the Social Gospel,” proved short-sighted and the Movement essentially disappeared from the Canadian scene by the 1920s.⁴³

As Evangelicals, Baptists also held an aversion to Roman Catholicism. Like the Reformers of the sixteenth century, Baptists identified the Papacy as Antichrist. They were equally suspicious of its autocratic nature, rejected many of its unscriptural teachings and practices, and shared many of “the popular suspicions that hovered [a]round celibacy and the confessional.”⁴⁴ Baptists’ antipathy towards Roman Catholicism was not, however, rooted solely in the fundamentals of their evangelical identity. As victims of religious persecution, largely though not exclusively at the hands of Roman Catholicism, Baptists came to champion the Free Church principle. As such, Baptists “stood for the separation of church and state, believing in a free church in a free state.” Baptists’ hostility to the notion of a national church led them to oppose any attempts to promote any type of religious, cultural or social uniformity – especially by the Church of Rome.

One of the most immediate points of contact between Baptists and Roman Catholics in Canada was the Grande Ligne Mission in Quebec, co-founded in 1836 by French-Swiss

Baptist churches and individuals, since money was “divided on a fixed plan among a limited number of objects,” based on the ideas of a committee or leaders of a movement.

⁴³John S. Moir, “On the King’s Business: The Rise and Fall of the Laymen’s Missionary Movement in Canada,” *Miscellanea Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, 7 (1980): 327, 332.

⁴⁴Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 101.

immigrant Madame Henriette Feller and Rev. Louis Roussy. Baptists from Canada, the United States and Britain contributed to the undertaking as did other denominations for a brief period, until they established their own witness among French Catholics. In 1849, the Mission became officially affiliated with the Canadian Baptist Missionary Society. Through its combination of evangelism and education the mission sought to convert French Catholics and establish Baptist churches.⁴⁵ A variety of methods were used. Classes were held for both adults and children, where reading, writing and Scripture were taught. Colportage, home meetings, literature distribution and personal testimonies were also utilized. These efforts to establish a French-Canadian Baptist work eventually resulted in the formation of the *Union des Eglises Baptistes de Langue Francaise* on July 8, 1868, a fellowship of nine churches.⁴⁶

The utter contempt that these missionaries felt towards the “Romanish religion” and “its priests and their teachings” ultimately fostered strong opposition to the work of the Baptist mission. The missionaries were generally hindered in their work by a strong feeling of resentment and intolerance, especially on the part of the Catholic clergy.⁴⁷

⁴⁵For a history of the mission from one of the Baptist missionaries who served there see E.A. Therrien (editor and contributor), *Baptist Work in French Canada* (Toronto: The American Baptist Publishing Society, n.d.), 49ff. Chapter 1 addresses the issue of “Romanism in French-Canada” and Chapter 2 by G.R. MacFaul, “Romanism – The Problem and the Peril.” The *Canadian Baptist* in an article that appeared on April 10, 1930, entitled, “What French Evangelization as a Life’s Work Has to Offer a Young Man” remarked: “It is idle to contend that nothing can be done, and that these people must be left to their fate. Something must be done.”

⁴⁶W. Nelson Thomson, “Witness in French Canada,” *Baptists in Canada* (Burlington: G.R. Welch Company Ltd., 1980), 45-50. See also R. Perin, “French Speaking Canada from 1840,” *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996), 191-196.

⁴⁷Richard Lougheed notes that “[a]ny ‘proselytism’ by Protestants only encouraged the French clergy to reaffirm the necessity of homogeneity of language and faith . . . Rabid anti-(French) Protestantism was the rule in episcopal letters and clerical papers in Quebec.” Richard Lougheed, “Anti-Catholicism

Converts to Protestantism were denied educational opportunities and often refused work, even if available, on the grounds of being a “heretic.” The *Sixty-First Report of the Grande Ligne Mission* in 1897 noted: “How often have our converts been obligated to leave home on account of family or social persecution. How often have they failed to find employment or even a friendly helping hand, and so have been forced to leave the country.”⁴⁸ Ostracism and boycotts were used effectively against the Baptist Churches in Maskinonge and Sorel that eventually contributed to the closure of these two churches.⁴⁹ W. Nelson Thomson notes that opposition to the work of the Grande Ligne Mission became “unrelenting” during the years 1891-1910. Some of the missionaries, like colporteur Gendreau, were arrested and imprisoned for their activities, while other converts were taken to court for making anti-Catholic statements or for refusing to pay the tithe. Violent incidents also erupted, as in 1894, when the windows of the *Salle de Reunions Evangeliques*

among French-Protestants,” 165.

⁴⁸As cited in Thomson, “Witness in French Canada,” 53. Richard Lougheed notes that “[f]or evangelicals Quebec appeared to prove conclusively much of the Catholic conspiracy theory . . . Quebec became a *cause celebre* in evangelical journals . . . Of particular importance were the stories of persecuted French converts from Catholicism . . . They told of threats of violence, job loss or censorship: all of these the evangelical community blamed on the priests or bishops.” See R. Lougheed, “Anti-Catholicism among French Protestants,” 165; See also W. Nelson Thomson, “The Socio-Religious Context of Quebec: French-Canadian Baptists Perceptions, 1868-1914,” *Costly Vision: The Baptist Pilgrimage in Canada* (Burlington: Welch Publishing Company, 1988), 168, 170-171. Thomson does maintain that Baptist workers at Grande Ligne began to “view [Charles] Chiniquy [a former Catholic priest who conducted missions in French Canada offering sensational expositions on alleged Catholic heresy] systematic anti-Catholicism with much diffidence.” They felt it was a “fight for externals and not the deep yearning of a Paul or Luther for the salvation of his countrymen.” Nevertheless, Chiniquy was invited to preach at the Eglise baptiste de Sainte-Marie [Marieville] in 1894, and the “relations of Mr. Chiniquy with the Grande Ligne missionaries were always kindly and cordial to the day of his death [1899].”

⁴⁹Theodore Lafleur, *A Semi-Centennial Historical Sketch of the Grand Ligne Mission* (Montreal: D. Bentley, 1885), 82-83; R. Lougheed, “Anti-Catholicism among French Protestants,” 172; Thomson, “Witness in French Canada,” 55.

et de Lecture in Quebec City were smashed. Freedom of speech about religion was curtailed for the French press and lecturers “through episcopal excommunications or mob attacks.”⁵⁰ Historian Richard Lougheed notes that as a result of growing Catholic dominance during the latter half of the nineteenth century enormous pressure was exerted on Protestant converts “simply through isolation, rather than overt persecution. As a result, up to 80% of French Protestants left Quebec prior to 1925.”⁵¹

Consequently, given the rather sordid history that characterized Baptist-Catholic relations⁵² not only in Europe, but in Canada as well,⁵³ it is not surprising that Roman Catholic immigration would pose a fundamental concern. Furthermore, many Baptists incorporated racial assumptions, which underlaid the nativist anti-immigration crusade. That most non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants were Roman Catholic made the appeal of

⁵⁰Thomson, “Witness in French Canada,” 54; R. Lougheed, “Anti-Catholicism among French Protestants,” 172. In 1910, the Grande Linge Mission Board opted for a change in policy that involved the dilution of the French orientation of the work. This resulted in the “progressive slide to anglicization” of the work. This is precisely what opponents of the Mission saw as one of its dangers. Not only was the Mission attempting to convert Catholics to Protestantism, but it was also seeking to Anglicize them at the same time.

⁵¹R. Lougheed, “Anti-Catholicism among French Protestants,” 172; Lougheed maintains that “anti-Catholicism . . . was the standard position of French Protestants in ultramontane Quebec.” For further discussion of Protestant mission in Quebec and its failure see Roberto Perin, “French-Speaking Canada from 1840,” *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996), 191-196.

⁵²See Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, 520ff.; “The Baptist in History,” *Canadian Baptist*, October 13, 1927, 5ff.; “Being a Baptist,” *Canadian Baptist*, September 23, 1926; “Why Free Churchmen?,” *Canadian Baptist*, January 23, 1930; “Church and State,” *Canadian Baptist*, December 7, 1922; “What Baptists Stand For,” *Canadian Baptist*, August 3, 1922; John Wolffe, “Anti-Catholicism and Evangelical Identity in Britain and the United States 1830 -1860,” *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, The British Isles and Beyond 1700 - 1900*, eds. M. Noll, D. Bebbington, and G. Rawlyk (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 179-197; J.R. Miller, “Bigotry in the North Atlantic Triangle: Irish, British and American Influences on Canadian Anti-Catholicism 1850-1900,” *Studies in Religion*, 16/3, 289-302; E.M. Checkland, *Religious Liberty in Canada: A Study in Relations of Church and State*, unpublished B.D. thesis, McMaster University, 1946.

⁵³See Mark Noll’s discussion of Protestant-Catholic hostility in Canada in his *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, 256-262; J.W. Grant *The Church in the Canadian Era*, 68-90.

nativism all the more palatable. Catholics were commonly viewed as not only more difficult to assimilate, but also seen as a threat to the very values and institutions of Canadian society.⁵⁴ Thus, Canadian Baptists reactions to immigration, particularly immigration of Roman Catholics, was a mix of anti-papist theology and racial anxiety.

Canadian Baptists of the late nineteenth century were also not unlike other Evangelicals of the period in sharing the optimistic temper of the age. This optimism usually found expression in doctrinal form through belief in the millennium. Though premillennialism (and dispensationalism) was beginning to make inroads into Baptist eschatology by the mid-1800s (ca. 1850), the majority of Canadian Baptists, nevertheless, remained post-millennialists,⁵⁵ holding to the belief "that the millennium will end with the personal, bodily return of Christ."⁵⁶ Post-millennialists also hold a number of other

⁵⁴For a discussion of Protestant opposition to Catholic immigration in the United States see Mark Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, 208-210; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism 1860-1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1967); David A. Jalovick, "For God and Country: Baptists and the Evangelization of Immigrants in the Late Nineteenth Century," *American Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. IX, No. 4, December 1990, 184-196; L.B. Davis, *Immigrants, Baptists and the Protestant Mind in America* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1973); In Canada see M. Barber, "Nationalism, Nativism and the Social Gospel: The Protestant Church responds to Foreign Immigrants 1897-1914," *The Social Gospel in Canada*, ed. R. Allen, (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1975), 186-226; J.W. Grant, "The Reaction of WASP Churches to Non-WASP Immigrants," *Historical Papers 1968; Canadian Society of Church History*; D. Avery, *Canadian Immigration Policy 1896-1919: The Anglo-Canadian Perspective*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Western Ontario, 1973.

⁵⁵See R. Lloyd Whan, *Premillennialism in Canadian Baptist History*, unpublished B.D. thesis, MacMaster University, 1945. Those churches who advocated a premillennial (largely dispensational) eschatology left the Convention in the famous 1927 Schism, Whan, *Premillennialism in Canadian Baptist History*, 33-35; W.E. Ellis, "Baptists and Radical Politics in Western Canada 1920-50," *Baptists in Canada: Search for Identity*, 1980, 163, as cited in J.B. Scott, *Responding to the Social Crisis*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Ottawa, 1989, 6; John W. Grant notes, that "religious preference was related to ethnicity in ways that favoured the same balance of forces." See *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 231.

⁵⁶M. J. Erickson, *Contemporary Options in Eschatology: A Study of the Millennium* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), 57.

significant beliefs: that the Kingdom of God is primarily a present reality; that a conversion of all nations will occur prior to the return of Christ; that the millennium is characterized by a long period of earthly peace; and that the continuing spread of the gospel will increasingly manifest the Kingdom of God here on earth.⁵⁷ While post-millennialism became increasingly associated with the Social Gospel Movement during the later part of the nineteenth century, the stress that Baptists placed on evangelism and personal conversion meant that the Social Gospel Movement made fewer inroads within Baptist circles than it did other Protestant denominations.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the "Social Gospel was first and foremost an evangelical movement."⁵⁹ As Brian Scott maintains, its leaders relied upon the prophets, the teaching of Jesus, the Bible and its eschatological message, with particular emphasis upon the Kingdom of God motif.⁶⁰

The mass influx of immigrants to urban centres combined with the recognition of social ills – poverty, hunger, gambling, prostitution, intemperance, disease, and various political "isms" – called for a "radical social reconstruction of Canadian society."⁶¹ Social gossellers, as a rule felt that if they could change the social structure, the people living in

⁵⁷See Erickson, *Contemporary Options in Eschatology*, 55-58.

⁵⁸See the valiant attempts by the Social Service Board to get Baptists to realize the importance of such work and the fact that social action did not deny the gospel. *Canadian Baptist*, August 8, 1918, 3; *Baptist Yearbook*, 1919, 233; 1922, 223; 1926, 234; 1927, 221; 1928, 215; 1930, 215; 1934, 207-210; *Canadian Baptist*, March 6, 1924, 11; March 25, 1925, 11; September 24, 1925, 2; April 28, 1927, 13; November 14, 1929, 1; May 22, 1930, 2; R. Allen, *A Social Passion*, 69; See also Rawlyk, "The Champions of the Oppressed?" 109.

⁵⁹B. Scott, *Responding to the Social Crisis: The Baptist Union of Western Canada and Social Christianity 1908-22*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Ottawa, 1989, 40.

⁶⁰Scott, *Responding to the Social Crisis*, 40.

⁶¹Scott, *Responding to the Social Crisis*, 272.

the society would change also.⁶² Baptists, with their emphasis on soul liberty and individualism, reversed this process. Convinced that if they could Christianize all (or at least most) of the individuals in society, Baptists held that these individuals could then in turn be counted on to Christianize the social order, thereby establishing the Kingdom of God on earth.⁶³ Consequently, since the “root cause of the ever expanding ‘hydra-headed social monster’” was deemed the “combination of a large influx of European immigrants and the industrialization of North America,” Baptists aimed to make Christian principles the foundation of Canadian life. This, as such, necessitated even greater evangelization. Baptists were convinced that the “Christianization/Canadianization” of the great hordes of the unwashed pouring into Canada from Europe would bring about the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God.⁶⁴ The social gospel impetus in Baptist circles was an understood evangelistic strategy designed to confront the difficulties of mission, particularly in urban centres at the turn of the century. Baptists then knew what they wanted to achieve with respect to the inflow of non-Protestant and non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants and why. The question was how to achieve it.

⁶²Allen, *The Social Passion*, 12.

⁶³See J. Brian Scott, “The *Western Outlook* and *Western Baptist* and Baptist Social Christianity, 1908-22,” *Historical Papers: 1983, Canadian Society of Church History*, 18.

⁶⁴This “social gospel,” which conservative Evangelicals would condemn as a diversion from the true gospel would be a contributing factor in the split of Canadian Baptists, that, however, did not occur until 1927. The fact remains that both conservatives and liberal Baptists supported the “Canadianization” of immigrants, despite their differing eschatological views. Furthermore, the social gospel was grounded in Evangelicalism and those who departed from this belief were rare. See Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 211.

Chapter 3

For Whose Kingdom? Canadian Baptists and the Evangelization of Immigrants, 1880-1914

The thirty-four years from 1880 to 1914 were a period of significant transformation for Canada. During these decades the nation underwent tremendous social, cultural, economic and political change. To a large extent three phenomena were responsible for bringing about this transference of Canadian society: immigration, industrialization, and urbanization. Their combined effect fostered the growth of a nation that was new in both “quality and spirit.” The new Canada which emerged from this period, while a product of its past, was in other ways fundamentally different. Consequently, these “years should be seen as a history of a people attempting to bring its institutions into conformity with the demands of a new, unfamiliar kind of society.”¹ One group for which these changes became a growing preoccupation were the country’s churches. Sometimes only vaguely aware of the nature of the transformation that was occurring around them, Canadian churches largely attempted to either minimize what they understood as the negative impact of these changes or retard their effects altogether.

The late Nineteenth Century found Canadian Baptists, and Protestantism in general, largely on the defensive. In the intellectual arena, Darwinism had shaken the theological foundations of the faith by drawing into question the inerrancy of Scripture. The Roman

¹R.C. Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada: 1896-1921 A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), 2.

Catholic Church seemed poised to expand its influence due to increasing membership. Urbanization was becoming a more significant factor in Canadian life, but the urban proletariat seemed less conceded to church attendance or accepting of the Protestant message.²

These challenges were made more acute by the large numbers of immigrants who entered the country during this period. Increasingly, these immigrants came from a vastly different religious traditions than that of evangelical Protestantism.³ Consequently, if they were not openly hostile, these immigrants were, at the very least, largely distrustful of the hopes and dreams that such groups as Baptists had for immigrants. Clearly, visions of a homogeneous (Protestant) Christian civilization were being seriously challenged. However, in spite of these challenges, optimism remained relatively high. Pastor A.A. Cameron's sermon to the annual Manitoba Missionary convention, in 1884, is reflective of this optimism.

²The secularization thesis has recently been questioned by Michael Gauvreau who argues that this approach strips the early twentieth century of "its historical distinctiveness." See Michael Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century: College and Creed in English Canada from the Great Revival to the Great Depression* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 218-254; See also Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada, 1900-1940* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996).

³Canadians had listed their origin in the 1901 Census as follows: British, 3 million; French, 1.6 million; other Europeans, 500,000; Asians 23,000; and Aborigines, approximately 125,000. Ten years later the 1911 Census noted: British, 4 million, French, 2 million, other Europeans, 1 million, Asians 43,000; and Aborigines, 105,000. Many of these "other Europeans" tended to stay in Canada, while many American migrants returned home, and some British immigrants either left for the United States or returned to the United Kingdom. Furthermore, "[t]o the horror of many British-Canadian Protestants, large numbers of the newcomers were Roman Catholic, Ukrainian Orthodox, or Greek Orthodox. In 1901, 2.2 million of Canada's population of just over 5.3 million were Catholic; a decade later, Catholics numbered 2.8 million, and in 1921, there were 3.4 million in a population of 8.8 million . . . it seemed only a matter of time before Canada would have a 'Papist' majority." See Robert Bothwell and J.L. Granatstein, *Our Century: The Canadian Journey in the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: McArthur and Company, 2000), 39-40.

Now, the question comes to us, is the church as much in earnest in making this country Christian, as the government in making it populous? We may not rest assured there can be no true advancement of this country unless there be first aggressive evangelization . . . The text speaks of making disciples of all nations; but we need not go very far for them, as nearly all nations come to us. The Mennonites and Lutherans of Germany; the Jews of Russia, are here. They are here from China and Iceland; from Great Britain and the United States; as well as from all the Eastern Provinces of the Dominion. In our home work we shall soon have to provide for the foreign element. German Baptists Missionaries are needed even now. Oh! what a magnificent field is ours . . . We are called upon to make and baptize disciples while the foundation of the Empire are being laid. . . .⁴

Thus, Canadian Baptists initially viewed the influx of immigrants as a magnificent opportunity to help shape the destiny and foundation of the nation. They viewed their arrival as some providential moving of God to hasten the goal of world evangelism and hence, the ushering in of the Millennium. Their attitudes and responses to the increasing “foreign element” during these years also reveals much about the way a culture acts to protect and preserve its values when they are (or are perceived to be) threatened. In many respects, the reactions of Canadian Baptists paralleled the fears of many others throughout the nation. In this context, their views perhaps reflect one way in which a native culture seeks to meet the challenge of that which it considers foreign.

As part of the evangelical Protestant tradition Canadian Baptists were committed to the propagation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Their goal, as such, was the reproduction of Christians – individuals in union with God by means of spiritual regeneration. Pursuant to this goal, was the desire to establish Baptist churches which were viewed as the closest *ecclesia* to the New Testament church. Hence, the commitment to regenerate church membership and believers’ baptism. However, this recognition of Baptists, as evangelicals,

⁴*The Baptist Yearbook*, 1884, 52-53.

only partially explains the motives which underlie their efforts of proselytizing the immigrants.

Baptists also saw themselves as playing a decisive role in shaping the transformation of Canadian society that was occurring in these years. As a product of the Protestant Reformation, Baptists were committed to principle of *sola scriptura*. The *Bible*, as such, was to be the sole authority in matter of faith and practice. But more than that, the Scriptures were to serve as an everyday guide book for life. Morals, values and standards for living were to be based upon the teaching of Scripture. Secondly, as products of the Reformation, Baptists adhered to the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. In this they rejected the sacramental and mediatorial role of the Catholic priesthood. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, Baptists stressed the belief in religious liberty. Consequently, Baptists propagated the separation of the church and state. This conviction was, as such, the key source of traditional antipathy to the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the established Churches of England and Scotland.⁵ Baptist aversion to ritual also made them largely anti-Catholic by definition. Fourthly, Baptists were strongly committed to the principle of autonomy of the local church and democratic cooperation between churches. As such, one cannot speak of a Baptist Church in Canada, but of a loose federation of Baptist churches. These religious associations and conventions are formulated solely on a voluntary basis. Consequently, Baptist ecclesiology is democratic in nature, predicated on the principle of congregational rule. Baptists reject more hierarchical forms of ecclesiology regarding these as not only anti-democratic, but un-Scriptural. Notions of a Pope are an anathema, since

⁵See Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1950), 46-57.

such an office presents a direct challenge not only to religious liberty in the church, but also to the state. What Canadian Baptists, sought along with their evangelical counterparts, was the creation of a "sanctified nation" – one that was "moral, enlightened and dedicated to the principles of the Protestant Reformation."⁶

In their efforts to achieve these goals, Canadian Baptists did not exist or function in a kind of "supra-cultural biblical vacuum." They were not isolated from an increasingly secular society. They were in fact a very real part of it. As such, they were forced to assume a dual identity, namely that of Canadian and Christian. At times the distinction between the two became extremely blurred, given the fact that the majority of Baptists in both cases were native born whites of British heritage. Canadian Baptists, therefore, were engulfed within an ethnic community, largely Protestant, which regarded itself as co-existent with and having a proprietorial right to the nation's character and institutions; even though in terms of actual numbers, Baptists constituted one of the smallest denominations in Canada.

As John Webster Grant pointed out, Canadian Protestant churches in these years embarked on large-scale missionary endeavors amongst immigrants with a clear view of what they wanted to achieve but no clear view of what it was possible to achieve. Grant notes that at least three motives were significant in this regard. The first, and perhaps the most powerful, was the simple recognition of the needs of these "strangers in a strange land." The second was the evangelical impulse to propagate the gospel amongst these "heathens." And the third impetus, which became significantly more important as the

⁶J.W. Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era* (Burlington: Welch Publishing Co., 1988), 76.

franchise was granted to increasing numbers of these immigrants, was a desire to implant Canadian ideals of citizenship. Canadianism thus became a favorite term in Protestant circles implying "loyalty to British institutions and conformity to Victorian moral standards."⁷ Such views of Canadian nationalism were not, however, exclusive to the Protestant community in Canada. Historian Mark McGowan argues that English-speaking Catholics also "cultivated their own unique vision of Canada" that shared affinity with their Protestant adversaries. English-speaking Catholics believed Canada was "destined to be English in speech but Catholic in faith." Armed with their own brand of "Canadianism," English-speaking Catholics proved just as zealous in their efforts to evangelize and assimilate immigrants into Canadian society as Protestants. As McGowan notes, these foreigners "were offered the Catholic faith and the English language as the prerequisites to solid citizenship." This attempt to assimilate immigrants in the final analysis, however, only succeeded in making English-speaking Catholics more "aware of their own identification with Canada, its institutions, opportunities and freedoms."⁸

While Protestant leaders regarded these aims as essentially complimentary, they increasingly found it difficult to keep them in balance. What is clearly evident here, though, was that racial thought was part of the Protestant imagination. Groups that came to Canada who were deemed unfit, whether socially, racially, morally, politically, or religiously could become 'legitimate members' of the society only by assimilating

⁷Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*, 96.

⁸Mark McGowan, "Toronto's English-speaking Catholics, Immigration, and the Making of a Canadian Catholic Identity, 1900-1930," in T. Murphy and G. Stortz (eds.) *The Place of English-speaking Catholics in Canadian Society, 1750-1930* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 204-218.

'Canadian' ideals and values which were indistinguishable from Protestant ideals and values. And all this was tempered by racial fears for the non Anglo-Saxon. In their immigrant assimilationist crusade Baptists:

... essentialized social and cultural differences and condemned certain groups as alien, foreign and unwanted. In this way, racial categories legitimized the social and cultural forms of native-born Protestants and defined other groups as illegitimate. Race was also an ideological medium through which power and dominance were played out. Racialism explained and justified social inequality and determined which immigrant groups' morals, social values, faiths and political traditions fit [Canadian] needs.⁹

These racial assumptions would dominate Protestant ideology up until the Second World War and would only begin to be seriously questioned, as we shall see, with the emergence of Fascism in the 1930s.

Anglo-Saxonism, with its overt biological intimations, implied a lineal descent from British lineage and was expressive of an indigenous nationalism. Furthermore, Anglo-Saxonism and loyalty to the British Empire were regarded as extensions of Canadian patriotism. As Carl Berger has noted in *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism* "Canadian imperialism was one variety of Canadian nationalism – a type of awareness of nationality which rested upon a certain understanding of history, the national character, and the national mission." The sense of mission, Berger contends,

... grew out of [a] conception of the immanence of God in the world: history has not accidentally placed millions of the "weaker races" under the protection of the Empire, nor was the evolution toward a stronger union a fortuitous and fitful process. The main justification for imperial power was work directed toward the Christianization and civilization of these races. Such work would

⁹W.H. Katerberg, "Protecting Christian Liberty: Mainline Protestantism, Racial Thought and Political Culture in Canada, 1918-39," *Historical Papers 1995: Canadian Society of Church History*, 9.

not only fulfill God's purposes, but would also burn away the selfishness and pride bred by power.¹⁰

The Empire was seen, therefore, as a "divine agency of progress and civilization" and the "attainment of nation . . . contingent upon the acceptance of the white man's burden." Canadians, consequently were largely proud of their country "precisely because of its British roots."¹¹

Canadianization, on the other hand, while implying a 'loyalty to British institutions' covered a much broader range of social, ideological, political and religious concerns. Likewise, it enunciated the pragmatic implications of racialism and nativism. The concept of nativism had developed in the United States where it perhaps "took more virulent and violent forms than it did in Canada." The term describes the "amalgam of ethnic prejudice and nationalism." John Higham, in his study of nativism in the United States defined it as "intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign . . . connection." Higham noted that there were three strands of American nativism: Anglo-Saxon, anti-Catholic, and anti-radical.¹² Some Canadian historians feel that the term "nativism" is inapplicable to Canada given the very different historical development between Canada and the United States.¹³ Howard Palmer, on the other hand, asserted that the term is

¹⁰Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 226, 9, 49, 231ff. For a discussion on how the imperialists saw "the strangers" impacting upon the national character of Canada see Berger, *The Sense of Power*, 147-152.

¹¹Katerberg, "Protecting Christian Liberty," 10.

¹²John Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 4.

¹³For arguments against the use of nativism in a Canadian context see Cornelius Jaenen, "The Unique Qualities of Canadian Ethnic Studies," University of Toronto Ethnic and Immigration Studies Programme lecture series, October 5, 1978. William H. Katerberg has also strongly criticized the use of Highman's model by Canadian historians. See his critique in "The Irony of Identity: An Essay on

“indeed a useful tool for Canadian historians . . . [and] while a comparison between Canadian and American nativism reveals some differences, it does show that the three strains of nativism (Anglo-Saxon, anti-Catholic, and anti-radical) identified by Higham had considerable influence in . . . Canada prior to World War II.”¹⁴ W.H. Pike noted the goals of Canadianization, in 1919, when he asserted:

The general notion “Canadianization” appears to denote the adoption of English speech, of Canadian clothes and manners, of the Canadian attitude of politics. It connotes the fusion of the various bloods, and a transmutation by the miracle of assimilation of Poles, Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, Germans, and others into beings similar in background, tradition, outlook, and spirit to the Anglo-Saxon backbone of the country.¹⁵

Canadianization was a program whereby the immigrants were to be transformed into not only reflecting, but also accentuating the values of Anglo-Saxon culture.

The goals of Canadianization thus focused on acculturation and assimilation. Canadianization programs, therefore, involved inculcating Canadian ideals—civic, social, political and religious – as well as preventing pockets of immigrants from forming. But Canadianization was more than simply naturalization. Naturalization was a change in

Nativism, Liberal Democracy and Parochial Identities in Canada and the United States,” *American Quarterly*, September 1995.

¹⁴Howard Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1982), 8-9; Howard Palmer, “Mosaic Versus Melting Pot?: Immigration and Ethnicity in Canada and the United States,” in *A Passion for Identity*, David Taras et. al. (ed.) (Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1993), 167-168. For discussion of the use of the concept of nativism in a Canadian context see W.P. Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy Towards Orientals in British Columbia* (Montreal: 1978), ix-x; Marilyn Barber, “Nationalism, Nativism and the Social Gospel: The Protestant Church Response to Foreign Immigrants in Western Canada, 1897-1914,” in R. Allen (ed.), *The Social Gospel in Canada* (Ottawa: 1975). For a general discussion of Anglo-Saxonism and Christian theology see Alan Davies, *Infected Christianity: A Study of Modern Racism* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1988, chapter 4.

¹⁵W.H. Pike, “Slavic Stock and the New Canadianism,” *Christian Guardian* (3 December, 1919), 11, as cited in Katerberg, “Protecting Christian Liberty,” 11.

legal status. Immigrants to Canada could become 'naturalized' by applying for 'naturalization' after a specific period in Canada free of legal problems. Assimilation, on the other hand, was a change in world view. Naturalization was, therefore, not the same thing as assimilation. As Reverend John A. Cormie remarked in 1931: "Every social problem in the country is markedly influenced by immigration . . . naturalization does not mean Canadianization. It merely signifies the intention of the immigrant to make a more or less permanent house in Canada and the desire to share in the country's political destiny."¹⁶

The Superintendent of the Home Missions Board of the United Church of Canada further contended that it was "not much of an indication as to the extent to which the immigrant has been incorporated into the life of the country."¹⁷ Premature naturalization he warned constituted a great menace, since by extending the franchise to persons "unfit by experience or aptitude to take part in the administration of a democratic community," it was, therefore, "conceivable that the whole political and social fabric could be radically change[d], if not overturned, by allowing the participation in our political life of large numbers of persons unwilling and unfit to share our ideals."¹⁸ Cormie's attitude reflected a genuine concern among church leaders that if Canada was to be transformed into "His Dominion" responsibility ultimately resided with the nation's Protestant churches. Since these church leaders' perceptions of Canadian nationalism were shaped by spiritual

¹⁶J.A. Cormie, *Canada and the New Canadians* (Toronto: The Social Service Council of Canada, 1931), 14.

¹⁷Cormie, *Canada and the New Canadians*, 14.

¹⁸Cormie, *Canada and the New Canadians*, 14.

concerns, they were convinced that only the churches could create a sense of community necessary “to withstand the pressures the country faced in the twentieth century.” This challenge ultimately led some of these Protestant churches to abandon denominational rivalries that “would not only be more efficient,” but also “provide a clear model for newcomers.” A United Church that would in turn create a united Canada. Canadianization for most leaders of the United Church of Canada meant “melting newcomers into an Anglo-Saxon mould. They were to become ‘one hundred per cent Canadian and British.’” Naturalization was not enough. As Dr. W.B. Creighton, editor of the *Christian Guardian* asserted: “We do not desire to have Canada filled with an unassimilated mass of people of different races and tongues and religions who would possess no common bond of union and whose presence in large numbers would undo all the work that has already been done in trying to build up a Canadian nation.”¹⁹

So long as southern, eastern and central European immigrants avoided assimilation “a problem of serious magnitude will certainly emerge.”²⁰ Canadianization schemes were driven by an impetuosity aimed at creating a culturally homogenous society. Immigration, provided the churches with an opportunity to exercise their overlapping duties to God and country. “The work of the churches and the needs of the nation were twofold:

¹⁹The preceding quotes and ideas were garnered from Mary Vipond, “Canadian National Consciousness and the Formation of the United Church of Canada,” *The Bulletin* (Toronto: Committee on Archives of the United Church of Canada, #24, 1975), 5-16. Vipond contends that “[t]he United Church was intended, then, to accomplish a double mission for a nation whose unity was threatened by ethnic and geographic division. It would be a large, nation-wide, uniquely Christian institution binding together individuals from all races and sections in the service of common beliefs and goals. And it would reinforce the values of the nation as a whole by providing a sort of spiritual cement – a religion whose essence was unity. The unity of three Protestant churches was a religious goal, but it was also a national one.”

²⁰Cormie, *Canada and the New Canadians*, 15.

democracy was the product of Christian nations and, to be a positive force, liberty required adherence to Christian morality."²¹ Consequently, Protestant churches were emphatic on the need of immigrants to adapt to Canadian life and Canadian life without Protestantism was hollow. Sometimes this attitude displayed itself in outright racist attitudes towards particular immigrant groups, like Blacks, while on other occasions it merely "assumed the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race, but allowed for acculturation."²² In either case, it was obvious that Anglo-Canadians associated their British heritage with Protestant Christianity and democracy and that Canadianization schemes were at best permeated with "naive paternalism," at worst "unvarnished bigotry," in which stereotypes and prejudices abounded.

During the early part of the nineteenth century many of Canada's aboriginal peoples had been subjected to a similar application of these ideals. While "Europeanization" may have been the catch-phrase earlier in the century, the goals of this assimilation scheme were in many ways parallel to the "Canadianization" schemes towards immigrants in the latter half of the century. As John W. Grant notes, the Aboriginal peoples of Canada were forced, as a matter of survival, to become like Europeans. This meant learning to adapt to European customs, technology, economic patterns, manners and dress. Missionaries and administrators, Grant maintains, provided the Aboriginal peoples with "all possible help"

²¹Katerberg, "Protecting Christian Liberty," 13.

²²Katerberg, "Protecting Christian Liberty," 12.

that was necessary “to cultivate the European values of sobriety, frugality, industry and enterprise.”²³

Certainly this program of acculturation of Canada’s Native Peoples,²⁴ “pressed by the state not as mere expedience but as part of the moral responsibility of the British people,” sounds strikingly similar in a variety of ways to the goals of “Canadianization” with respect to immigrants that W.H. Pike espoused approximately a century later. In both instances the eradication of the cultural norms, values and customs of undesired minorities were the stated objective. Given the racialistic overtones inherent in Protestant missions to both Canada’s Native Peoples and immigrants, was the framework of Canadian Baptists responses to immigration in this period motivated by purely evangelistic goals? Was it diluted or even dominated by an impassioned Canadian nativism dedicated to the preservation of Anglo-Saxon ideals and institutions?

As evangelicals, Canadian Baptists took the command of Christ (Matthew 28:19), to make disciples seriously. Their “loyalty to the truth” obligated them and they felt uniquely qualified to carry out this task. The following remarks, taken from the 1901 *Baptist Yearbook*, reflected the principles and policy the denomination established in order to regulate its Home Mission work in this capacity:

There are first of all the general and well recognized principles that constitute the bases of all Christian Mission work, whether home or foreign, viz.: The evil and lost condition of the human family; the possibility of the human family being saved from this evil and lost condition, and the belief that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is the only agency for the accomplishment of this great

²³J.W. Grant, *Moon of Wintertime* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 75.

²⁴See Grant, *Moon of Wintertime*, 75-95.

salvation. (b) And secondly, [t]he special principles that must form the basis of Home Missions work.

The first of these is the one the late Alexander Grant used to emphasize with great force, viz.: 'Responsibility in life and work always increases with proximity.' Hence our duty as Christians is to see to it that no part of our land shall remain either unsupplied or insufficiently supplied with the gospel in its purity and entirety. And the second is like unto the first, viz.: 'Home Mission work is basi[c] work' . . . The simple fact that a very considerable proportion of the best workers in our self-supporting churches, and about two-thirds of all the pastors, are drawn from our Home Mission Churches, is sufficient proof of the basi[c] character of this work. Another basi[c] principle of Home Missions is that we believe our distinctive principles as a denomination to be of sufficient importance to justify us a separate existence and work in every community in which such work is a reasonable possibility. When this principle shall cease to be recognized and acted upon by any religious denomination, it is high time that such a denomination should withdraw from the field and cease by its existence to perpetuate schism in the body of Christ. Another principle is that we believe our denominational progress will depend largely upon our so planning and organizing and conducting our work, that every Baptist in our own country may have Baptist preaching and pastoral watchcare. We are strongly convinced that this last is a principle to which we, as a denomination, have not given sufficient attention, and because of our failure to act upon this principle hundreds of Baptist families, and thousands of Baptists, have drifted beyond our reach, and the life and power which we so much need has been absorbed by wiser and more aggressive bodies of Christians.²⁵

Officially, at least, the Home Missions policy of the Convention Baptists of Ontario and Quebec reflected a commitment to an evangelistic mandate coupled with the promotion of denominational distinctives like religious liberty. What ultimately needs to be ascertained was whether there was any substantial variance or departure from this policy in addressing the immigrant phenomenon during the years from 1880 to 1914.

In one respect 1901 must be regarded as a significant turning point in Baptist responses to immigration at the turn of the century. In the years from 1880 to 1901 the

²⁵*The Baptist Yearbook*, 1901, 41-42. Much the same thought was echoed by the Canadian Baptist Women's Home Mission magazine in September of 1894. See *The Baptist Visitor*, September, 1894, 6.

focus of Baptist Home Missions in Canada coalesced, essentially around people of German and Scandinavian extraction, largely in Ontario and the Northwest, and amongst French Catholics at the Grande Ligne Mission in Quebec. However, the years from 1901 to 1914 witnessed a gradual shift in emphasis away from what has sometimes been deemed “old immigration” to “new immigration” – namely people of eastern and southern European descent, especially Slavs.²⁶

J.K. Zeman, largely makes no attempt to try to explain this shift in Baptist concern. He tends to account for it solely on the basis that during the years from 1901 to 1914 nearly three million immigrants entered Canada.²⁷ Certainly the large number of immigrants entering the country presented the churches of the Convention with a monumental challenge, yet opportunity. No simple numeric explanation is, of itself, adequate in trying to explain this sudden conceptual shift of focus. While three million immigrants entered Canada during these years, the greatest period of mass immigration in Canada’s history, the majority still were people from traditional sources, like the British Isles, the United States and northwestern Europe. Consequently, some other factors must have been equally, if not more significantly, important in fostering this shift.

Rather than sheer quantity, it would appear that the origins of an increasing number of these immigrants was the critical factor. “Old immigrants,” as has been noted, consisted of people from British, American and northwestern European heritage, namely Germans

²⁶Jarold K. Zeman in his article “Witness Among the Immigrants” points out this shift in Baptist concern. See Zeman, “Witness Among the Immigrants,” 69; cf. Lillian Petroff, *Sojourners and Settlers: The Macedonian Community in Toronto to 1940* (Toronto: Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario, 1995), 60.

²⁷Zeman, “Witness Among the Immigrants,” 69.

and Scandinavians. As such, they shared many of the same beliefs, values, institutions and practices that Baptists in Canada would endorse. Most were also Protestant of one type or another. Martin E. Marty has noted, that as part of the contrived racial theories of the day was the belief that Anglo-Saxon democracy was born in the forests of ancient Germany.²⁸ Germans, as such, were viewed as a cultured people who could easily fit into the mainstream of Canadian life. Alexander Grant, superintendent of Canadian Home Missions from 1884 until his tragic death in 1897, asserted that in Germans “we have no better class of colonists than they.” Grant further commented that, “[i]t may also be affirmed with confidence that Germans are as intelligent through-going Baptists, when they are Baptists, as can be found.”²⁹ German willingness to become a part of not only the civil, but also the (Baptist) religious life of the country heightened their desirability as immigrants in the view of many Baptists.³⁰ Nor did Baptists confine their “praise” solely to German immigrants during these years. Scandinavians, namely Swedes, Norwegians, Finns and Danes, those “hardy Norseman,” were also looked upon in highly favorable terms. In fact, they were regarded as “among the most valuable of immigrants when they turn toward our shores.”³¹ The positive endorsement of this group of people, whom many in Baptist circles regarded as the “best class of settlers,” was predicated on the fact that they were regarded as being “peaceful,” “law abiding,” “frugal” and “industrious.” Even

²⁸M.E. Marty, *Protestantism in the U.S.* (New York: Charles Scribers Sons, 1986), 129-30.

²⁹*The Baptist Yearbook*, 1893, 158; See also 154-158.

³⁰*The Baptist Visitor*, May 1911, 6.

³¹*The Baptist Visitor*, September 1901, 4. For further discussion of this “ethnic pecking order” see Howard Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1982), 22-37.

their compatibility with regions of northern climate also was viewed in a positive way by Baptists.³² Thus, rather than imposing any direct threat or challenge to existing norms in Canadian society, Baptists felt these people could make a positive contribution to the development of the nation. The fact that the majority were Protestant, of which Baptists affiliation was high, only served to buttress these feelings and was probably the most significant factor in the formation of such attitudes among Baptists. Consequently, the general consensus within the Convention Baptists of Ontario and Quebec was “that of all immigrants coming to our country, there are none who give promise of making better citizens than do the Scandinavians. And to become a nation, such as God would have us to be, we must wreath into our citizenship the laurels of [C]hristian grace.”³³

Thus, so long as immigrants were perceived to re-enforce existing social and religious norms, Baptists were largely content to confine their missionary activities to the propagation of the gospel in order “to exert an influence in advancing the Redeemer’s Kingdom.”³⁴ But not all Protestant groups shared the same degree of enthusiasm towards northern or western Europeans. Some asserted that even those immigrants from the “Nordic” race of Northern Europe needed to be Canadianized because, although very

³²*The Baptist Visitor*, January 1912, 6. Yet at the same time these qualities were perceived to be simply the raw material for making these immigrants into good Canadian citizens, rather than worthy attributes in their own right. The perception of the foreigner as “primitive” and “benighted” still dominated Protestant thinking of the period. Enrico C. Cumbo notes that “the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon and the spiritual superiority of Protestantism led many to patronize the foreigner.” See Enrico C. Cumbo, “‘Impediments to Harvest’: The Limitations of Methodist Proselytization of Toronto’s Italian Immigrants, 1905-1925,” *Catholics at the ‘Gathering Place’* (Toronto: Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 1993), 162.

³³*The Baptist Visitor*, September 1901, 6.

³⁴*The Baptist Yearbook*, 1894, 158.

receptive to Anglo-Protestant ideals, on arrival in Canada they did not necessarily share the ideals and morals on which a democracy like Canada depended. As a result, all immigrants needed to be ranked according to how much they differed from the Anglo-Saxon ideal. Though American and northern European immigrants did not invariably present major problems when it came to Canadianization, those from other parts of Europe, and especially Asia, whose languages, cultures and ideals were considered radically more distinct required far further scrutiny.³⁵

Increasingly after 1901, even Baptist attitudes and responses to ethnic diversity began to change. As one commentator remarked, "Christian civilization is at stake by the godless influences of these European and Asiatic peoples."³⁶ Where once Baptists had regarded the possibilities afforded by immigration as something wonderful, they now perceived it to be the greatest peril facing the nation. The 1909 *Baptist Yearbook* records:

It is equally certain that this fact is creating one of the gravest problems that the Canadian government and the Canadian people have ever faced . . . Some of these people are easily assimilated and incorporated into our life and brought into a fair conformity to our national ideals. They are anxious to learn and to become Canadians in the truest sense of the word. But this is not true of the largest proportions of them. They are here for one and only one purpose – that of securing an easier and better living than they could get in their own land. They think nothing about our national ideals and care nothing about the making of the nation. Notwithstanding this, we are convinced that they are capable of being transformed into *good citizens*. *But we must remember that they are coming to us as raw material. They are bringing with them all their religious and*

³⁵Katerberg, "Protecting Christian Liberty," 11. Howard Palmer noted, "[p]ublic debate over Slavs focused on whether they should be allowed to enter Canada. But debate over blacks, Chinese, and Japanese focused on whether they should be allowed to come to Canada at all." See Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 32ff. For a discussion of Protestant clergy's response to Oriental immigrants see W.P. Ward, "The Oriental Immigrant and Canada's Protestant Clergy, 1858-1925," *BC Studies*, No. 22, Summer 1974, 40-55.

³⁶*The Baptist Visitor*, May 1904, 9.

*racial prejudices, all their socialistic and anarchistic tendencies, all their disregard for the Christian Sabbath and all their callous indifference to the value of human life. We believe that nothing but the Gospel of Jesus Christ will effect the needed transformation, and we would [argue] that this problem is everyday becoming vaster in its proportions and more urgent in its character.*³⁷

Clearly, interests of national security rather than eternal security were increasingly becoming the preoccupation of evangelistic endeavours, since many of these immigrants were deemed a menace to Canadian civilization.

Howard Palmer noted that the response of Protestant churches to the new immigrants must be viewed "within the context of the relationship between Protestant religious values and nationalism."³⁸ One of the main goals of these Protestant churches, including Baptists was the creation of a Christian nation. N.K. Clifford argued that this religious vision and its relationship with immigration not only

provide[d] the basis for the formation of a broad Protestant consensus and coalition . . . but also a host of Protestant-oriented organizations such as temperance societies, missionary societies, Bible societies, the Lord's Day Alliance, the YMCA's and YWCA's utilized this vision as a framework for defining their task within the nation, for shaping their conceptions of the ideal society, and for determining those elements which posed a threat to the realization of their purposes . . . Amongst the threats to this vision was the massive immigration to Canada, between 1880 and World War II, of people who did not share it . . .³⁹

The reform movements that emerged in Canada prior to the First World War were dedicated to the task of "righting the social ills" that plagued the nation and "building a truly Christian Canada." Three of the major social reform movements, the social gospel,

³⁷*The Baptist Yearbook*, 1909, 65.

³⁸Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 41.

³⁹N.K. Clifford, "A Vision in Crisis," *Religion and Culture in Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1977), 24. The Laymen's Missionary Movement should also be included with this group.

prohibition and women's suffrage, all expressed concern over the "'threat' the new immigrants posed to the type of 'progressive' society they envisioned." While some reformers believed the social problems of the immigrant neighbourhoods could be remedied through education and assimilation programs, a tiny minority believed they were "biologically determined and sought a solution to the problem in exclusionary immigration laws."⁴⁰

The social gospel, the underlying ideology of many of these reform movements, sought the creation of a Protestant Christian Canada not only through the salvation of individual souls, but also through the salvation of society itself.⁴¹ In their efforts to build this truly Christian society, social gospel clergy and lay people saw "the immigrant" as one of their major stumbling blocks.

The root cause of the ever expanding 'hydra-headed social monster,' at least in the minds of the theologically enlightened and socially motivated Protestant churchmen of the period, was the combination of a large influx of European immigrants and the industrialization of North America.⁴²

⁴⁰Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 38. Palmer notes that despite the widespread concern among reformers over the impact of the new immigrants, as long as Clifford Sifton remained Minister of the Interior, the Liberal government of Wilfrid Laurier basically ignored demands for tighter controls on immigration, since they believed immigration was necessary to sustain economic growth, as well as provide a cheap source of labour for railroad construction. However, when Frank Oliver became Minister of Interior in 1905 following Sifton's resignation, "some concessions were made to nativists in the form of tightened immigration regulations governing central and eastern Europeans." See Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 45-47.

⁴¹See J. Brian Scott, "The Western Outlook and Western Baptist and Baptist Social Christianity, 1908-22," *Canadian Society of Church History Papers* 1983, 6; cf. Richard Allen, "The Social Gospel and the Reform Tradition in Canada, 1890-1928," *The Canadian Historical Review*, December, 1968 381-82.; Richard Allen, *A Social Passion* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).

⁴²J. Brian Scott, *Responding to the Social Crisis: The Baptist Union of Western Canada and Social Christianity, 1908-22*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Ottawa, 1989, 272.

Southern, and eastern Europeans and Asians were singled out for missionary activity not only because they were viewed as “inferior to other immigrants,” but also because they “were not Protestant and ‘lacked the desirable Anglo-Saxon qualities.’”⁴³ As this missionary work proceeded, Howard Palmer notes that “proselytizing to Protestantism came increasingly to be seen as secondary to the task of assimilating the immigrants to the standards of Canada’s English-speaking majority.” Protestant clergy believed that “assimilation would both alleviate the social problems facing immigrants and prevent the deterioration of ‘Canadian’ or ‘British’ institutions, which were regarded as synonymous.” Consequently, assimilation which was “first seen as a means of facilitating conversion . . . eventually came to be an end in itself.”⁴⁴

While the response of Protestant churches to the social crisis of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were markedly similar, J. Brian Scott notes that the crisis did not consume Baptists in the same fashion “that it consumed Methodists and Presbyterians.” Scott asserts that “a Calvinistic reverence for pursuit of rugged individualism in the form of free enterprise, . . . seems to set Western Baptist social gospel apart from its prairie counterparts.”⁴⁵ Nevertheless, “[t]here is little doubt that the Baptist Union embarked upon its missionary endeavor with a strong evangelical intent of both Christianizing and Canadianizing the rising tide of new immigrants.”⁴⁶

⁴³Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 40.

⁴⁴Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 41.

⁴⁵Scott, *Responding to the Social Crisis*, 276; Scott, “The Western Outlook and Western Baptist and Baptist Social Christianity, 1908-22,” 18.

⁴⁶Scott, *Responding to the Social Crisis*, 270.

Somewhat surprisingly, little overtly racist material against immigrants appears in the Baptist literature of the period other than a few scattered remarks, depicting Hindus, Chinese, and Japanese as “heathens,” Italians as possessive of “impulsive temperament[s]” and Galicians as “stolid,” “indifferent,” “ignorant” and “illiterate.”⁴⁷ Nothing in the way of anti-Semitic comments could be found other than a reference to “the shrewdness of Hebrews” and a statement “And oh, the Jews, the Jews,”⁴⁸ which in the context of the address seemed to carry a degree of negativity. In fact, the most overtly negative comments towards immigrants were found in a single article entitled “Who Are Canadians?”, which appeared in the January 1912 edition of *The Baptist Visitor*, the Women’s Home Missions publication. The article attacked immigrants for becoming too “dependent upon our public charities.” It also asserted that “thirty percent of those cared for in our asylums are foreign born [and] among the criminal class, thirty-eight percent are foreign.”⁴⁹ The article, also sought to draw a distinction between the characteristics and ideals of different foreigners, arguing that Scandinavians and Germans were by far the best classes. As for others,

[i]gnorance of our language, disregard for our institutions of law and order, indecency, immorality, drunkenness and crime, make of their city hives, but city dives. High rents, high prices of food, aggravate the troubles, and disease, dirt and degradation pollutes these foreign quarters. We must steadily, patiently, constantly keep at this work of Christianizing the foreigners. We

⁴⁷*The Baptist Yearbook*, 1912, 86; “Who Are Canadians?” *The Baptist Visitor*, January 1912, 6-8; *The Baptist Yearbook*, 1901, 7.

⁴⁸*The Baptist Yearbook*, 1912, 86; *The Baptist Visitor*, January, 1912, 8.

⁴⁹In 1911 the population of Canada that was Canadian born was 5,620,000 and the population that was foreign born was 1,587,000. The foreign born population of Canada thus amounted in 1911 to 28.2 percent of the total population. Source for statistics: Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, *Immigration Statistics*, 1984.

must do it because we cannot afford to neglect it. Our national life demands it. He who puts to this work his best effort and energy is as true a patriot as was ever he who shouldered a musket in the defense of his country.⁵⁰

The article concluded with an assertion that Christian love and the glorification of Christ ultimately must serve as the impetus to eliminate the monumental problems of these immigrants. Was the salvation of “our national life” the more pressing motive? If so, what facilitated this shift in motive? Why were certain classes of immigrants deemed more desirable than others?

The answer to each of these questions seems to be more ideologically than ethnically rooted. Germans, Scandinavians, British and Americans were all “highly prized” immigrants for Baptists of this period because they were by in large Protestant. Their basic values and beliefs tended to essentially endorse rather than undermine fundamental Canadian values and institutions of the period. Such groups largely were not seen to present any serious threat to Baptist aspirations of wanting to ensure that Canada remained a Christian nation. However, increasingly after 1901, the religious affiliation of more and more of the immigrants who came to Canada was Catholic. For Baptists this reality posed a serious threat to notions of a Christian Canada.⁵¹

Throughout the course of Canadian history, clashes between Protestants and Roman Catholics were quite common. During the later part of the nineteenth century, open

⁵⁰*The Baptist Visitor*, January, 1912, 8.

⁵¹Scientific racial theories of the period tended not to regard Slavs and other Eastern Europeans as white. Yet, *The Baptist Visitor*, in October 1900, referred to these people as “a white race, healthy and good looking.” This suggests that ethnicity was not the sole or even the critical factor in fostering changes in Baptist attitudes. See *The Baptist Visitor* October 1900, 4; See also Bothwell and Granatstein, *Our Century*, 39-40 for Protestant reaction to the changing religious composition of Canada.

hostility to Roman Catholicism was a popularly expressed phenomenon. This anti-Catholicism was not simply politically motivated, it also had a theological and social inclination to it as well. As J.R. Miller points out, "a proper appreciation of the emotive force of anti-Catholic feeling requires an exploration and understanding of its several surfaces [nevertheless] [t]here could be no mistaking the liveliness of Catholicism as a public issue during the Victorian period."⁵² Roman Catholicism was attacked as being morally and politically degenerate, responsible for criminal, poor and unattractive societies, a brutalizer and degrader of women, a corrupter of the minds of youth and biblically and spiritually bankrupt. In making their case against Roman Catholicism, nineteenth century Protestants asserted, "that Rome was heretic, schismatic, and riven with dissension."⁵³

But of even greater concern to Protestants of the nineteenth century, was Rome's claims and lust for power. "Popery 'never can be satisfied with less than complete domination, and that, too, in matters political as well as spiritual' . . . Catholics 'always aim . . . at supremacy; and when supreme, they are even intolerant. They can never be affectionate subjects to a Protestant monarch.'"⁵⁴ The natural outcome to all this many Protestants, and especially Baptists, charged was centuries of persecution and tyranny on

⁵²J.R. Miller, "Anti-Catholic Thought in Victorian Canada," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 66, No. 4, 474.

⁵³Miller, "Anti-Catholic Thought in Victorian Canada," 487.

⁵⁴As cited in Miller, "Anti-Catholic Thought in Victorian Canada," 491; Mark McGowan's recent analysis of English-speaking Catholics would seem to draw this into question. English-speaking Catholics he maintains espoused their own form of Canadianization, advocating a vision of Canada that was "English in language," "respectful of British laws and governance" although "Catholic in faith." See M. McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 218-249.

the part of Rome. Consequently, Canadian Protestants at the turn of the century, viewed Roman Catholicism as a threat not only to basic fundamental civil liberties, but also to ties with the Empire and later on to the Commonwealth. Brent Reilly has pointed out, that “[t]he maintenance of democratic freedoms and of the links with Great Britain were twin impulses which drove some Protestants to organized defense against what they perceived as Catholic aggression.”⁵⁵

Reverend Alexander Hislop in his book *The Two Babylons* (popular edition first published in 1871) captured the sentiment of Protestants of this period toward Roman Catholics:

There never has been any difficulty in the mind of any enlightened Protestant in identifying the woman ‘sitting on seven mountains, and having on her forehead the name written’, ‘mystery, Babylon the Great’, with the Roman apostasy . . . now while this characteristic of Rome has ever been well marked and defined, it has always been easy to show that the Church which has its seat and headquarters on the seven hills of Rome might most appropriately be called ‘Babylon’, in as much as it is the chief seat of idolatry under the New Testament, as the ancient Babylon was the chief seat of idolatry under the Old . . . It has been known all along that Popery was baptized Paganism; but God is now making it manifest, that the Paganism which Rome has baptized is, in all its essential elements, the very Paganism which prevailed in the ancient literal Babylon, when Jehovah opened before Cyrus the two-leaved gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron . . . Her judgment is now evidently hastening on; and just as it approaches, the Providence of God, conspiring with the Word of God, by light pouring in from all quarters, makes it more and more evident that Rome is in very deed the Babylon of the Apocalypse . . . and, finally, that the Pope himself is truly and properly the lineal representative of Belshazzar.⁵⁶

⁵⁵Brent Reilly, “Baptists and Organized Opposition to Roman Catholicism 1941-1962,” *Costly Vision* (Burlington: Welch Co., 1988), 181.

⁵⁶A. Hislop, *The Two Babylons* (London: S.W. Partridge and Co., 1903), 1-3.

Roman Catholicism was regarded the very antithesis of Christianity – the Anti-Christ.

Recent scholarship in the area of Protestant-Catholic relations in Canada suggests that the confrontationalist approach “typified by the ‘Belfast of Canada’ motif seems overly simplistic given the variegated nature of relations between the city’s [Toronto] Catholics and Protestants.” Historian John Moir, argues that the Protestant press “seldom mentioned Roman Catholicism” and very infrequently made reference to “their Catholic neighbours.” Moir further contends that Protestants were less ‘anti-Catholic’ than they were ‘anti-papal,’ since they feared the interference of the Vatican, a foreign power in their domestic affairs. This, however, is a rather fine theological distinction. How much did or how capable was the average lay person in drawing such a distinction? Were anti-papal and anti-Catholic really two sides of the same coin? Was it possible to attack the embodiment of an institution without really attacking the institution and its members? Even T.T. Shields tried to claim his attacks were not against individual Catholics, but against the Catholic system. In the final analysis does that justify his actions or make him any less a bigot? I think not. Moir contends that “[a]lmost invariably, political perceptions not religion stirred Protestant fears.”⁵⁷ While the nineteenth century was certainly marked with episodes of sectarian violence between Protestants and Catholics⁵⁸ “[f]or Toronto, 1858 seemed to mark a turning point in the tide of religious violence.” Moir notes that

⁵⁷John Moir, “Toronto Protestants and Their Perceptions of Their Roman Catholic Neighbours,” *Catholics at the ‘Gathering Place’: Historical Essays on the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1841-1991* (Toronto: Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 1993), 314.

⁵⁸See John Webster Grant, *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 205ff.

"[p]hysical violence was largely replaced by verbal attacks, in which Catholic editors referred to their neighbour as 'grunting Methodists' and 'canting Presbyterians.'"

The Jubilee Riots of 1875 represented the "last gasp of physical confrontation between Protestants and Roman Catholics in Toronto."⁵⁹ In the decades that followed the Jubilee Riots relations between Protestants and Catholics gradually improved, but fluctuated with political perceptions and economic realities of the day. Consequently, Moir contends that the period following Confederation "inaugurated an age of increasing toleration, or even reconciliation" between Protestants and Catholics, which climaxed in the reforming spirit of Vatican II.⁶⁰

Historian Mark McGowan also views the analysis of Miller and Reilly as being too one-dimensional. McGowan argues that Protestant-Catholic relations in Canada functioned at least at three different levels – institutional, public, and private. Miller's [and those of a few other scholars] analysis, McGowan contends, focuses only on the institutional level and provides insights into the reasons for Catholic-Protestant hostilities at a theoretical level. McGowan asserts that inter-denominational relations "among the ordinary rank and file" were often "frequently in conflict with popular perceptions of institutional and public peace or violence." Generally the "bishops spoke of peace between Protestants and Catholics" and Protestant families were "on good terms with their Catholic neighbours," although there were regional variations. The Episcopal Reports of

⁵⁹Moir, "Toronto Protestants and Their Perceptions of Their Roman Catholic Neighbours," 317-318; Linda Frances Wicks, *"There Must be No Drawing Back": The Catholic Church's Efforts on Behalf of Non-English Speaking Immigrants in Toronto, 1889-1939*, unpublished M.A. thesis, OISE, 1999, 33ff.

⁶⁰Moir, "Toronto Protestants and Their Perceptions of Their Roman Catholic Neighbours," 320, 324.

1900-01, McGowan notes, make it clear that Catholic bishops did not regard direct proselytism as a major concern, but the everyday contact between Catholics and Protestants. Such social interaction it was feared "could subtly disarm Catholics, create moral and devotional laxity, and finally imperil their faith itself." What especially concerned the bishops was the number of mixed marriages, still eminently regarded as a "danger to religion." What this suggests to McGowan is that relations from "the perspective of the pew" were vastly different from those of the institutional perspective. From the day to day perspective of living, working and interacting with one another, traditional hostility between some Protestants and Catholics was beginning to subside, and this was reflected in the growing number of mixed marriages.⁶¹ But it also reflects something more. Religion was gradually being relegated more and more to the private rather than the public sphere. This was true for growing numbers of Christians, as well as the society at large. With increasing secularization religious concerns became less important in the public realm. Religious affiliation for some no longer represented the totality of who they were, but only one aspect of their entire personage. As religious distinctiveness and issues of the past became increasingly less important greater cooperation and interaction with traditional foes at various levels was to be expected. Not all, however, embraced this new era of reconciliation and toleration with the same spirit of enthusiasm or cooperation.

Given the distinctives of Baptist theology it is not surprising that they would not generally share these reconciliatory sentiments. Baptist held a rather low opinion of the

⁶¹Mark McGowan, "Rethinking Catholic-Protestant Relations in Canada: The Episcopal Reports of 1900-1901," *CCHA, Historical Studies*, 59 (1992), 11-32; See also M. McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 89-117.

Catholic Church, regarding it as essentially ignorant, semi-pagan, hostile to free institutions and committed to a deliberate plan of world domination. As such, it posed a direct challenge to their dreams of a Christian Canada. *The Baptist Visitor* prefaced an 1895 article with a caption that stated this “would read as appropriately for us if Canadian was inserted in the place of American.” *The Home Mission Monthly* charged:

... Rome is not content with a religious sphere of action, but aspires to political supremacy, and craves uncontrolled sway in national affairs. Even this, reprehensible as it is, would not be so alarming were it not for the fact that the Church of Rome is intrinsically anti-American [anti-Canadian], and to that extent is a continued menace to our free institutions. The dogmas of the Vatican and their supremacy in the Church, including the infallibility of the Pope and his supreme temporal and civil reign, projected into American life [Canadian life], threaten to subvert and undermine our national freedom and its particular institutions.⁶²

Baptists feared that the burgeoning Roman horde would ultimately foster the demise of Canadian civilization. They saw their duty as not only resisting further encroachment of Roman Catholic power, but also of rescuing those already under the curse of its bondage.

On the other hand, Roman Catholics also found reason for caution in dealing with evangelical agencies. Evangelical identification of the pope as Anti-Christ and predictions of the imminent end of his reign aroused the fears of many Catholics. Catholic leaders

⁶²*The Baptist Visitor*, January 1895, 7; See also the *Canadian Baptist*, August 30, 1900, 8-9, where J.H. Farmer notes, “Most of the readers of the *Baptist* . . . have been trained into an attitude of hostility to, and almost contempt for, the Roman Catholic Church . . . Rome has been weighed in the balances and found wanting.” See also “Protestant Torchbearers,” *Canadian Baptist*, August 16, 1900; “Shall the Truth be Told Concerning Romanism?” *Canadian Baptist*, February 22, 1900; “Catholicism: Roman and Anglican,” *Canadian Baptist*, February 8, 1900, 10, asserted “the foundations of Catholicism are false.” Justin D. Fulton in “A Manly Christianity,” attacked those Protestant churches calling for a “diluted gospel that shall not touch Romanism” and condemned a leading publisher associated with temperance reform for giving away the plates of a book that attacked the “aggressions of Romanism” thereby surrendering “the truth” in order “to get some priests to join in the temperance work.” *Canadian Baptist*, February 15, 1900, 2; *Canadian Baptist* July 26, 1900, 1, notes that the “Pope does not wish it understood that the policy of the Vatican is against England . . .”

complained that Protestants were not just simply circulating a bad version of the Bible, but that their pamphlets and literature “pitilessly attack[ed] Roman Catholics.” Catholics further warned of the “insidious methods” used by Protestants “to entice [Catholic] children . . . into their Sunday schools and screaming conventicles.”⁶³ This fear of Protestant proselytism was not only reflected, Linda Wicks points out, in the Archdiocese of Toronto’s relationships with other religious denominations in the city, but in the defensive attitude it developed since 1850, owing to the minority status of Catholics in the city.⁶⁴ Both Archbishop Dennis O’Connor and his successor Fergus McEvay held that the diocese had a responsibility to protect both the church and the new Catholic immigrants from central and southern Europe from active Protestant proselytism. As O’Connor noted:

This advance of evil [proselytism] is due to mixed marriages which in my judgment have been tolerated to [sic] readily; to public schools which insensibly produce indifference to religion in the minds of scholars; to the public press, which though not irreligious treats all religions in a patronizing way as something to be amenable to and guided by public opinion; to Protestant association, that is, to neighbourly intercourse with Protestants.⁶⁵

Under the leadership of O’Connor the Archdiocese of Toronto adopted an “isolationist” policy in which he concentrated on stabilizing the Church’s institutional structures against Protestant proselytism.⁶⁶ Mark McGowan, however, notes that this “throwback to

⁶³John Webster Grant, *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 114.

⁶⁴Linda Frances Wicks, *“There Must Be No Drawing Back”: The Catholic Church’s Efforts on Behalf of Non-English Speaking Immigrants in Toronto, 1889-1939*, unpublished M.A. thesis OISE, 1999, 33-34.

⁶⁵As cited in Wicks, *“There Must Be No Drawing Back,”* 39.

⁶⁶Wicks, *“There Must Be No Drawing Back,”* 39-44. Wicks’ contention that McEvay was also an isolationist is not supported by the historical record. Historian Mark McGowan maintains that McEvay had a much greater openness in almost every dimension of his episcopate than did O’Connor. McEvay was responsible for the “national parish in Toronto.” He promoted catholicity and was anxious about

isolationism" was just what many Catholics "were in the process of rejecting as they moved into all of Toronto's neighbourhoods and into the broad spectrum of the city's labour market." So while the archdiocese may have espoused such policy and Archbishop O'Connor strictly enforced the marriage laws, the laity engaged in "active disobedience."⁶⁷

Recognizing that their loyalty to Canada, its institutions and its values were being challenge led some immigrant groups to issue public statements affirming their loyalty to the country. One such statement sent by Donato A. Glionna found its way into the pages of *The Globe* on April 21, 1908. The letter was entitled, "Why Italians Would Fight for Canada." In the letter, Mr. Glionna of the *Umberto Primo* Society, expressed how he always made it a point to stress with his Italian brethren the advantages and opportunities of living in Canada for those who were willing to work. He also pointed out "that under the British flag the rights and liberties of the people were protected in a far greater degree than in any other country." As a result, Glionna asserted that he "always advised my Italian fellow-citizens to take out their papers of naturalization as soon as their terms of residency would permit . . ."⁶⁸ In spite of such assurances the true loyalties of many immigrants were still questioned, especially if they happened to be Catholic as well.

But it was not just the Roman ideology that many feared. Socialism, communism, secularism and even general religious indifference were also perceived as a threat.⁶⁹

proselytism. He was in the words of McGowan "active in every sense of the word, determined to beat the Protestants at their own game."

⁶⁷Mark McGowan, *The Waning of the Green*, 108-109.

⁶⁸ARCAT, Luigi Pautasso – ITA OO5, "Archbishop Fergus P. McEavy and the Betterment of Toronto's Italians," 3.

⁶⁹*The Baptist Yearbook*, 1908, 64-65; *The Baptist Yearbook*, 1897, 73.

Consequently, Baptists were gravely concerned over the way the ballot box was being “recklessly” handed over to these new immigrants fearing that it was being transformed “into a bludgeon for our heads.”⁷⁰ The critical issue for many Baptists became “[h]ow [to] mold the heterogeneous mass of immigration, formed of one hundred foreign elements, into one people making them moral and intelligent citizens, loyal to our free institutions and capable of self-government.”⁷¹

Their solution to this problem was to be as much political as it was religious. As C.J. Cameron, Assistant Superintendent of Home Missions, explained, not only was it necessary to assimilate the foreign element, it was equally important to prevent those who were deemed unassimilable, particularly blacks and the “yellow races” from entering the country, since their presence would only serve to undermine the ideals and values of a free and nominally Christian society. Cameron maintained that,

we must endeavor to assimilate the foreigners. If the mixing process fails, we must strictly prohibit from entering our country all elements that are non-assimilable. It is contrary to the Creator’s law for white, black, or yellow races to mix together. If the Canadian civilization fails to assimilate the great masses of foreigners admitted to our country, the results will be destruction to the ideals of a free and nominally Christian nation which will be supplanted by a lower realm of habits, outcomes and institutions.⁷²

For Cameron, the basic threat of the immigrant was political. “The millions of aliens admitted to Canada,” he asserted, “have transported to our soil political notions which we

⁷⁰*The Baptist Visitor*, January 1912, 6.

⁷¹C. J. Cameron, *Foreigners or Canadians?* (Toronto: Baptist Home Mission Branch of Ontario and Quebec, 1913), 14.

⁷²Cameron, *Foreigners or Canadians?* 14; See also C.J. Cameron and C.H. Schutt, *The Call of Our Own Land* (Toronto: American Baptist Publishing Society, 1923), 143.

cannot tolerate. The continental ideas of the Sabbath, the nihilist's ideas of government, the communist's ideas of property and the pagan's ideas of religion."⁷³ Consequently, assimilation of this "foreign horde," became a matter of paramount importance in the minds of church leaders. While acknowledging that the public school, press and political institutions were doing much to instill in these foreigners "a sense of citizenship," these agencies were limited in their effectiveness to inspire true values of Canadian citizenship because they failed to touch upon "the inmost springs of life, and unfold the noblest qualities of the soul" The only means whereby this goal could be achieved was to "Canadianize the foreigner by Christianizing him." Cameron maintained that immigration represented "our greatest opportunity and our gravest responsibility," since failure to Christianize would inevitably result in the foreignization of Canada.⁷⁴ Such work Baptists believed was the means to building a nation and one for which they were uniquely qualified. Given their own democratic ecclesiology Baptists felt that no other denomination was better suited to meet these people and lead them along in the right direction on the ideals of nationhood and citizenship. Baptist churches were not merely centres for "teaching men the way to God and holiness and Heaven, but also for the dissemination of the great principles of liberty, justice, equality and fraternity which have been the foundation principles of all organized Baptist life."⁷⁵

⁷³Cameron, *Foreigners or Canadians?* 15; See also Cameron and Schutt, *The Call of Our Own Land*, 144.

⁷⁴*The Baptist Visitor*, May 1909, 8.

⁷⁵*The Baptist Yearbook*, 1908, 65.

Hence, the years from 1880 to 1914 saw a form of Baptist dualism develop with respect to immigration. On the one hand certain groups were perceived rather favourably with the recognition that they had the potential to become good citizens and contribute to the enrichment of Canadian life. In this capacity, Baptists believed that a Protestant environment, and more specifically their churches, had sufficient vitality to improve the foreign elements they encountered. Alternatively, as the sources of immigration began to shift increasingly after 1901, those new groups whose beliefs and customs were deemed alien and threatening to the foundations of the society were regarded as undesirable. The dread of radicalism, a belief in the superiority of Anglo-Saxon values and institutions combined, in these later years, with an inherent anti-Catholic theology to produce a growing concern, amongst Baptists in Ontario and Quebec, about immigration. As such, Canadian nativism became a major motivating factor behind Baptist missionary activities. This was due to the fact that the religion of the immigrant was deemed more significant than the relationship of his ethnic origin to Anglo-Saxon culture. Two factors did, however, work together to mitigate somewhat this growing nativistic tendency. The first was the belief that the immigrant was part of God's providential plan for helping to build a Christian nation (even though some felt more and more that it was the Pope's plan). The second was a more practical restraint. Certainly, if the immigrants were to be reached for Christ, care had to be exercised so as not to overtly offend them. In spite of this, Convention Baptists in Ontario and Quebec, increasingly saw the "incoming horde" as a debasing influence intent on the destruction of the nation – albeit an Anglo-Saxon Protestant Canada.

Baptists employed a variety of methods in their efforts to evangelize the immigrants. The German and Scandinavian works largely consisted of ethnic language churches and missions (preaching stations). Much of the work in these communities was carried out by indigenous clergy, colporteurs or lay persons.⁷⁶ Occasionally this presented problems from the denominational perspective as some of these pastors proved “misfits” who “disseminate heresy.”⁷⁷ Nevertheless, the Convention recognized the importance of having missionaries who spoke the language and understood the customs of the people, since this would allow the fields to be reached in a “more intelligible way.”⁷⁸ Initially, many of these workers were recruited from the “old World” or the United States, but as the numbers of immigrants arriving in Canada continued to grow, the Convention recognized that “the present haphazard method” was no longer “adequate to meet the needs of the country.” As a result the Convention issued an “urgent call” for German, Swedish and Russian teachers who could “take Christian young men and young women from our various

⁷⁶See for example the appointment of Joseph Joel, an Icelander and former student of Brandon College as missionary to the Icelandic work. *Baptist Yearbook*, 1904, 220; For further evidence of this approach see also *The Baptist Yearbook*, 1905, 37ff., 88ff. The approach suffered from a large turnover of labourers for a variety of reason (many of the clergy recruited from the United States went back), as well as severe financial shortcomings that often prevented the recruitment of missionaries. The *Baptist Yearbook* lamented this fact in 1910 when it noted that financial deficit prevented the procuring of two Russian Baptist missionaries to work among the Slavic peoples of Montreal and an Italian Baptist minister from the United States to do work within the Italian community of Toronto. See the *Baptist Yearbook*, 1910, 76.

⁷⁷*Baptist Yearbook* 1898/99, 177.

⁷⁸This remark was recorded with respect to the need to appoint a German missionary “who could unify the work of German Baptists in this country.” See the *Baptist Yearbook*, 1906, 197. Rev. F.A. Bloedow of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Yorkton, Saskatchewan became the Superintendent of this work. See the *Baptist Visitor*, October 1911, 5.

Baptist settlements and train them for active missionary work.”⁷⁹ In 1908, the Convention hired Rev. John Kolesnikoff, a Russian Baptist from Scranton Pennsylvania, to “deal with the foreign mission field of Toronto.” Kolesnikoff’s arrival prompted the opening of three “mission halls” [King St., Simcoe St., Dundas St. at the Junction] in the city, as well as missions in Hamilton, Welland, Oshawa, Fort William, Montreal and other communities. Besides the mission halls and gospel services [held on Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday] a variety of other approaches were used to evangelize the Slavic communities. These included: night schools where reading, writing, geography and arithmetic were taught to a “goodly number of young men;” a free dispensary and medical care were provided to “these people” on Thursday evenings at Jarvis Street Baptist Church by Dr. Simpson; street meetings; lantern lectures; festivals; literature distribution, including the publication of a Ruthenian paper, *The Witness of the Truth*, and the translation of hymns; and employment information centres. In addition, women were given training in domestic housekeeping that included cooking and sewing lessons, despite the fact they “can’t speak, read, or write English.”⁸⁰ Jarold K. Zeman, a Baptist historian, expressed admiration for this “wholistic

⁷⁹*Baptist Yearbook*, 1906, 201; In the case of Galician missionaries this was deemed essential, since there were not any Baptist churches in Galicia from which clergy or missionaries could be recruited. See the *Baptist Yearbook*, 1907, 239. Brandon College approved the plan and Rev. C.C. McLaurin was able to secure pledges for the hiring of a teacher for three years. Professor Emil Lundkvist, a Swedish Baptist from the United States, was hired in 1907 to aid in the training of missionaries for work among Scandinavian immigrants. See the *Baptist Yearbook*, 1909, 235. W. Ellis has argued that the denominational educational policy of Baptists largely proved ineffective, since it lacked a support base. Many in the pews believed the training was inappropriate. See W. Ellis, “Baptist Missions Adaptation to the Western Frontier,” *Canadian Baptist History and Polity* (Hamilton: McMaster University Divinity College, 1982), 173.

⁸⁰*Baptist Visitor*, May, 1912, 6; November 1913, 8-9. Similar approaches were also used in the Italian work in Toronto. See the *Baptist Visitor*, October 1907, 5-7. Literature distribution included Italian tracts, Gospels and Testaments, that carried a charge for the latter. The report noted that “[i]f they are not paid for, they do not appreciate them sufficiently.” The charge was in fact a way of helping to

[sic] approach to the needs of immigrants."⁸¹ However laudable their efforts may have been the fact remains that the intention of these programs was to Canadianize these immigrant communities poised to "heatherize" the Dominion.

The Ukrainian community itself was well aware of the intentions of these Protestant missionaries. Frances Swyripa points out that the stands of Ukrainian Protestant missionaries were "quickly discredited" because of their links with the assimilationist intentions of Protestant churches. Anglicization schemes were generally met with indifference, and cost Protestant missionaries "many pioneer adherents." Ukrainian parents wanted to ensure that their children retained their native language and customs. As a result, they fostered an environment in which their children were taught the language, customs, beliefs, proverbs and literature of the old country. And even when Anglo-Canadian nativism closed public bilingual school after 1916, Ukrainians turned to their own private institutions [*bursy* and *ridni shkoly*] to ensure the continued passage of their heritage.⁸² The home, however, was the primary defence against the denationalizing influence of the Protestant missionaries and here Ukrainian women played a pivotal role. The missionary women and teachers sent into Ukrainian communities to serve as models of Canadian values and womanhood achieved only limited results. Their influence, historian Frances Swyripa points out, was "limited by their small numbers and isolation,

underwrite the cost of the literature and probably the salary of the missionaries. See also Zoriana Yaworsky-Sokolosky, "The Beginnings of Ukrainian Settlement in Toronto, 1891-1939," *Gathering Place: Peoples and Neighbourhoods in Toronto, 1839-1945* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1985), 287-288.

⁸¹Zeman, "Witness Among the Immigrants," 70.

⁸²F. Swyripa, *Wedded to the Cause: Ukrainian-Canadian Women and Ethnic Identity, 1891-1991* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 7-8, 49-50.

cultural alienation, attitudes and social composition." Often these missionaries and teachers were young single women from middle-class backgrounds, who were "less acclimatized to the rigors of pioneer life than their Ukrainian targets" and hardly "authorities on marriage" or parenting. Many were simply "self-centred, aloof, demanding and prejudiced." As salesperson for Anglo-Canadianism, Swyripa notes that these missionaries were "surpassed by the more persuasive influences of the school, mail order catalogue, workplace, mass advertizing and mass media."⁸³

The years from 1880 to 1914 also witnessed significant economic, social, political and cultural changes in Canada which had a profound impact on the churches of the land. This chapter has sought to address how the Baptist churches of Ontario and Quebec sought to address one aspect of this change – immigration – and why a change in motive and attitude occurred after 1901. The reaction of Baptists was not due simply to the sheer numbers of immigrants nor to the state of the nation's economy. Their response was moulded in large part by the nature of the immigration, which they believed raised serious questions about the type of society that would emerge in English-speaking Canada. Certainly amongst Baptists there was no questioning "that [Anglo-Saxon] values might not be the apex of civilization which all men should strive for."⁸⁴ As a result, Baptists readily accepted and propagated an assimilationist theory in which immigrants were expected to renounce their home culture, values, traditions and particularly, religions, in favour of those of Anglo-Canadians and Protestantism.

⁸³F. Swyripa, *Wedded to the Cause*, 109-113.

⁸⁴Howard Palmer, "Reluctant Hosts: Anglo-Canadian Views of Multiculturalism in the 20th Century," *Readings in Canadian History* (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston of Canada Ltd., 1990), 193.

Ultimately, these Baptist churches would fail in their efforts to win significant numbers of immigrants. Even work among the Germans and Scandinavians, which had proved fruitful in the early years, would end in bitter disappointment as many of these churches splintered away forming their own associations.⁸⁵ But, the success or failure of their efforts should not be judged solely in terms of conversions. As John Webster Grant has pointed out, Protestant missionary endeavors in this period helped to ease the way for many immigrants into Canadian society.⁸⁶ Baptists' fears about the destruction of Canadian society, as a result of Catholic infiltration, were also subsequently proved wrong, though many today question the legitimacy of public funding of separate schools in the Province of Ontario. In another respect, they were proven right. The Catholic church is the largest religious group in Canada today. Nevertheless, in their efforts to address the immigrant question in the years from 1880 to 1914, Convention Baptists in Ontario and Quebec attempted to serve two kingdoms – that of Jehovah and that of Victoria, Edward and George, a distinction in these years that became blurred. In the end it would seem that God's Kingdom increasingly took second place.

The coming of the Great War temporarily put to rest Baptists' fears surrounding the enormous influx of immigration, since the war effectively closed Canada's borders during the years 1914 to 1918. Following the war, however, Canada once again saw a mass

⁸⁵Walter E. Ellis, "Baptist Missions Adaptation to the Western Frontier," *Canadian Baptist History and Polity* (Hamilton: McMaster Divinity College, 1982), 75-76. In 1881, there were 296,525 (6.9 % of the population) Baptists in Canada. In 1911, there were 382,666 (5.3%) Baptists in Canada. These figure were garnered from Phyllis D. Airhart, "Ordering a New Nation and Reordering Protestantism, 1867-1914," *The Canadian Protestant Experience, 1760-1990* (Burlington: Welch Publishing Company Inc., 1990), 104.

⁸⁶Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*, 97.

migration of Europe's 'great unwashed' to Canadian soil. This once again aroused Baptists fears. Protestant church leaders, including Baptists, were among the leading advocates calling for a change in government policy regarding immigration. Their first priority was a restrictive immigration policy.

Chapter 4

Broad Is the Road and Narrow Is the Gate Leading to the Land of Promise: Canadian Baptists and Their Voice in Restricting Immigration Policy 1914 to 1945

The early summer of 1914 was one of the best in many years, and Canadians generally showed very little concern for the crisis that was brewing in some obscure corner of Europe. The Balkans, it seemed, had always been a region of instability, and no one in that fateful summer either appreciated or sensed that the nations of Europe had embarked upon an uncontrollable march toward one of the most destructive wars in human history. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian throne, by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo triggered a series of events that plunged the major European powers into a state of war. The Austrians seized the opportunity to precipitate a diplomatic crisis in order to consolidate a fledgling empire. When Serbia rejected Austrian demands, the Austrians declared war on July 28, 1914. The alliance systems, international agreements, mobilization schemes and military strategies built up over a series of decades soon embroiled the Great Empires of Europe in a major conflagration.

While Britain was not bound by any formal military obligations to enter the conflict (though Britain was a guarantor of Belgian neutrality), the German refusal to withdraw its troops from Belgium inevitably drew the British Empire into the conflict partially for strategic reasons. Consequently, at 8:55 p.m. on August 4, 1914, the Governor General of

Canada, the Duke of Connaught, received a telegram announcing that the British Empire was at war with the German Empire. While Canada “had the right and the responsibility to decide the scope of their involvement,” she was nevertheless automatically at war with Germany. On August 1, even before the formal British declaration of war, Canada’s Prime Minister, Sir Robert Borden, had promised Britain “that if unhappily war should ensue the Canadian people will be united in a common resolve to put forward effort and make every sacrifice necessary to ensure the integrity and maintain the honour of the Empire.”¹ Even Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the leader of the Opposition, was unequivocal in his support of both Borden and Canada’s participation in the war.

Thus Canada entered the war as a largely united nation. At the outset there was a great deal of “good cheer and high spirits.” The war was seen to be as much a Canadian war as a British war. The *Toronto Globe* declared on August 3:

. . . of one thing let there be no cavil or question: If it means war for Britain it means war also for Canada. If it means war for Canada it means also union of all Canadians for the defence of Canada, for the maintenance of the Empire’s integrity, and for the preservation in the world of Britain’s ideals of democratic government and life.²

Even the strongly French-Canadian nationalist paper of Henri Bourassa, *Le Devoir*, was “carried along by the wave.” The nation was, therefore, caught up in a euphoria of

¹As cited in N. Hillmer and J.L. Granatstein, *Empire to Umpire* (Toronto: Copp Clark Longman Ltd., 1994), 52.

²As cited in, Hillmer and Granatstein, *Empire to Umpire*, 53; Matt Bray it should be noted points out that “outside the Ontario capital, in fact, only the *Grain Grower’s Guide* and the *Manitoba Free Press*, both published in Winnipeg, expressed the nationalistic view point he found principally in the *Globe* of Toronto. Otherwise the Canadian press took the more colonial-minded position that Canada was both legally and morally at war because of her place in the British Empire.” The position of the *Globe* must therefore be viewed as atypical. See Matt Bray, “Fighting as an Ally,” *Canadian Historical Review*, LXI, 2, June 1980, 142-143, 141.

patriotism and nationalistic fervour. On October 3, 1914, the largest convoy ever to sail from Canada left for Britain, with more than thirty thousand men, as part of the first Canadian contingent.

Some within Canada saw the war as a glorious opportunity to forge closer ties with the Empire, "a chance at least to save our [sic] soul of Canada."³ But for Borden and many English-speaking Canadians, this was Canada's war, "a struggle in which we have taken part of our own free will . . . because we realize the world compelling consideration which its issues involve." The "cause of freedom" and the "future destiny of civilization and humanity" were at stake, therefore, Canada was committed to see the conflict through to its end. English Canadians contributed sixty-five per cent of the first wave of volunteers, and half of all those who voluntarily enlisted in the Canadian armed forces in World War One were British born.⁴

Even the churches of the nation enthusiastically rallied behind the War effort. At their annual convention in 1914, the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec passed the following resolution 'On the War':

Resolved, that we herewith put on record our sincere and profound conviction that all the people of the Dominion of Canada should realize the serious duty that we are now facing to do everything in our power to support the cause of Great Britain in the present terrible and deplorable war. We feel that no one should underestimate the seriousness of the present situation, and we desire to emphasize the duty that rests upon [all of] us to put all our resources and our services at the disposal of the Empire . . .⁵

³As cited in, Hillmer and Granatstein, *Empire to Umpire*, 55.

⁴Hillmer and Granatstein, *Empire to Umpire*, 54.

⁵*Baptist Yearbook*, 1914, 28.

Baptists were also concerned that the war might have a detrimental effect upon the denomination's Home Mission Enterprises. In its annual report of 1914 the Home Mission Board warned that,

there is a real danger that for months, and even years, the interests of the Kingdom of God may be obscured, and for the time being forgotten. We believe not only that this ought not to be true, but we firmly believe that if the Christian world will properly relate itself to the war, the thoughts of all our people may be turned towards God as they have not been for many years, and that as a consequence we may and ought to witness a great revival of the church and multitudes of conversions. Let us keep constantly before us that fact that, however much we may think about present world conditions, and however deep our personal interest in the war may be, the interests of the Kingdom of God should occupy the place of supremacy in all our thoughts. The great world war must effect in a very vital way the interest of the Kingdom, and it is for the Church of Christ to determine whether the religious result of the war shall be a great religious and spiritual awakening, a great turning to and seeking after God, a fuller recognition of the unity of the race and the brotherhood of man, and an ushering in of the period so long foretold, when the sword shall be beaten into the plowshare, and the spear into the pruning hook, and the nations shall learn war no more, or whether it shall leave the nations worse than when it began, more cruel, more revengeful, more surrendered to the precept that 'might is right,' and that war is the only honorable occupation for humanity.⁶

The strong millennial overtones here are painstakingly obvious. In spite of the war, Baptists were encouraged to keep the interests of the Kingdom of God paramount in their thoughts, in this way the war could serve as a vehicle through which spiritual renewal would be awakened, eventually "ushering in that period so long foretold" – the Millennium, the Kingdom of God on earth.

Furthermore, emphasis was also placed on the need to recognize "the unity of the race" and "the brotherhood of man." Thus, it would appear that there was at least some recognition on the part of Baptists that the war was likely to arouse hostile nativistic

⁶*Baptist Yearbook*, 1914, 62.

sentiments towards some groups of people living in Canada. In this context Baptists stressed the need to recognize the humanity of their German cousins, in spite of the war, and that they too had a place within God's universal kingdom. As F.A. Bloedow remarked in 1914, shortly after the war began and before the body count grew unimaginably high:

We are at war with Germany, but on very cordial relations with German Baptists in Western Canada, who think for themselves, and talk of the war from their point of view just as freely as we would talk with one of our fellow countrymen with whom we differed in politics. The war will be very trying on them. There is more or less of the disposition, when a force must be curtailed, to let the Germans and Austrians go. This will make it very hard for their churches. Many of them have no sympathy with the German war machine, and those who feel that the Kaiser is fighting a righteous war are good-mannered enough to know that they are in Canada, and that Canada is at war.⁷

In spite of such assurances, as we have already noted, the war unleashed a most pronounced patriotic zeal that precipitated an insistent hostility to 'hyphenated Canadians' and demanded their unswerving loyalty to the nation.⁸ Some Baptists, including T.T. Shields, pastor of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, were not so accommodating to their German brethren. Shields saw the advance of Prussianism as a precursor to the spread of Modernism. "Prussian militarism is the ripe fruit of the brutal doctrine of the survival of the fittest," Shields noted. Seen in this context, the war was represented in the thought of Shields as a struggle between the "brute force" of evolutionary liberalism and the "weaker things" of an "omnipotent God." Germany, he noted, had shown "us what to expect, - Hell with the top taken off!"⁹ For many Canadians, including members of the

⁷*Baptist Yearbook*, 1914, 226.

⁸Palmer, *Reluctant Hosts*, 197.

⁹T.T. Shields, "'Culture' and Evolution," *Revelations of the War*, 26-28. "We are threatened with 'higher criticism'" was the alarm cry sounded by H.G. Mellick back as early as the mid-1890s in making

nation's churches (Baptists included), these "foreigners" constituted "a real menace to our Canadian civilization."

The coming of the Great War, therefore, had profound implications not only for immigration, but also for many of the new Canadians scattered throughout the land. The war and the shutdown of passenger shipping from the continent effectively brought to an end the great migratory movement of population from the nations of Europe to the shores of Canada. Those few immigrants who did arrive were almost inclusively of English-speaking nationalities. There was even some outflow of Allied nationals from Canada to Europe. Russian, Italian, French and other reservists living in Canada heard the bugle call and returned to their respective countries.

In May 1914, even before hostilities broke out in Europe, Borden's government passed the British Nationality, Naturalization and Aliens Act, which fundamentally changed Canadian naturalization practice. Prior to the passage of this Act, an immigrant merely required a sworn affidavit that testified to three years residence in Canada in order to gain naturalization. With the enactment, immigrants were required to prove both five years residency and an adequate knowledge of either English or French to a superior court judge. Furthermore, the Secretary of State was granted absolute discretionary power to deny naturalization to any individual deemed a threat to the "public good."¹⁰ Once

reference to Baptist work amongst German immigrants. See the *Baptist Yearbook*, 1894/95, 159.

¹⁰G.S. Kealey, "State Repression of Labour and the Left in Canada, 1914-20: The Impact of the First World War," *A Nation of Immigrants* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 386. For further discussion on the impact of the war and the threat of 'enemy aliens' see Howard Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1982), 47-53; Donald Avery, "The Radical Alien and the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919," *The West and the Nation* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1976), 212-219.

Canada found herself at war, the government also saw fit to pass the War Measures Act which gave the executive branch of government almost unlimited powers in the interest of "security, defence, peace, order and welfare of Canada," including the powers of arrest, detention, exclusion and deportation.¹¹ Even before the Act became law, the government had already issued an order in council designed to regulate the flow of "enemy aliens" out of the country. While assuring that their property and businesses would remain safe, the government nevertheless demanded they surrender "all firearms and explosives."¹²

In late October the government passed further legislation demanding that all "enemy aliens" were required to register and submit themselves for examination. Special registrars of "enemy aliens" were commissioned in major urban centers, while police authorities were empowered in other jurisdictions. Following registration and examination, "foreign aliens" who were deemed non-threatening were permitted either to leave Canada or remain free provided that they reported monthly to the registrar. Those characterized as "dangerous" were interned along with those who either failed to register or who refused the examination. This "initial wave of enthusiasm" resulted in the internment of some 6000 aliens, many of whom surprisingly were former Galicians (Ukrainians), subjects of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, most of whom passionately hated the Austro-Hungarian Empire.¹³ By 1916, most of these internees were released.

¹¹Kealey, *A Nation Of Immigrants*, 387.

¹²Kealey, *A Nation Of Immigrants*, 387.

¹³Kealey, *A Nation Of Immigrants*, 387-388; See also Mark Minenko, "'Without Just Cause': Canada's First National Internment Operation," in L. Luciuk and S. Hryniuk (eds.) *Canada's Ukrainians: Negotiating and Identity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 288-303. The camps remained open until February 1920 and were not officially closed by the Internment Operations Officer until June 1920. The camps had imprisoned 8579 men, 81 women and 156 children. The men included 2009 Germans,

Nevertheless, while the internment experience outraged Ukrainian Canadians, some Canadian historians have tended to downplay the internment's horrors, even describing it as "charity to indigent, unemployed foreigners."¹⁴ Robert C. Brown and Ramsay Cook go so far as to assert that the government's major concern was beneficence designed "to safeguard the rights of aliens" against nativist hostility. By taking the internees out of harm's way they conclude "that the government's actions held in check the unrestrained enthusiasm of native Canadians to persecute their fellow citizens."¹⁵ In other words, 'these aliens' were interned for their own protection. Ukrainian-Canadian historians have not shared the same enthusiasm for the policies of the Borden government. Mark Minenko

5994 'Austrians' (Ukrainians), 205 Turks, 99 Bulgarians and 312 'miscellaneous.' Of these no more than 3179 could be considered remotely prisoners of war. See Kealey, *A Nation Of Immigrants*, 392. Bishop Nykyta Budka's pastoral letter calling upon his Ukrainian parishioners to remember their duty to the Austro-Hungarian Empire if war broke out no doubt fueled the anger of Anglo-Canadians. In January 1916, the newly elected Liberal government of Manitoba also announced its intentions to create a unilingual school system in the province, because "among so many different nationalities there is an absolute need of a common medium of communication." Many ethnic leaders in Manitoba did not accept this reasoning and saw the abolition of bilingual schools as a diabolical plot on the part of "English jingoes and Orangemen . . . who desire to deprive the Ukrainian youth from having an opportunity to enter any position above digging sewers and cutting lumber." In March 1916, D.A. Ross a Liberal MLA from Manitoba charged that Budka was an Austrian spy, an officer in the Austrian Army and not a Bishop at all. See Avery, "The Radical Alien and the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919," 213-214. For a discussion of the charges brought against Budka for sowing "seeds of sedition and disloyalty" and being a "menace to the British interest of Manitoba" see Michael Shykula and Bernard Korchinski, *Pioneer Bishop: The Story of Bishop Nicetas Budka's Fifteen Years in Canada* (Regina: Bishop Budka Council #5914/ Knights of Columbus, 1990), 106-111; Arthur Meighen, Acting Minister of Justice was informed by the Office of the Chief Commissioner of Police that following a thorough investigation of Budka there were no grounds for prosecution on the basis of these accusations. Budka, nevertheless, was subsequently put on trial on October 27, 1919. Judge Paterson, the judge of record at the trial, was prepared to dismiss the case for lack of evidence. At Budka's request the trial continued in which he supplied an abundance of evidence to support his claims of loyalty to Canada. The judge subsequently rendered his decision on November 26, 1919 stating: ". . . not a tittle of evidence was produced against the bishop to warrant the charges brought." Paterson asserted that no grounds were established to doubt Bishop Budka's "loyalty to Canada."

¹⁴Kealey, *A Nation Of Immigrants*, 388.

¹⁵Brown and Cook as cited in, Kealey, *A Nation Of Immigrants*, 388.

notes that the internment of Ukrainian-Canadians “was a grave injustice against a people who had come to contribute to the opening of western Canada . . . the restrictions that were progressively imposed on all Canadians, and specifically upon Ukrainians, went beyond any measures required to ensure law and order in Canada during the First World War.”¹⁶

The Home Mission work of Baptists among the New Canadians was affected by the wave of anti-foreign nativism. An economic recession at the war’s outset and the conditions arising out of the war hindered the work in non-English missions. The closing down of large scale immigration into Canada saw the number of immigration chaplains at Quebec representing the Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists reduced from three to one representing all four denominations. That one, incidentally, happened to be Reverend M. Hughes, “our Baptist man in Quebec City.”¹⁷ But more significant than all of that were the obvious instances of flagrant discrimination, ridicule and suffering many pre-war immigrants were forced to endure. And while the denomination tried throughout the war to depict work among the immigrants in the most positive light it could, asserting that “the work among the non-English churches continues

¹⁶Minenko, “Without Just Cause,” 302-303; See also Peter Melnycky, “The Internment of Ukrainians in Canada,” in F. Swyrypa and J.H. Thompson (eds.) *Loyalties in Conflict: Ukrainian Canadians During the Great War* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute for Ukrainian Studies, 1983), 1-24; Lubomyr Luciuk, *A Time for Atonement: Canada’s First National Internment Operation and Ukrainian Canadians, 1914-1920* (Kingston: Limestone Press, 1988); J.B. Gregorvich (ed.) *Ukrainian Canadians in Canada’s Wars: Materials for Ukrainian Canadian History* (Toronto: Ukrainian Canadian Research Foundation, 1987); Kealey, *A Nation Of Immigrants*, 388; see note 15, 405; See also John Thompson, *The Harvest of War: The Prairie West 1914-1918* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1977), and Chapter 4 of Donald Avery’s *Dangerous Foreigners: European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada 1896-1932* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1979).

¹⁷*Baptist Yearbook*, 1915, 74.

. . . with general good harmony [despite] the fact the races represented are opposing each other overseas,"¹⁸ it is clearly evident that serious problems plagued this work. As one commentator remarked concerning Slavic Canadians, the churches have "misunderstood them." While the churches "are on a fair way to appreciat[ing] them for some prejudices are being removed, and it will be in the interest of our mission work and for the good of our country if [sic] we be not too hasty in our judgment of any people coming to us."¹⁹ The effectiveness of church outreach programs, it would appear, were being seriously undermined by the misinformed and erroneous attitudes held by many towards this ethnic community.

In 1916, the Women's Baptist Home Missions Board of Ontario West reported that "this has been a year of common suffering in our German work,"²⁰ and the Western Missions Board reported that "the war conditions sometimes make the relations between these people and their English brothers a little difficult, but on the whole the work has gone on harmoniously."²¹ Johann Fuhr, an immigrant of German origin recalled that "[i]n World War I, the hatred for Germans was obvious. Before World War I Germans were tops . . . they were workers. During World War I people were talking so much against the Germans that Germans felt downhearted and discouraged at the hatred."²² Commenting

¹⁸*Baptist Yearbook*, 1917, 260-261; See *Baptist Yearbook*, 1915, 234, 237; *Baptist Yearbook*, 1916, 271, 274.

¹⁹*Baptist Yearbook*, 1915, 262.

²⁰*Baptist Yearbook*, 1916, 250.

²¹*Baptist Yearbook*, 1916, 271.

²²As cited in Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 48. At different times throughout the war rioting soldiers and civilians attacked the premises of German clubs and businesses.

on work among the German immigrants the President of the Convention remarked in 1918 that the war presented one of the most significant reasons for propagating the Gospel amongst the 500,000 Germans living in Canada. This he asserted was the only way to prevent “their old ideals” and “philosophy of life” from being set up here in Canada. Propagation of the Gospel was not only the means to spiritual salvation, but political salvation as well. “If we give them Jesus, we first save them, then we save our country, and who knows? perhaps we may save Germany.”²³

Even Scandinavians, considered by Baptists as “among the most valuable of immigrants” and our “best class of settlers” were also subject to this outpouring of nativistic sentiment. One Swedish Baptist’s pained comments found their way into the 1917 *Baptist Yearbook*:

Some unscrupulous writer has incorrectly accused the Scandinavians of not being loyal to their new King and country during the present life-and-death struggle in defence of the high cause of freedom, the rights of humanity and lasting peace. A few isolated individuals who are still under the influence of the old country may claim that they are neutral – whatever that may mean, – but it is equally true that probably 5,000 or more have enlisted for overseas service. Several have already been reported killed in action. Last year two distinctly Scandinavian battalions were recruited in Winnipeg. We positively refuse to create any sort of ‘Scandinavianism’. Our ambition is – and the word should be taken in its proper sense – our endeavor is to make the youths of the noble blonde race better Christians and better Canadians.²⁴

The fact that such a letter would be printed in the *Yearbook* is indicative that the editors were concerned that good Baptists would be tarred with a nativist brush. The last few words of the statement, “better Christians and better Canadians” suggest that Baptists

²³*Baptist Yearbook*, 1918, 230.

²⁴*Baptist Yearbook*, 1917, 262. The writer probably meant “companies” here as battalions contained about 1,100 men.

maintained their assimilationist zeal throughout the war years and this, as we have already noted, was grounded in nativistic and racialistic ideology.

Throughout the war years Baptists sought to not only maintain, but actually intensify their work among the non-English speaking people from Europe as something of vital national interest. "No missionary work . . . is more needful, interesting, important and encouraging, than that among the non-English people from Europe."²⁵ Baptist evangelism, the Western Missions Board asserted, is "a force which makes for the highest ideals and the [surest] counsels in national life."²⁶ The need to Canadianize these people was heightened near the close of the war when rumored immigrant support for a number of radical organizations served to intensify anti-radical nativist fears of the "menace of the aliens."²⁷ The Russian Revolution, with its public affirmation of atheism, frightened some Canadian religious spokespersons, who feared that some of those from the former Russian Empire might be more than a little sympathetic to the revolutionary ideals of the Bolsheviks. Furthermore, the civil war between the Reds and the Whites was regarded by some as the battle of the Godless against the word of Christ.

²⁵*Baptist Yearbook*, 1916, 271.

²⁶*Baptist Yearbook*, 1918, 278.

²⁷For discussion of how government legislation (PC 2381 and 2384) moved to censure all 'publications' in 'an enemy language,' which essentially amounted to state suppression of labour and the left see Kealey, *A Nation Of Immigrants*, 392-403.

These fears of a "Red Menace" were further heightened following the events of the Winnipeg General Strike and echoed the America Red Scare of the same period.²⁸ As Dr. F. W. Patterson, General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Western Canada asserted,

This work among the non-English peoples of Western Canada is not only a Christian obligation, but is of especial importance in these days of reconstruction. The 'Foreigner' of to-day will be the Canadian of to-morrow. A deliberate and heavily-financed attempt is being made by Bolshevistic leaders to capture the allegiance of the people of non-English origin. Whether the Canada of the future will be a hell of anarchy or whether it shall develop along constitutional lines toward a freer and better citizenship will depend on whether the church of Jesus Christ or the Bolshevist is the winner in this struggle for the allegiance of the new Canadian.²⁹

Patterson concluded his survey by pointing out that the almost ceaseless propaganda campaign aimed by the radical left at the non-English population mandated a "more aggressive and vital evangelistic and educational policy among these peoples than we have yet had."³⁰ Now, more than ever, the Canadianization of these new immigrants was of vital importance since frightened religious leaders feared that weak-minded former

²⁸See David Bercuson, *Fools and Wise Men: the Rise and Fall of the One Big Union* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1978); David Bercuson and Kenneth McNaughton, *The Winnipeg General Strike, 1919* (Don Mills: Longmans, 1974); Donald Avery, "Dangerous Foreigners": *European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932* (Toronto: 1979); Donald Avery, "The Radical Alien and the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919," *The West and the Nation* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1976) 207-231; Robert K. Murray's *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920* (New York: 1964) is a good survey of this phenomenon in the United States. Richard Allen's *A Social Passion* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), outlines the relationship between the Church and the Winnipeg General Strike. D.A. Ross MLA for Springfield, Manitoba once again claimed that the entire Ukrainian community was under the control of Bishop Budka and that "this sinister prelate was deeply involved in a Bolshevik conspiracy." Ross indicated that he had irrefutable prove that Ukrainians throughout the province "had machine guns, rifles and ammunition to start a revolution in May" and that their intention was "to divide up property equally among everybody." See Avery, "The Radical Alien and the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919," 219; These charges of Ross proved to be unfounded as the subsequent trial of Budka proved. See Shykula and Korchinski, *Pioneer Bishop*, 110-111.

²⁹*Baptist Yearbook*, 1919, 273.

³⁰*Baptist Yearbook*, 1919, 283.

immigrants were susceptible to radical ideas bent not simply on changing Canadian society, but on actually destroying it, transforming it into a godless immoral society. Patterson's remarks, furthermore, mark a transition in the concept of Canadianization from a "racial" to a "political" phenomenon.³¹

To combat alien political ideas, the Canadian government introduced significant amendments to the Immigration Act that allowed for the immediate deportation of anarchists and any other proponents of armed revolution. Following the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919 the government also amended the Naturalization Act allowing it to revoke the naturalization of any person, even of British heritage, who propagated revolution. The government also changed the Criminal Code to allow for the laying of charges against anyone who attempted to promote change outside of the peaceful parliamentary model.³² As Howard Palmer correctly remarked, "[b]y 1919, notions of ethnic, cultural and political acceptability had triumphed over economic considerations in the formation of national immigration policy."³³

³¹Patterson had the previous year called for Christians to serve in public office. See *Western Baptist*, July 1918, 2. While lamenting the "Bolshevist leadership" of the Winnipeg General Strike, the *Western Baptist* noted that "beneath the present struggle was the wide-spread consciousness that the disproportion between income and necessary expenditure [showed] no sign of being overcome," [and that] "the government [appeared] unable to understand and incapable of giving assistance." See the *Western Baptist*, July, 1919, 4. The unrest the paper asserted represented the failure of human society to do what was just. This is certainly a surprisingly liberal response given the hysteria of the times. Baptist reaction to the One Big Union and the labour difficulties of 1918/19 is, however, generally not marked. The *Western Baptist* makes this lone reference in July 1919, the *Canadian Baptist* makes no mention at all of any union or labour difficulties in 1918/19.

³²Kealey, *A Nation Of Immigrants*, 402; See also Avery, "The Radical Alien and the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919," 222-224.

³³Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 56.

The economic recession of the early 1920s once again brought immigration policy to the forefront of public debate in Canada. Hoping to recapture the boom spirit of the pre-war years leaders of the Liberal Party, the urban press, and the business community all vigorously promoted immigration in the early 1920s. Their ideals were still largely tied to several basic assumptions of the National Policy: farmers were needed to provide traffic and freight for the railroads, to purchase and settle Canadian Pacific Railroad lands, and to provide a domestic market for Canadian made products. Generally, it was believed that a larger population could provide a stable base for the economic and social development of the country. The need for increased immigration was viewed as "particularly pressing" due to the fact that Canada's railroads were largely over-extended, national debt had increased substantially during the war, and Canadians were emigrating in increasing numbers to the United States.³⁴

While the recession prompted some groups in Canada to call for increased immigration quotas, others, like farmers, labour unions and war veterans, seriously questioned the desirability of further immigration. The opposition of these groups to immigration was almost entirely economic. Farmers and labour organizations questioned "the connection between immigration and economic growth and wondered if immigration would lead to [further] unemployment and a reduced standard of living for Canadian workers or to an overproduction of grain through an increased number of farmers."³⁵

³⁴Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 64.

³⁵Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 70.

During the war Baptists understood that once hostilities ceased, Canada would most likely again become a destination for many European immigrants seeking new homes. As early as 1916, the Home Missions Board warned,

[a]fter the war closes, undoubtedly upon Canada will come a deluge of immigration... The history of events following every European war in the last two centuries tells us that emigration is the escape valve from imminent insurrection. As Canada is the only country in the world that offers the newcomers a free home on the land, we can reasonably expect that a large majority of these foreign immigrants will settle in the Dominion. What preparations are we making to meet the incoming tide of immigration?³⁶

Baptists fears were put to rest when the Canadian government, in the early 1920s, amended the Immigration Act to further restrict immigration from south, central and eastern Europe, as well as Asia. These changes virtually excluded all Chinese immigrants from Canada while most central and eastern Europeans were classified as non-preferred or restricted categories of immigration. Southern Europeans, and all European Jews were classified as permit class immigrants, making it even harder for them to enter Canada.

The 1922 Immigration Policy of Prime Minister Mackenzie King's Liberal government sought to uphold the major provisions of the pre-First World War policy. It was selective and made provisions for farm labourers, farmers with "sufficient means" to begin farming, domestics, British subjects and Americans. All other immigrants were virtually excluded. Basically the

policy was an attempt to find a middle ground between business on the one hand, which was demanding that immigration doors be thrown open to allow in larger numbers of immigrants, and organized labour and patriotic groups on the other hand, who wanted the doors kept closed since they feared competition from cheap labour or a new influx of unassimilable and 'inferior'

³⁶*Baptist Yearbook*, 1916, 68.

immigrants. The 1922 regulations gave formal expression to the long-standing preference for British immigrants.³⁷

Baptists had, in fact, called for just such a change in Immigration policy as early as 1919. Dr. F.W. Patterson, General-Secretary of the Baptist Union stated: "If we might be pardoned for venturing into the realm of national politics, it looks as though our Government should immediately discontinue all non-English immigration until we have digested and assimilated the enormous amount we have already taken in."³⁸

As part of its goal of seeing changes implemented with respect to Canada's Immigration policy the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec passed the following resolution in 1918:

Resolved, that the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec extend its support to the Department of Immigration and Colonization of the Dominion Government in revising the laws regulating immigration and colonization so as to embrace the following recommendations: First: To discontinue the licensing of [the] [F]emale [L]abour [B]ureau[u] and other agencies whose chief consideration is personal gain. Second: That the Dominion Government and Local Legislatures be requested to use the organized agencies of the overseas religious bodies, and thus secure from the British Isles only those who are likely to make good away from parental control; and in Canada use the Strangers' Department, or its equivalent, now found in operation in all well-organized Protestant denominations, in both city and country, for the purpose of determining positions suitable to the industrial capacity of the employee, and at the same time for exercising moral oversight. Third: That the Department of Immigration and Colonization be urged to substitute for the profiteering agencies, interdenominational directorates in all large cities,

³⁷Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 65. Typical of the efforts to promote immigration in these years was the formation of the Western Canada Colonization Association in 1920 organized by prominent western Canadians with eastern financial backing and the 1923 Empire Settlement Agreement between the Canadian and British governments, which formalized the Canadian preference for British immigrants.

³⁸*Baptist Yearbook*, 1919, 274.

similar to that which is now in successful operation in Montreal, under the designation of the Protestant Directorate of Female Immigration.³⁹

The following year, the Convention was proud to acknowledge its heartfelt appreciation to the Department of Immigration and Colonization of the Dominion Government for its work in reversing the laws relating to immigration with respect to the Female Labour Bureau and the perceived control profiteering agencies appeared to have over this organization. The Convention "heartily commend the action of the said department in establishing well-kept and well-inspected hostels in the chief centres from coast to coast to assist female immigrants to get established in suitable situations under proper safeguards."⁴⁰

Baptists also expressed strong disapproval of their government with respect to its policies regarding the immigration of Mormons to Canada. Once again, Baptists were targeting a specific immigrant community because of its religious beliefs and practices.

Instead of nipping this evil in the bud, the Government has allowed these people to come in greater numbers every year, until now Mormonism has grown to be a more serious menace than any of us quite realized . . . Like the Roman Catholic menace, Mormonism not only provides a field for missionary work, but is itself an aggressive enemy of Christianity . . . [Furthermore], Mormonism is the deadly foe of womanhood and the home. Let us [therefore] awake from our indifference to this great menace . . .⁴¹

³⁹*Baptist Yearbook*, 1918, 35-36.

⁴⁰*Baptist Yearbook*, 1919, 34. Part of the impetus for Baptists here was clearly moral reform to ensure that these women were established in "suitable situations," and hence not in prostitution.

⁴¹*Baptist Yearbook*, 1918, 239-240. Baptists had expressed concern about Mormonism in the past. See C.J. Cameron, *Foreigners or Canadians?* (Toronto: Baptist Home Mission Branch of Ontario and Quebec, 1913); See also "Mormonism," *Canadian Baptist* August 9, 1900, 5; August 30, 1900, 5; September 6, 1900, 5. Doukhobors were also viewed by Baptists as a potential threat, since "like Mormons they follow implicitly their leader and so constitute a peril to political purity." See Cameron, *Foreigners or Canadians?* 40. For further discussion on the negative attitudes held toward Mormons, Doukhobors, Mennonites and Hutterites see Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 26, 50-53. For a discussion of Mormon

Mormons had a long history of oppression and persecution as a result of their religious convictions, something Baptists as dissenters should have easily related to. It was, after all, this religious suffering and persecution that gave rise to two principal Baptist distinctives: religious liberty and separation of church and state. Now that Baptists found themselves more and more a part of mainstream Protestantism and culture in Canada, they appeared less inclined to extend such privileges to those groups whose ideologies challenged or threatened their own perceptions of what Canada should be. From the Baptist perspective the best thing the Government could have done was to “nip this evil in the bud” and prevented the Mormon “menace” from ever setting foot on Canadian soil.

Reservations were also expressed about the danger of having masses of non-English speaking peoples settled together in one locale, since it was assumed this would perpetuate the customs and traditions of the homeland. While recognizing that this was difficult to control in cities

... protest should be made against the Government’s granting to non-English speaking peoples, tracks of land for community settlements. [Furthermore], [t]here should be no diminishing of the required standards for full citizenship along lines of education and other qualifications. Responsibility along these lines rest primarily with the Government, and we should expect thorough enforcement of our Canadian laws.⁴²

Foreign blocks were thus to be discouraged because they would lead to the ‘balkanization of Canada’ and hence prevent assimilation.

immigration to Canada see Lawrence B. Lee, “The Mormons Come to Canada, 1887-1902,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 59, 1968, 11-22.

⁴²*Baptist Yearbook*, 1919, 222.

Sociologist C.A. Dawson in addressing this conflict between community and ethnic solidarity remarked:

It was expected that these separatist communities [Mormons, Doukhobors, Mennonites, among others] would arouse the antagonism of those settlers who belonged to neighbouring communities in which a more secular pattern of life prevailed. Many of the social and economic movements which had received the ready support of other settlers were met with stout opposition in these colonies. The politics of the latter were uncertain; they seemed to be opposed, in some instances to public schools, to avoid the official language of the region, and, in certain groups, to be antagonistic to the nationalistic sentiments of the linguistic majority. In other instances, while the members of a colony spoke the official language, they adhere to religious tenets which seem strangely alien. In such a situation the members of outside communities felt uncomfortable and insecure. Naturally they brought pressure to bear on governmental representatives to bring these blocs under school, homestead, and all other regulations without delay or compromise. In many instances these ethnic minorities were made extremely self-conscious and resentful by the antagonistic attitudes of their neighbours.⁴³

Fears were also raised concerning "the fact that a large proportion of these peoples are opposed to prohibition and presumably to other legislation of a moral nature." Consequently, it was necessary for Baptist churches to become more aggressive in reaching out "the helping and guiding hand to these, 'Strangers within Our Gates.'" It was believed that the churches should open classes to teach the English language and present Canadian ideals of life and citizenship to as many men, women, and children as possible within these communities. Only by implanting Christian ideals was it possible to remedy "the evils of which we complain."⁴⁴ Clearly, as Baptists prepared to deal with the expected onslaught

⁴³C.A. Dawson, *Group Settlement: Ethnic Communities in Western Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1936), 379.

⁴⁴*Baptist Yearbook*, 1919, 222.

of immigrants that was soon to arrive sometime in the 1920s, they were armed and waiting with their program of Canadianization.

The 1920s also afforded a significant new role for Baptist women in outreach to New Canadians. From the very outset of Baptist Home Mission Work amongst New Canadians, women played a critical role.⁴⁵ As early as 1883-4, the *Baptist Yearbook* lamented the fact that there were one-third less missionaries serving in Canada than ten years previous and funding for home mission work was in decline. C.C. McLaurin, remarked that "it is suicidal to all our interest."

The 1884 appointment of Alexander Grant, former pastor of Talbot Street Baptist Church in London, Ontario, as superintendent spelled significant turnaround for Home Mission Work in Canada. Grant was a man of considerable vision. New Canadians he argued should never be called immigrants, but simply Canadians.⁴⁶ His missionary zeal and enthusiasm was to play a critical role in the formation of the Women's Baptist Home Missionary Society (WBHMS) of Ontario West and in the response of women to the call

⁴⁵Baptist women had also played a significant role in the temperance issue. In 1886, the Convention had passed a resolution against "The Liquor Question." See *Baptist Yearbook*, 1886, 13. Edie Gleick notes that the women of Walmer Road Baptist church were "entirely sympathetic to the aims of the WCTU for without question . . . the war against alcohol was the evangelical cause par excellence of the late nineteenth century." Given the profound Baptist aversion to liquor these sentiments were shared throughout the Convention. See Edie Gleick, *The Changing Role of Women at Walmer Road Baptist Church, 1889-1959*, unpublished paper, McMaster Divinity College, 1984, 3.

⁴⁶*Northwest Baptist*, August 15, 1893, 2. Grant during his lifetime was able to prevent nativism from becoming a serious factor among Baptists in the Canadian west. This was a considerable accomplishment given the prominence it enjoyed among Baptists in the western United States during the 1890s. However, with the death of Grant it entered western Canada as we have already noted and led to the collapse of the work among new Canadians and native people. For a study of the situation in the United States see Lawrence Davis, *Immigrants, Baptists, and the Protestant Mind in America* (Urbana, 1973).

of Home Missions.⁴⁷ At the annual convention of the Foreign Mission department held at Talbot Street Baptist Church in October 1884 it was decided to add the Home Mission enterprise to the Foreign Mission work: As Mrs. A.R. McMaster commented:

[i]t was painfully evident the Home Missions, which are necessarily the foundation on which all other denominational enterprises depend, had fallen into sad neglect. If a few were feeling their responsibility, was their not a general responsibility, the realization of which might be increased by concerted action.⁴⁸

Consequently, a group of women led by Mrs. J. Boyd and Mrs. A.H. Newman of Bloor Street Baptist Church (Toronto), meeting first at the home of Mrs. Newman and later at Jarvis Street Baptist Church, invited delegates to form a Women's Home Missionary Society. On December 12, 1884, thirty-eight delegates from eighteen churches assembled in the parlour of Jarvis Street Baptist Church and the Society was formed complete with constitution, executive officers and an elected Board of Managers.⁴⁹ During the first ten years of its ministry the Society sought to strengthen work in weak fields and assisted in the opening up of new missionary enterprises among English-speaking people in the West.

⁴⁷Anna I. Greenslade, "History of the Women's Baptist Home Missionary Society of Ontario West," *Canadian Baptist Home Mission Digest*, Vol. 1, June 1953, 100. Grant tragically drowned in a canoeing accident in 1897. At the time of his death he was one of the most respected leaders in the Canadian church.

⁴⁸*The Baptist Link and Visitor*, November 1934, 3; For a discussion of women's mission work in other Protestant denominations see Rosemary R. Gagan, *A Sensitive Independence—Canadian Methodist Women Missionaries in Canada and the Orient 1881-1925* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992); Ruth Compton Brouwer, *New Women for God: Canadian Presbyterian Women and Indian Missions, 1876-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

⁴⁹Greenslade, *Canadian Baptist Home Mission Digest*, 100.

During its second year, the Society also contributed support to the Grande Ligne Mission, which worked among the French-Catholic population in the province of Quebec.⁵⁰

A new phase in WBHMS work began in 1894. For the first time, the Society made financial contributions to missions amongst New Canadians in the form of Comfort Boxes. The recent influx of foreign immigrants into Canada was perceived at once as “our hope and peril.” Thus, the Board agreed to appropriate \$300 to foreign work in the West amongst the Scandinavians. The first Swedish Baptist Church in Canada was soon organized in Winnipeg with thirteen members. The following year two new churches were organized in Kenora and New Scandinavia, after which the Society increased its funding to \$500. By 1897, the General Board assumed control of all Scandinavian work in the Northwest because of its rapid growth. Nevertheless, the WBHMS continued its financial support for this work. By 1914 its support reached more than \$1800.⁵¹

However, the Women’s Society did not limit its support to the Scandinavians. In 1899 following visits from the Home Mission Board’s Superintendents Mellick and A.J. Vining the Society agreed to support missionary activities amongst Ukrainian immigrants. In 1900, George Burgdorff and Timothy Sylvester Muscho, Baptists from Russia, were appointed missionaries and the Society contributed \$600 to their support. In October, 1904, the first Russian Baptist Church in Winnipeg was formed with Ivan Shakotko as pastor.⁵²

⁵⁰Greenslade, *Canadian Baptist Home Mission Digest*, 100.

⁵¹*Baptist Link and Visitor*, November 1934, 10.

⁵²Rev. Shakotko would later become a Travelling Missionary in the West along with Mykety Krywetsky (formerly of Overstone). Shakotko, however, was soon forced to resign because of poor health.

Although work among the Galicians was difficult, since it aroused relentless opposition from the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, and growth slow, by the time of the outbreak of the First World War the Women's Society was contributing \$1200 year in support of eight churches and ten preaching stations, that worked among this group of recently arrived immigrants.⁵³

Work among German immigrants in Canada had begun as early as 1886, largely aided by the American Home Missionary Society and using leaders trained by the German Department at Rochester University. The Women's Baptist Home Missionary Society, while interested in the German work, was unable to make any financial contributions until 1910-11, when it offered \$250 of support for a pastoral salary. The contributions rose year by year until 1914 when, in spite of the war, the Women's Society "raised their appropriations from \$600.00 to 1000.00."⁵⁴

During the first decade of the new century, the WBHMS shifted its focus eastward in Canada to include the "problem of foreign immigration" within the province of Ontario. The work among the foreign population of Ontario was embraced as the distinctive achievement of the third decade of the Women's Home Mission Society.⁵⁵ Most importantly, the Board contributed to the support of Reverend John Kolesnikoff, who arrived in Toronto in 1908.⁵⁶ Under Reverend Kolesnikoff's leadership three "mission

⁵³*Baptist Link and Visitor*, November 1934, 12; In total this amounted to 200 members.

⁵⁴*Baptist Link and Visitor*, November 1934, 13.

⁵⁵*Baptist Link and Visitor*, November 1934, 14.

⁵⁶For a detailed account of his work see Cameron, *Foreigners or Canadians?* 42-58; Canadian *Baptist Home Mission Digest*, Vol. 2, 1955, 83-86. Cf. Lillian Petroff's discussion of his work from the point of view of the immigrant in *Sojourners and Settlers: The Macedonian Community in Toronto to 1940* (Toronto:

halls" were soon opened in the city, which operated night schools, aided the newcomers in finding employment, sought to teach them general hygiene, educational and scriptural truths, and even provided some basic health care through a clinical facility. The ministry also operated a printing press from which Reverend Kolesnikoff edited a Slavic paper (written in Russian), *The Witness of Truth*, with the aid of Mr. Kryzinski.⁵⁷

The ministry of Reverend Kolesnikoff, in Toronto, also saw the appointment of the first Bible women, Emily Weir, to the West Toronto Mission Hall in 1913; whom according to Baptist press commentary the Slavic women referred to as "the good smiling Lady [who] knocks at the door [and] says 'come to a meeting.'"⁵⁸ Soon the Slavic work in Toronto was expanded to include 'mission halls' in other major centres like Hamilton, Welland, Oshawa, Fort William, Montreal, London, Berlin, Preston and others. A Fireside League was also established which allowed members of the Society to do personal work amongst foreign families. Clearly, the approach of the Slavic missions was anything but one dimensional, as it sought to meet not only the spiritual, but also the intellectual and physical needs of the recent immigrants. By 1914, the Society increased its support for this

Multicultural History Society of Toronto, 1995), 60-62.

⁵⁷Work amongst the Polish community of Toronto begun by Reverend C.W. Tuzek, and later supported by Reverend Edmund Lipinski, Mrs. L. Hamilton and Polish student workers was also aided by the publication of a Polish Christian monthly periodical, *The Voice of Truth*. See the *Baptist Yearbook*, 1922, 104.

⁵⁸*Link and Visitor*, November 1934, 15. Mrs. Weir, however, soon found that she could not work with the Reverend and both resigned. The Board accepted Emily Weir's resignation on the grounds she could not speak the language, thus the Board had faced its first personality conflict. See J. Colwell, *The Role of Women in the Baptist Churches of Ontario 1900-1970*, paper CBA, 1992, 8.

outreach to \$800.⁵⁹ In 1914, the President of the Women's Home Missionary Society remarked,

Perhaps no mission ever fostered by our Home Board has created a more general interest amongst our churches. We are glad to be able to report continued and increased prosperity.⁶⁰

These words of optimism, belied reality. The mission work was not going as smoothly as hoped. A combination of the war, the death of Reverend John Kolesnikoff (April 1918), the resignation of several other key leaders (Mr. Naydovitch in Montreal and Reverend Paul Ambrosinoff and Reverend Andoff in Toronto), as well as financial belt tightening led to the closing of many of the mission halls, which focused on Slavic immigrants, especially in Toronto. In its Annual Report of 1919, the Women's Home Mission Society also lamented the distance individual and committed Baptists kept from those they hoped to reach:

. . . whether this work had received the warm sympathy and support it deserved from us? How many of us have taken a personal interest in these missionaries of ours? Which of us have ever gone to one of their meetings? Or visited them in their homes? How often have we remembered them in our prayers? The mere giving of money is not enough. They have the right to expect from us a warm Christian sympathy and co-operation in the difficult work to which they are giving themselves.⁶¹

Historian Lillian Petroff notes that oral testimony demonstrates "that Macedonians made use of all things Protestant that aided them in the new land but for the most part they

⁵⁹*Link and Visitor*, November 1934, 16: Originally the Society had pledged \$1000 of support.

⁶⁰*Link and Visitor*, November 1934, 16.

⁶¹*Link and Visitor*, November 1934, 18.

remained Eastern Orthodox."⁶² Furthermore, many immigrant groups did not look kindly on the efforts of these Protestant missions who tried to woo them away from their ancestral faith.

'As though we were heathen' one old immigrant remembered, still smarting with indignation. Kolesnikoff's forceful attempts to convert the settlers, coupled with his repeated attacks on the Eastern Orthodox faith, angered Macedonian lay people and clergy: 'He tried to force people [to join the Baptist church]. He knocked our church, our religion. That was no good.'⁶³

Opposition to the proselytizing of Protestant missions was not limited to the clergy alone. Even families recognized that conversion meant conflict and further assimilation. Petroff notes that Archimandrite Theophilat "bluntly told those who loitered around the Baptist mission that they would lose their standing in [their] family and [the] community. 'Boys don't go,' he would say."⁶⁴ For those Macedonians who joined the Baptist missions many

⁶²Lillian Petroff, *Sojourners and Settlers: The Macedonian Community in Toronto to 1940* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Toronto, 1995), 59, 62. Enrico Cumbo makes a similar argument with respect to the Italian community in Toronto and the efforts of Protestant mission. Essentially, the Italians made use of the services provided by the Protestant mission without feeling obliged to convert. The mission provided "practical means to practical ends" by offering social and material assistance. In other words, the immigrant was interested solely in learning English and securing access to a job opportunity through connections the mission might have, but not in converting to Protestantism. See Enrico Cumbo, "Impediments to Harvest': The Limitations of Methodist Proselytization of Toronto's Italian Immigrants, 1905-1925," *Catholics at the 'Gathering Place'* (Toronto: Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 1993), 164-165. Stephen A. Speisman also notes that the "attraction of the missions was not Christianity but rather material assistance and aids to acculturation offered there." Consequently, in the case of Jews the most effective counter measure "was for the Jews to set up parallel facilities." See Stephen A. Speisman, *The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1997), 140. Speisman also notes that while it is highly improbable "that many more Jews would have been attracted to Christianity . . . It was true, however, that increased numbers might have sought material assistance from the mission[s] had the Eastern European community not exerted powerful social pressure in opposition to the practice and aroused popular sentiment against the missionaries." In some cases this pressure led to outbreaks of violence against Protestant missions and eventually the formation of the Anti-Missionary League or as it was more commonly called the Anti-Shmad Organization; its purpose being to simply persuade Jews to keep out of Protestant missions. See Speisman, *The Jews of Toronto*, 136-144.

⁶³Petroff, *Sojourners and Settlers*, 62.

⁶⁴Petroff, *Sojourners and Settlers*, 63.

had already been exposed to Protestantism in the Old World. As such, they had already converted [crypto-Protesants] before their arrival in Canada. Consequently,

Protestant intrusion forced Macedonians to size up the situation and act on it. They shrewdly decided to use the educational and work opportunities offered by the proselytizers. The majority did so [however] without abandoning either faith or heritage.⁶⁵

For those few who adopted Protestantism Petroff notes that it

apparently increased mobility and speeded up acculturation. Perhaps it broke through some Anglo-Canadian barriers of prejudice. Or perhaps different mores and contact with urban Canadian ways, which came from already thinking in Protestant modes and being marginalized to the main Macedonian-Canadian community, hastened assimilation. It is difficult to say.⁶⁶

Conversion to Protestantism it would appear had marginal implications for the process of assimilation.

With relatively few exceptions, like the commitment of Emily Weir and Miss Edith Owen,⁶⁷ the major contribution of Baptist women to Home Mission work had largely been financial. The importance of this contribution, however, should not be underestimated, since most of the Home Mission work undertaken in the area, both in Ontario and the

⁶⁵Petroff, *Sojourners and Settlers*, 63. Enrico Cumbo notes that "for a people [Italians in his case] imbedded with this constitution of reality, religious conversion to North American Protestantism was not only problematic but fundamentally meaningless. One would not chose to be something other than what one actually was." In this regard Italian Catholics regarded conversion as a betrayal of their faith and so they "simply 'passed through' or seemingly 'converted' without questioning their age old customs and beliefs." See Cumbo, "Impediments to Harvest," 168. See also John Zucchi, *The Italian Immigrants of St. John's Ward 1875-1915: Patterns of Settlement and Neighbourhood Formation* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1981), 17. John Zucchi, "Church and Clergy, and the Religious Life of Toronto's Italian Immigrants, 1900-1940," *CCHA Study Sessions*, 50 (1983), 532-548.

⁶⁶Petroff, *Sojourners and Settlers*, 64.

⁶⁷Miss Owen was appointed as Slavic Bible Woman in Montreal on November 1, 1915 at a salary of \$170 a year less than Mr. A. Naydovitch even though she was doing essentially the same job (salary of \$700 – \$600 paid by WHMS). See Colwell, *The Role of Women*, 9.

Northwest, would not have been possible without the financial sacrifices of these Baptist women. As a sign of ongoing commitment the Board decided to expand its involvement with Home Missions and for the very first time appoint a women missionary to work amongst the immigrant communities. Miss Anna Phelps was appointed to work among the women and children of recently arrived immigrants on October 19, 1918 at the Royce Avenue Mission in Toronto.⁶⁸ As the Women's Home Mission Society noted, "[i]t has been impressed on our Board that our great opportunity at present lies with the women and children, and we have, therefore, appointed a Bible-woman in the person of Miss Anna Phelps"⁶⁹ Thus, as the door was closing on Slavic mission work, especially in Toronto, a new door opened for the Women's Home Mission Society with the appointment and support of women missionaries amongst the New Canadians. The support of these women missionaries was the "distinctive" feature of the Society's work up to and beyond the Second World War. Between 1919-1969, the Baptist women societies appointed and supported a total of fifty-five women home missionaries, most of whom served, for various lengths of time, among the immigrant populations in major urban centres across Ontario and Quebec.⁷⁰ The work of three of these women, Miss Anna Phelps, Miss Olive Hunter and her close friend Miss Charlotte Evans, stand out for their long and distinguished careers.

⁶⁸Mrs. P. Bruce, "Beneath Canadian Skies," *Canadian Baptist Home Mission Digest*, Vol. 6, 1963/4, 102. Shortly thereafter, the Board appointed two other independent missionary women Miss Abbie Garbutt (1881-1971) in March 1920, who served in Saskatchewan until 1941 amongst the Ukrainians, and Miss Florence Mabee, who served at the Memorial Institute in Toronto, from September 1920 until 1944, working among the Italian and Polish communities.

⁶⁹*Link and Visitor*, November 1934, 18.

⁷⁰Zeman, *Baptists in Canada*, 74.

Anna Phelps, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Champion Phelps was born on May 17, 1872 in Boston, Ontario. From an early age, Miss Phelps was highly involved in the church. She served as a “zealous worker” in the Sunday School department of Boston Baptist Church, among primary and junior age children. Following the death of her parents, Miss Phelps spent about two years in the home of Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Barber of Boston. These were years of spiritual nurturing, and Miss Phelps felt called to foreign missions. She travelled to Chicago to train for foreign missionary service at the Baptist Missionary Training School. After three years, she graduated from the program with honours.⁷¹

Her first missionary service was not overseas, but amongst Blacks on Southern Island between Savannah and Charleston. Here, Miss Phelps laboured for about three years teaching primarily girls at the Mission School at Beaufort. Gradually, the heat and the humidity began to take a toll on her health and on the advice of a doctor, she was ordered to go north. However, after only a short leave, she decided to return to her work in the south. This proved ill-advised. She suffered a complete physical breakdown, which forced her to relinquish all duties.⁷²

While recuperating in Toronto, Miss Phelps attended Bible College and conferred with Dr. Morton on the possibility of working amongst foreign immigrants in Montreal. Still not well enough to work, she went to the Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming for additional rest. Following her return from convalescence, she spent a brief time in nursing before finally being appointed the first Bible woman to work among New Canadians in

⁷¹*Canadian Baptist*, August 18, 1927, 1.

⁷²Miss A. Phelps suffered from physical problems with respect to her tubular glands.

the city of Toronto. Her appointment in October, 1919, by the Women's Home Mission Board laid the foundation for the Royce Avenue Church in Toronto.⁷³ As the work grew, the Board soon found that it was necessary to appoint a Polish speaking missionary. At the request of Miss Phelps, Mr. Tuzek was appointed in October 1920.

Following completion of her work in Toronto, Miss Phelps helped expand mission work in Ford City and Hamilton before finally agreeing to work at the mission the Walkerville Church had established in Windsor.⁷⁴ This work proved more challenging than she had experienced in either Ford City or Hamilton. In Windsor she laboured among a variety of ethnic communities. Her time in Windsor, however, was to be short-lived. She was once again struck down by an illness that would eventually claim her life on July 13, 1927. In spite of her rather short time in mission work, Anna Phelps laid out a path that other Baptist women would soon follow.

Two of the women who took up this challenge were Olive Ade Hunter and Charlotte Evans. Olive Hunter had a long and distinguished career in Home Missions work among New Canadians lasting from the time of her appointment in January 1927 until her retirement in 1968. Hunter was born in Montreal on April 25, 1899 (d. 1996). Her family soon moved to Ontario, and the young Olive spent her childhood in several cities, notably Cornwall and Port Hope. She was baptized at the age of twelve by Reverend J.S. La Flair,

⁷³The Royce Church was formed in March 1923 as the first Polish Baptist Church in Ontario with Mr. Jersak as pastor. By this time Mr. Tuzek had taken on mission work in other parts of the city.

⁷⁴ "Miss Anna Phelps – A Tribute," *Canadian Baptist*, August 18, 1927, 11.

and it seems quite early in her life sensed a calling to mission work.⁷⁵ After attending Cornwall High School (Jr. Matric and partial upper school), she embarked on an eight year career as a public school teacher. She eventually moved to Waterloo County (1926), where her desire to enter mission work was rekindled.⁷⁶ Following the acceptance of her application, she was sent to Toronto for eighteen months training under the guidance of Miss Florence Mabee, who worked among the Polish speakers at the Robinson Street Mission and completed some missionary courses at McMaster.⁷⁷

Hunter was eventually assigned to work at the Aubin Road Mission in Windsor where it was duly noted that she “gave effective leadership.”⁷⁸ She also worked for a time at the Anna Phelps Memorial Mission (at the time called Bethel).⁷⁹ It was largely through her influence that her friend Charlotte Evans, who had moved to Windsor at the same time as Hunter, was appointed full-time missionary to both the Anna Phelps and Aubin Road Missions in November 1929.⁸⁰ Owing to poor health, Hunter was eventually transferred

⁷⁵ “Olive Ade Hunter,” *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*. She claimed that the calling came at eight years of age following a mission band meeting led by Pastor J. Sheldon.

⁷⁶ While teaching German Mennonites in Waterloo County, she also encountered a number of Russia refugees that seemed to prompt these earlier missionary desires.

⁷⁷ “Olive Ade Hunter,” *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

⁷⁸ “Olive Ade Hunter,” *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

⁷⁹ In 1934, the WHMB in celebration of their Jubilee and in recognition of the work of Anna Phelps opted to rename the Bethel Mission in her honour. See “Olive Ade Hunter,” *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

⁸⁰ “Charlotte Evans,” *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*. These two women worked in conjunction with Reverend John Cristea in the ministry, although Cristea would later leave this work in the early 1930s due to personality conflicts with Evans.

by the WHMB to Hamilton in September 1936. In Hamilton she enrolled in a mission course at McMaster University, eventually graduating with a diploma in 1937.

During her time in Hamilton, Hunter was also given charge of a mission outreach to the community's Hungarian residents (known as the Hungarian Mission). In 1942, the work expanded to include many other nationalities and was renamed the "New Canadian Mission."⁸¹ In 1947, Hunter spent a year as the deputation speaker for the WHMB. During that year, she promoted the cause of Home Missions by visiting every Association in Ontario. The following year, however, she returned to the work of the New Canadian Mission, which experienced a tremendous growth, to which Hunter's efforts directly contributed. As a result, of this growth the mission was forced to move to a new site and erect a new building – Eastwood Baptist Centre, which was dedicated on May 6, 1951.⁸² Hunter continued her work of teaching (children both English in conjunction with Bible instruction), a ploy used to gain access to parents, and domestic skills at Eastwood until 1955. When she left Eastwood, in 1955, Mrs. C. W. Fielding, in an article that appeared in the *Hamilton Spectator*, called Hunter "our top pioneer worker."⁸³

Hunter's career in Home Missions was far from over. In 1955, Hunter took up a new challenge. She moved north to Sudbury, where she would spend the next twelve years labouring on behalf of WHMB at the New Canadian Mission (eventually to become Sudbury Melvin). Here, Hunter again worked predominately with children and teenagers.

⁸¹ "Olive Ade Hunter," *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

⁸² "Olive Ade Hunter," *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

⁸³ Mrs. C.W. Fielding, *Hamilton Spectator*, April 30, 1955, as found in "Olive Ade Hunter," *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

She also held English classes for men and women largely of Finnish descent.⁸⁴ After more than forty years of service, Olive Hunter retired in 1968. Her contribution to the cause of Baptist Home Missions during these year is prodigious.

Olive Hunter, also convinced her close friend, Charlotte Evans, to get involved in Home Mission work amongst Canada's recently arrived immigrant communities. Like her friend Oliver Hunter, Charlotte Evans spent forty years of her life committed to this work among New Canadians.⁸⁵ Evans was born on June 23, 1901 (d. May 31, 1977), in Bruce County, Ontario. Her family were active Christian workers, but Evans was not raised as a Baptist. They attended a local Methodist Church. Evans' first missionary contact was in helping raise funds for the church at the age of ten, for which she was rewarded a book of missionary stories. While only fifteen and attending Westside Methodist Church, Owen Sound, Evans sensed the call of God to missionary service.⁸⁶

After graduating from high school, she was qualified as a teacher at Stratford Normal School and went on to teach for three years at Keewatin Public School, and for two more in a community school near Guelph. In the fall of 1924 she entered the Methodist National Training School, which was now under the auspices of the United Church of Canada. She was drawn to the course in Missions. That same year would prove significant

⁸⁴ "Olive Ade Hunter," *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

⁸⁵It is perhaps worth noting that in the case of both of these two women that they did not marry. This was true of many Baptist women missionaries who served for extended periods of time in missionary service.

⁸⁶ "Charlotte Evans," *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

to Evans for another reason – 1924 was the year she met Olive Hunter at a convention. A friendship blossomed that would profoundly affect the direction of Evans' life.

Evans' desire for a career in missions, however, appeared doomed after she was three times rejected for foreign service on medical grounds.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, she left her teaching position in Marden in 1928 and came to Toronto to assist Miss F. Mabee in her work at the Robinson Street Mission. When Olive Hunter was appointed to a mission position in Windsor, Evans decided to accompany her close friend. In Windsor Evans supply taught and did volunteer work at the Aubin Road Mission. Due to Olive Hunter's "influence and prayers" Evans was baptized in July 1928, at the Walkerville Church by Reverend A.D. Vincent.⁸⁸ Now that she was a Baptist, and due to her keen interest in Home Mission work, which she had been doing on a voluntary basis since May 1928, the Young Women's Circles of Ontario West undertook to raise her support, and she was appointed full-time missionary to both the Anna Phelps and Aubin Road Missions in November 1929. As she once remarked, "I would rather work in our East Windsor Baptist Mission for nothing (if that were possible) than do any other work at any salary."⁸⁹ The salary she received, like most of these women missionaries was barely adequate to meet their most basic needs.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, Evans and Hunter laboured together as co-workers in the Windsor Missions until 1936, when Hunter was transferred to Hamilton.

⁸⁷ "The Retirement of Miss Charlotte Evans," *Link and Visitor*, March 1970, 3.

⁸⁸ "Charlotte Evans," *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

⁸⁹ "The Retirement of Miss Charlotte Evans," *Link and Visitor*, March 1970, 3.

⁹⁰In the case of Evans, it was so meager she was even forced to open a private kindergarten and rely on the personal donations of a friend.

Evans devoted herself primarily to the Primary and Play School work of the mission, as well as choral activities. This allowed Olive Hunter to focus on administrative tasks, and leading the older children and young peoples' (teens) ministries. Evans would often recruit children by pulling them off the streets or by knocking on doors and through the use of signs persuaded mothers (who knew little English) to allow their children to attend. The *Link and Visitor* recalled the story of Nic, a boy in the Windsor Sunday School, who later went on to an important position in the Post Office. "How did Miss Hunter and you ever get permission from my parents for my sister and me to attend the Baptist Mission?" Evans recalled,

I remember visiting their parents [Nic and his sister] to invite the children to Sunday School. It was agreed that the children might go if I would promise to take them across the busy street.⁹¹

With the departure of Olive Hunter in 1936, Evans assumed control of the administrative tasks of the mission. She was assisted in the work by Miss Mary Renton, and later by Miss Muriel Israel. The 1930s were an especially challenging time for the missions not only because of the overtly racist attitudes many held towards immigrants, but also because of the severe financial hardships that many, including the missionaries had to endure. Evans maintained, nevertheless, that the missions continued their work of training young people by holding Vacation [Bible] Schools, which complimented the work of week-day groups for children and the Sunday School.⁹² As to what else young people were to be trained for Evans left no doubt.

⁹¹ "Sowing and Reaping," *Link and Visitor*, October 1960, 274.

⁹² "Sowing and Reaping," *Link and Visitor*, October 1960, 273.

[W]e must begin at our own doors, for the people from other nations living in Canada may be won as Christian citizens who will multiply our own efforts . . . We recognize that the refugee (immigre) – resettlement-integration story is not complete until the relocated family has met Jesus Christ and found its place in a communion of worshippers, whereupon it will go out to witness to others.⁹³

In November 1939, Evans was sent on a speaking tour of the Niagara-Hamilton Association, after which she became gravely ill and was ordered by her doctor to rest. As a result of her poor health, her tenure in Windsor ended and her work was taken over by Reverend J.H. Olmstead. The mission was soon granted full membership into the Convention as Anna Phelps Memorial Baptist Church (now Grace Baptist). But if there were any doubts Canadian Baptist women missionaries had shown they had the ability to work on par with their male counterparts in not only planting, but also in establishing churches.

In April 1940, Evans, in better health, was asked to consider the position of Christian Fellowship Missionary for Toronto. She was compelled to the assignment.

While the committee was talking, I knew it was God's will for me to do this work. In every hard problem or in in times of lack of faith in Christian Fellowship work, I think back to that morning when His Presence was so real, when the new work was suggested.⁹⁴

She accepted and opened the Christian Fellowship Office at Beverley Baptist Church on June 1, 1940.⁹⁵ Though her work with the Fellowship was largely administrative, she was

⁹³C. Evans, "The Missionary Task Among Newcomers," *Link and Visitor*, June 1961, 192.

⁹⁴ "Charlotte Evans," *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*. The New Canadian Christian Fellowship concept was just promoted in 1932 as a way "to show our friendship and our Christian Faith with the strangers within our gates." See Mrs. P. Bruce, "Beneath Canadian Skies," *Canadian Baptist Home Mission Digest*, Vol. 6, 1963-4, 102.

⁹⁵The Office would eventually transfer in 1947 to 638 Dovercourt; in 1956 the College Street Sunday School Hall; and in 1960 to 88 St. George.

responsible for organizing a volunteer visitors program, and teaching centres, the purpose of which was to teach newcomers to Canada “our language and customs and show Christian friendship.”⁹⁶ This work was supplementary to government funded immigrant integration programs, municipal night schools, community programs and programs of other agencies. The Baptist program afforded those who couldn’t keep up with their English language classes some extra help, as well as providing an opportunity for mothers, who normally could not leave their families, language instruction. As Evans asserted, they were

aimed chiefly at men and women who’ve become discouraged with night courses, are too shy to enroll in a class of strangers or who have had a bitter experience since arriving in the country.⁹⁷

Besides English language instruction, the pupils were also taken on shopping expeditions, taught how to use the telephone directory, encouraged to read English language books and newspapers and women were “coached” in the use of Canadian recipes. Undeniably, the goal was assimilation – to Canadianize and if possible Christianize(which meant Protestantize) the immigrant as soon as possible. Evans remarked, “[s]ome don’t wish to be assimilated. They come here with the idea of forming their own ethnic group. They don’t feel it’s necessary to be assimilated, as long as they have a job.”⁹⁸ Evans went on to comment that she “tried to discourage” this attitude and “encourage integration” of these immigrants in accordance with the ideals of Canadianization.

⁹⁶ “Charlotte Evans,” *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*. The first teaching centre was opened at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church in September 1947.

⁹⁷ “Charlotte Evans,” *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

⁹⁸ “Charlotte Evans,” *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

Her work among the immigrants communities did not go unnoticed by the church. On September 9, 1946, she was asked to represent Baptists at a Citizenship Ceremonial held at the Chamber of the Ontario Legislature, under the auspices of the Provincial Adult Education Department. She was also frequently asked to train others in the "art of working" with recently arrived immigrants, and her advice on immigrants was regularly sought not only in Toronto, but across the province. Not everyone, however, appreciate her work. Not surprisingly, since many of its members were the target of her missionary ventures, the Roman Catholic Church voiced its disapproval of her work, often sending their own religious publications to her.⁹⁹

Another bout of illness eventually forced Evans to relinquish her duties at the Christian Fellowship Office in March of 1954. After spending several weeks in hospital, she took a year's leave of absence. On September 1, 1955, she was appointed to open a Christian Fellowship Office at the Parson Memorial Mission, which closed in January 1960. The offices of the Christian Fellowship were subsequently transferred to Fourth Avenue Baptist Church, where Evans remained until her retirement in 1969, the only missionary during those years serving in the nation's capital of Ottawa. On Monday, February 2, 1970, in honour of her forty years in home mission work a "Charlotte Evans Night" was held at Fourth Avenue Baptist Church, where she was given a ticket for a world trip, that included visits to Expo '70 in Japan, Canadian Baptist Missionary sites in Indian and various Baptist World Alliance meetings.¹⁰⁰ On her retirement, Evans remarked, "[a]fter

⁹⁹Evans even claimed they threatened her with physical violence that necessitated the need for police protection. See "Charlotte Evans," *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

¹⁰⁰ "Charlotte Evans," *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

forty years of service to New Canadians supported by our Home Mission Department, I can say, along with Miss Olive Hunter, I wish we were just beginning because workers are needed in Canada to reach people who do not know Jesus Christ whom we will continue to serve in our retirement years."¹⁰¹

The contributions and sacrifice that these three women and countless others made to the task of Baptist Home Missions was enormous.¹⁰² Since they were essentially performing the work of their male counterparts, it was only a matter of time before the issue of women's ordination would be raised. This occurred on the floor of the 1929 Convention, where a resolution was put forth favouring women's ordination. After much heated discussion, it was agreed that a Committee should be formed to look into the matter and report its findings and recommendations to the Convention the following year.¹⁰³ The Special Committee, chaired by R.R. McKay, delivered its report on the 'Ordination of Women' the following year:

... 3. They found that, although there have been a few cases in some sections of the Baptist denomination, especially in the Northern United States where

¹⁰¹ "Charlotte Evans," *Canadian Baptist Archives Files*.

¹⁰² See the words of praise offered by the Home Mission Board in its annual report in 1933. *Baptist Yearbook*, 1933, 103. Lucille Marr's article "Hierarchy, Gender and the Goals of Religious Educators in the Canadian Presbyterian, Methodist and United Churches, 1919-1939," *Studies in Religion*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 65-74, offers an interesting point of contrast on the issue of women's ordination. In the article Marr outlines the active role played by women in the area of religious education in these mainline Protestant churches. The onset of the Depression Marr notes resulted in about half of the women losing their positions as directors of religious education programs in these churches. This experience caused the women to realize that they "were expendable to the church." Consequently, Marr asserts they came to conclude there was "no recourse but to demand full equality through ordination." Lydia Gruchy was the first woman ordained in the United Church of Canada. Despite this "victory" women continued to be employed in the traditional area of Christian education which became a "solidly women's domain."

¹⁰³ *Baptist Yearbook*, 1929, 68-69.

women have been set apart as assistants to men having the care of large groups of county churches, it is not looked upon with favor by representative Baptist opinion of the present time;

4. They found that the ordaining of women has never been the practice of our people, and the history of our churches contains no instances of such ordination being proposed.

5. Therefore, while recognizing that women are doing an unspeakably valuable work as Sunday School teachers, district visitors, settlement workers, deaconesses, Bible women, missionaries . . . your Committee does not think there is either demand or need, especially at the present time for beginning a practice which is so entirely new to us as a people.¹⁰⁴

Reverend John Galt moved that the Report be amended.¹⁰⁵ He called for the adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas; for four hundred years Baptists have consistently recognized and taught the equality of all believers and have never questioned the right of women to take active part in the work and worship of the Church . . . and whereas Baptists have sent women forth to preach the Gospel to the heathen; to teach Christian Doctrine and to have oversight of churches . . . and whereas Holy Scripture clearly shows that it pleased God to call women to prophetic office both under the law and under grace . . . therefore: be it resolved, that this Convention express its approval of the ordination of women on equal terms with men; that is to say, in instances in which there is full proof that God has called them to the work of the Gospel ministry. – Reverend H.O. Lloyd seconded the motion.¹⁰⁶

The amendment was “lost.” The Baptist Convention just was not ready.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ “Report of the Special Committee on the Ordination of Women,” *Baptist Yearbook*, 1930, 252. Members of the Committee were: Dr. R.R. McKay, Dr. A.L. McCrimmon, Dr. G.T. Webb, Mrs. E.J. Zavitz, Mrs. Albert Matthews, Reverend H.E. Allen and Messengers D.D. Gray and E.D. Lang. See “The Convention Resolution – Ordination of Women,” *Canadian Baptist*, October 31, 1929, 7.

¹⁰⁵ Dr. R.R. McKay urged that it be adopted.

¹⁰⁶ *Baptist Yearbook*, 1930, 42-43.

¹⁰⁷ It was not until September 16, 1947, when Muriel Spurgeon, a Graduate of Arts and Divinity programs, was appointed to serve as a foreign missionary in India, that the Convention finally ordained a woman. This, however, did not set a precedent and it would be another thirty-two years before the Convention would ordain another woman (1979 Clarrie Holmes). See Johanna Vander Spek,

When Hunter, Evans and other women missionaries began their work among post World War One immigrants to Canada, they spoke for Baptist Churches affirming what they saw as their divine mission to “evangelize,” “Christianize,” and “Canadianize” these folk. As the *Canadian Baptist* asserted in 1922:

The subject of immigration is in the limelight. The number landing and the character of the men and women who are to people our vast Dominion is of vital interest both to church and State. Socially, politically, and religiously, immigration is an issue of prime importance . . . It is difficult to say what the future will be, but the expectation is that [sic] the number entering our country will increase. It will be pleasing if the future immigrants are still more largely of British origin or from those countries of the continent whose political, social and religious ideals are akin to our own.¹⁰⁸

The *Canadian Baptist* continued, that “[f]rom the stand point of national life the work of Home Missions must continue to hold a place of paramount importance.” Not only was it “vital to our future,” but the “foreign element” was “impinge[ing] on Our national life.” Furthermore, the cities were gathering places for the growth and spread of all manner of “isms” – religious, social and political.¹⁰⁹ Quite simply, the influx of foreign speaking peoples was seen as one of the most serious issues facing the nation. Baptists supported the efforts of the Canadian government to Canadianize these ‘strangers within our gates,’ but asserted that this goal could only be accomplished if the immigrants were also Christianized. As the *Canadian Baptist* asserted,

A Study of Women in Ministry, Senior Seminar Paper, McMaster Divinity College, 1992, 14-15. Note the *Baptist Yearbook* does not offer any comments pertaining to the arguments that were used to defeat the amendment of John Galt.

¹⁰⁸ “Man at the Gate,” *Canadian Baptist*, February 2, 1922, 4.

¹⁰⁹ “Home Missions and the Nation,” *Canadian Baptist*, May 18, 1922, 8.

If this work is pressed there is yet a chance to assimilate the foreign elements. Slavic, Italian, Polish, Scandinavian and other peoples are crowding in. They cannot be ignored. But long and patient work must be done among them with the Gospel of Christ, if, as Christian citizens, they are to be built into the structure of the body politic.¹¹⁰

With the prospect of increased immigration on the horizon, Baptists were clearly concerned about the social, political and religious consequences that would result. This was true not only for Western Canada, but for the larger urban centres of the nation where more and more of these immigrants settled. C.J. Cameron commented,

[t]he chief problem of the city is the problem of the immigrant. The incoming tide that has flooded the central region of the city is largely foreign. New Canadians is the term used to describe this great host of strangers that have come within our gate. How to assimilate this heterogeneous mass of people composed of a hundred nationalities, making them virtuous living and liberty – loving citizens [sic], loyal to our free institutions and capable of self-government is the greatest problem Canada has to face. The World War revealed how many citizens in Canada were in it, but not of it.

There are many agencies that are of valuable help in solving the foreign problem, such as the Public Schools, the press, our political institutions, etc. But serviceable as these may be for certain ends, they fail to develop the noblest character.

The chief contribution toward the solution of this vexed problem is made by the Christian church. Its great task in our land is to teach these new Canadians the spirit of Christian brotherhood by seeking to bring them into a spiritual relationship with God.¹¹¹

Cameron remained as convinced after the war as he had been before that the only institution capable of realistically dealing with the immigrant question was the church. While the schools, press and political institutions could meet “certain ends” their effectiveness in addressing the issues surrounding immigration were at best limited. Since

¹¹⁰ “Home Mission and the Nation,” *Canadian Baptist*, May 18, 1922, 8.

¹¹¹ “The Task of the Churches in the City,” *Canadian Baptist*, January 6, 1921, 13.

the root of all social ills Cameron believed was spiritual, that required a spiritual solution that only the churches could offer in the form of the Gospel.

Canadian Baptists, as such, believed that immigrants and immigration lay at the heart of many of the nation's social problems, and that urban centres were their breeding grounds.¹¹² They, likewise, held that nothing short of the Gospel of Jesus Christ could rectify the situation. Many were convinced that nothing short of religion could conserve the "true value and promote the highest interest of society." Religion was in their judgment "an indispensable factor" not only in the reconstruction of the world following the devastation of the First World War, but also in the "restoration of social harmony."

All races and classes of men cannot succeed . . . without the motives and experience of religion . . . The need and the opportunity of the present hour conspire to make it especially propitious for the promulgation of the religious views and practices which Baptists hold and have consistently exemplified through a long history . . . We have all races and classes represented here and the only power sufficient to fuse these people and make them a common people, lovers of God and followers of Jesus Christ, is the power of the Gospel . . . it is either Jesus Christ or chaos. The Baptists of Canada must see that it is Jesus Christ and not chaos.¹¹³

Clearly for these Baptists the only way Canadians could truly be a "common people" was to be "lovers of God" and "followers of Jesus Christ." Furthermore, it was only through the Christianization of Canadian society that social chaos could be avoided. This dictated not only the regeneration of the individual, but society as well. The millennial overtones in all of this are quite obvious, and it is clear that the war had not dampened Baptists' desires to turn Canada into "His Dominion" from sea to sea. As one Baptist commentator

¹¹²As one Baptist commentator put it, the "foreign population is large and a source of danger." "Heart Cry of the Canadian West," *Canadian Baptist*, March 1, 1923, 1.

¹¹³"Open Doors in Saskatchewan," *Canadian Baptist*, February 23, 1922, 3.

remarked, "... the Christian church must ... not shirk the social obligations of her mission ... [the] hope in time, by the grace of God [is] to create a healthy Christian atmosphere, that in due season conditions of human life and human government will be permeated with the Spirit of Christ, and conditions of life in all its varied spheres, will be favourable to the realization of the Kingdom of God."¹¹⁴

In the confusion of the post-First World War era, with its consequent seeming drift to secular and material values, there was an "urgent call" from the Baptist Young Peoples Association for a textbook that could be used at Mission Circles or Band Meetings, and that presented a renewed perspective on missions from a Baptist point of view. The Home Mission Board issued *The Call of Our Own Land*. It was basically a reprinting of an earlier work by C.J. Cameron.¹¹⁵ The "Preface to the Text" stated that, "it is extremely important for our young people to become intimately acquainted with our history, sufferings and distinctive principles."¹¹⁶ Unfortunately, *The Call of Our Own Land* pointed a finger at immigrants as a source of moral and social decay. This was especially so in the

¹¹⁴ "Social and National Well Being," *Canadian Baptist*, May 12, 1921, 2; See also "The Lord's Coming," *Canadian Baptist*, January 14, 1922; "Western Mission," *Canadian Baptist*, August 25, 1921; "Baptist Faith and Message," *Canadian Baptist*, June 18, 1925; "Gospel and Social Questions," *Canadian Baptist*, April 22, 1926; "Social Implications of the Gospel," *Canadian Baptist*, May 20, 1926; "Citizenship and Evangelization," *Canadian Baptist*, July 19, 1928; "Women's Baptist Home Mission Society of Ontario West Report," *Baptist Yearbook*, 1918; "Therefore, our God-given task is to bring about through the preaching and practice of the Gospel that spiritual unity among the diverse elements that compose our present population that shall make it possible for the coming nation to workout that part of God's great world plan that He has destined for us." "Western Mission," *Canadian Baptist*, August 25, 1921, 4.

¹¹⁵ "Text Book on Home Missions is Coming," *Canadian Baptist*, April 26, 1923, 3; The earlier work on which much of this text is based is C.J. Cameron's *Foreigners or Canadians?*; "I heartily commend it", was the endorsement of the editor of the *Canadian Baptist*, "to our people generally, and especially to the Baptist Young People's Unions, and the study groups in our colleges." "The Call of Our Own Land," *Canadian Baptist*, May 31, 1923, 3.

¹¹⁶ C.H. Schutt and C.J. Cameron, *The Call of Our Own Land* (Toronto: American Baptist Publishing Society for the Home Mission Board of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, 1923), Preface.

publication's fourth chapter "The Task of the City," where immigrants are held principally responsible for the ills of urban life.¹¹⁷ But it is even more pronounced in Chapter VI "New Canadians" where not only immigrants but also Mormons and Roman Catholics are viciously attacked. By contrast Baptists are described as defenders of liberty and freedom. In a section entitled "The Peril of Our Immigration," the text states,

If a sliver of wood be accidentally driven into the hand one of three results must take place. The foreign substance may be assimilated into the blood. If this process be impossible the flesh will fester around the intruder and try to cast it out. If it fails in this act there follows mortification to the hand. The same order of action prevails in solving the immigration problem. We must endeavour to assimilate the foreigner. If the mixing process fails we must strictly prohibit from entering our country all elements that are non-assimilable. It is contrary to the Creator's law for white, black or yellow races to mix together. Black and yellow races cannot be assimilated by the white, and therefore, should be excluded from Canada. May our country be delivered from a yellow peril on the Pacific Coast similar to that which the United States suffers in its black problem of the South.¹¹⁸

The text goes on to assert that "many evils" in the land, everything including disease, drunkenness, illiteracy, low standards of living, and crime, exist because of the "great mass of unassimilated foreign population." The solution to the problem, a part from excluding those deemed most undesirable, is turning them into us. "[I]f we have a spark of patriotism, a love for this land of every land the best . . . [is to] Canadianize the foreigner by Christianizing him."¹¹⁹

Despite criticism from farmer and labour organizations and Protestant church leadership, enthusiasm for immigration "as an economic panacea continued unabated

¹¹⁷Schutt and Cameron, *The Call of Our Own Land*, 96-110.

¹¹⁸Schutt and Cameron, *The Call of Our Own Land*, 143.

¹¹⁹Schutt and Cameron, *The Call of Our Own Land*, 144,146.

throughout the mid-twenties" among the business community. In 1924 and 1925 several powerful sectors of Canadian society, that included transportation companies, boards of trade, newspapers and politicians of various political parties pressed the Liberal government of Mackenzie King to open the doors to immigration. These groups were convinced that only a limited number of immigrants could be expected from the "preferred" countries of northern Europe and Britain and "that probably only central and eastern Europeans would do the rugged work of clearing unsettled farm land." With the economy in a state of growth by the mid-twenties, the federal government yielded to this pressure and changed its immigration policy with respect to immigrants from central and eastern Europe. In September 1925, the King government entered into the "Railways Agreement" with the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National Railways. This agreement opened the doors to more central and eastern Europeans, but it also fueled the sentiments of nativism with ever increasing passion.¹²⁰ Historian Howard Palmer notes that

[f]rom 1926 to 1930, the predominate nativist cry was that non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants would subvert Anglo-Saxon institutions and racial purity. This Canadian version of Anglo-Saxon nativism was slightly different from its American counterpart. Whereas Anglo-Saxon nativism in the United States had been concerned primarily about a "racial" threat to the purity of the Anglo-Saxon "race," Anglo-Saxon nativism in Canada was given added impetus by the desire of some traditionalists to preserve Canada as "British." Americans and Canadians could share Anglo-Saxonism as a racial concept, but "Britishness," though closely related, was a nationalist sentiment peculiar to Canada. The intensity of late twenties nativist reaction stemmed in part from an overall concern about the decline of things "British" in Canada.¹²¹

¹²⁰Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 93-94. The agreement originally covered a period of two years. It was renewed in October 1927, for another three years. For a discussion of the rise of nativist sentiments during the years from 1925-30, and the debates with immigration "boosters" see Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 96-122.

¹²¹Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 98.

As post-war immigrants once again began arriving on the shores of Canada, Baptists were told to be “armed and ready” with their program of Canadianization/Christianization. In fact, the two had essentially become synonymous. M.L. Orchard, in his treatise *The Time for the Sickle*, asserted: “[t]o be truly Canadian must include being truly Christian. If we would Canadianize these people we must surely Christianize them. The New Birth is a prime essential to the New Canadian.”¹²² Baptist churches, Orchard believed, “just because they claim to be New Testament churches and because they emphasize a spiritual religion” were under “a peculiar obligation” to dispense this message of the “New Birth to every New Canadian.”¹²³ In doing this Baptists could ensure that they were preparing not only the individual, but also the social order “for the coming of new world and the making of Our Dominion His Dominion”¹²⁴

For most Baptists of the 1920s, the most vexing problem associated with immigration was still the Roman Catholic question. As C.H. Schutt of the Baptist Home Mission Board charged:

The most important problem – in my opinion, is the evangelization of the Roman Catholics of our land, who number at the present time nearly 39 % of Canada’s population, and comprise a large proportion of every Province of the

¹²²M.L Orchard, *The Time for the Sickle* (Winnipeg: Baptist Union of Western Canada; 1925), 53. See also his comment on 114 “Canadian ideals are Christian and therefore to Canadianize we must Christianize,” and the article “The Stranger Within the Gates of Canada,” *Canadian Baptist*, July 29, 1923, 8, where editor Lewis F. Kipp makes a similar charge.

¹²³Orchard, *The Time for the Sickle*, 53.

¹²⁴“The Social Need of the World,” *Canadian Baptist*, June 9, 1932, 7; See also “Evangelizing Canadian Life,” *Canadian Baptist*, June 9, 1932, 14.

Dominion, and are rapidly growing in proportion and influence in many communities which were formerly Protestant.¹²⁵

Baptists feared that a continued influx of Roman Catholic immigrants would result in a *coup de grace* for freedom and liberty. "The Roman Catholic church is doing all it can to capture Canada for the Pope. I do not blame them for it, but I do know it will be a dark day for this Dominion if the teaching of the Catholic church becomes dominant here."¹²⁶

Baptists were still convinced that the aim of Roman Catholicism was to

capture Canada for the man at the Vatican . . . by her Catholic immigration . . . In 50 or 100 years from now, if the world continues, what religious force will dominate Canada? Will it be Catholic or Christian?¹²⁷

The city problem, which was an immigrant problem, was also a Roman Catholic problem. Baptists held that they (and other Protestant Churches) were being driven from the inner cities because of "a steady stream of Catholic citizens from Italy, Russia, Poland and other parts of the world."¹²⁸ Immigration was, therefore, feeding Catholic growth in metropolitan areas. Furthermore, since the recent "stream of immigrants had been from

¹²⁵"Opening for Bi-Lingual Work," *Canadian Baptist*, March 29, 1928, 2; "Home Mission Board Report," *Baptist Yearbook*, 1928, 110-111, where exactly the same rhetoric was also recorded with a "we" in place of "my."

¹²⁶W.T. Graham, "The Baptist in History," *Canadian Baptist*, October 13, 1927, 11; See also "Our Ontario Foreign Work," *Canadian Baptist*, May 28, 1925, 11, where Roman Catholicism is linked to Satan; "Why Evangelize Roman Catholics," *Canadian Baptist*, April 7, 1927, 5, where "love" of country and a desire to be "free and prosperous" among six other reasons are stated; "The Convention of Women's Baptist Home and Foreign Missions," *Canadian Baptist*, October 29, 1925, 2, stated, "The Roman Church is out to capture Canada for the Vatican. We want Canada for the Man of Galilee."

¹²⁷Schutt and Cameron, *The Call of Our Own Land*, 177-178. In our next chapter, we will examine this anti-Catholic phenomenon in greater detail, during this period, by looking at Canada's leading anti-Catholic crusader – the fundamentalist Baptist preacher T.T. Shields.

¹²⁸"Immigration – Not Strategy," *Canadian Baptist*, December 11, 1930, 3.

the south" of Europe, "a people alien" to Canadian "customs, ideals and religion,"¹²⁹ many of the social and moral problems of the nation were also directly attributable to these Catholic immigrants. Consequently, it is not surprising to find once again Baptists calling for the "strictest care" in the selection of immigrants and the maintenance of immigration from the British Isles "in a ratio far in excess of that from all non-English speaking countries."¹³⁰ In advocating a narrow selectivity Baptists hoped to keep Catholics out (or at the very least reduce their numbers substantially), while ensuring that Canada remained British and Protestant. Baptists, therefore, ended the decade as they had begun it, demanding rather severe restrictions be placed on Canada's immigration policy.¹³¹

As the 1920s drew to a close, there were, however, inklings within the Baptist ranks that the nativism so much a part of the Baptist Home Mission outreach might be counterproductive to the Churches' efforts. In an article on "racialism" in the *Canadian Baptist* in 1928, Dr. Frederick C. Spurr, in outlining several solutions to the immigrant problem, remarked that Baptists needed to have "courage" and abandon "our contempt for tanned skins; our sneers at Eastern culture; [and] the belief in the moral and intellectual inferiority of Eastern peoples."¹³² There was, however, still a sense of moral superiority

¹²⁹ "Making a Great People," *Canadian Baptist*, June 2, 1927, 14.

¹³⁰ "Home Mission Board Report," *Baptist Yearbook*, 1927, 114-115, 219; "Social Service Plans," *Canadian Baptist*, 1928, 16.

¹³¹It also seems that Baptists saw the "melting pot" concept that began to emerge in the 1920s as a failure as well. "Will this melting pot result in Canada remaining British in her ideals, her motivating principles of truth and justice and righteousness or will she be subjected to creeds, dogmas, superstitions and slavery as [prevail] in continental Europe. It has only taken these years of depression to prove to us the strength of these New Canadians. Their influence now is not beneficial." M.A. White, "The Task at Home," *Canadian Baptist*, August 2, 1934, 7.

¹³² "Racialism," *Canadian Baptist*, September 6, 1928, 7.

and intolerance in Spurr's comments when he concluded by stating "[i]t involves the acceptance, in the name Christ, of responsibility for all peoples who are less enlightened and less advanced than ourselves."¹³³

In addressing the issue of "Evangelism and Home Missions," Reverend M. Simmonds noted:

We are being confronted with a larger problem than we appreciate, and one that involves very delicate questions, which will have to be answered in accordance with Christian principle. We are being told that the Canadianization of these newcomers is an imperative need from the nationalistic standpoint. Personally, I am not quite sure that we are truly Christian when we speak thus.¹³⁴

While acknowledging the un-Christian nature of this Canadianization program, Simmonds, like the majority of his Baptist brethren was not quite ready to give it up. In the very next sentence he concedes "... there is no better means of Canadianizing than evangelizing. But evangelizing is not to be degraded to a means, it is a most worthy end in itself ... immigrants stand as a potential danger to themselves and to us, growing up in the confused juxtaposition of variant cultures, traditions and sanctions ... they must be evangelized ..."¹³⁵ While Simmonds would call for a greater "sympathetic appreciation on their traditions," evangelism had and would continue to remain "a means"—a means whereby Baptists had sought to assimilate the immigrant through a program of "Canadianization," and "Christianization."¹³⁶ While Baptists were not quite ready to

¹³³ "Racialism," *The Canadian Baptist*, September 6, 1928, 7.

¹³⁴ "Evangelism and Home Missions," *Canadian Baptist*, July 10, 1930, 7. See also M.A. White, "Joy in Service," *Canadian Baptist*, November 3, 1932, 14.

¹³⁵ "Evangelism and Home Missions," *Canadian Baptist*, July 10, 1930, 7.

¹³⁶ See also "Eleven Nations in this School," *Canadian Baptist*, August 9, 1928, 6.

abandon this Canadianization scheme, some voices were beginning to question its value, effectiveness, credibility and reflection of Christian charity. But their voices were barely heard above the anti-immigrant din of the Baptist mainstream.

As the depression loomed, the doors of immigration, which Baptists had long sought to close, slammed shut. They would remain closed for the next fifteen years. With the flow of immigrants cut off, Baptists would continue with their efforts to Christianize and Canadianize those previously arrived. The Depression years would also force Baptists to confront another challenge, that of Jews seeking refuge from the torment of Hitler's Germany. But before turning attention to this critical issue, we will examine the anti-Catholic rhetoric of one of Canada's leading fundamentalists and Baptists of the period – T.T. Shields.

Chapter 5

“The Voice of One Crying in the Wilderness”?

As already noted, for many Canadian Protestants of the late nineteenth century, the Roman Catholic Church constituted little more than “a ruthless, unchanging, non-Christian organization intending world-wide socio-political control and the elimination of Protestantism.”¹ Both John Wolffe and Richard Lougheed correctly maintain that anti-Catholicism was not merely “a racial prejudice but an integral component of evangelical theology prior to the mid-twentieth century.”² British church historian David Bebbington maintains, Roman Catholicism constituted a “grand threat to Evangelical values.” He states that

Evangelicals shared the common British aversion to popery as a compendium of all that was alien to national life, whether religious, political or moral. They inherited the Reformation identification of the papacy as AntiChrist, the seventeenth-century fears that linked popery with continental autocracy and the popular suspicions that hovered round celibacy and the confessional. They [also] added their own specific sense of the spiritual deprivation of Catholics.³

John Webster Grant notes,

¹Richard Lougheed, “Anti-Catholicism Among French Canadian Protestants,” *Historical Papers: Canadian Society of Church History* (June 1995): 162; John Wolffe, “Anti-Catholicism and Evangelical Identity in Britain and the United States, 1830-1860,” *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700-1900* (New York: Oxford Press, 1994), 179-197.

²Lougheed, “Anti-Catholicism Among French Canadian Protestants,” *Historical Papers*, 162.

³David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 101.

that Protestantism and Roman Catholicism represented radically incompatible forms of Christianity had always been an Ontario axiom, and nothing happened in the nineteenth century to call it into question. To a general Protestant antipathy to popery various groups added specific grievances . . . To many evangelical Protestants, who inherited a deep rooted belief that the pope was the Antichrist predicted in the book of Revelation, Roman Catholicism constituted an idolatrous system to be rooted out with reforming zeal.⁴

Consequently, anti-Catholicism was clearly “a constant evangelical theological tenet throughout pre-Vatican II history.”⁵

Among Canadian Baptist anti-Catholic voices, one stands out. Thomas Todhunter Shields cannot be considered the symbol for the “mainstream of Canadian, Ontarian, or even Baptist evangelicalism.”⁶ Nevertheless, his advocacy of separatism, as the late George Rawlyk has argued, came later.⁷ During the mid 1920s, Shields saw himself as the bedrock of Canadian Baptists.⁸ Furthermore, his views on Roman Catholicism were widely shared

⁴John Webster Grant, *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 204; Grant asserts that at the end of the nineteenth century even with the emergence of religious movements on the right and the left flanks of evangelical orthodoxy “the legitimacy of religious pluralism had won little acceptance in Ontario. Evangelical Protestantism was still the norm . . .” Grant, *A Profusion of Spires*, 220.

⁵Lougheed, “Anti-Catholicism Among French Canadian Protestants,” *Historical Papers*, 163.

⁶John G. Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 23.

⁷George Rawlyk, “A.L. McCrimmon, H.P. Whidden, and T. T. Shields, Christian Education and McMaster University,” *Canadian Baptists and Higher Education* (Kingston: Queen’s University Press, 1988).

⁸See Mark Parent, *The Christology of T.T. Shields: The Irony of Fundamentalism*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University 1991, 41. Shields was clearly an influential leader in Baptist circles until the split in the Convention in 1927. He had gained a reputation as a noted preacher in the Convention, and also served on a number of Boards and committees, including that of McMaster University from whom he was awarded a honorary Doctor of Divinity degree. After the Baptist schism of 1927, he continued to command influence amongst those conservative elements who left the Convention, until they too tired of his militancy. In the end, Shields was relegated to the fringes of Baptist evangelicalism – the fundamentalist extreme.

among Protestant evangelicals, particularly Baptists.⁹ T.T. Shields, was the militant fundamentalist pastor of Jarvis Street Baptist Church in Toronto for over forty-five years and a rabid anti-Catholic. As L.K. Tarr states, Shields regarded the Church of Rome as “the advocate of a religious system that was, at its very core, the antithesis of Scriptural truth [and he] shared the New Testament’s writers repugnance for ritualism, legalism, formalism, and sacerdotalism all of which [he believed] found expression in Romanism.”¹⁰

T.T. Shields was born in Bristol, in 1873. After he migrated to Canada, Shields retained a deep sense of affection for the country of his birth often praising Britain as the champion of freedom and liberty.¹¹ This sense of pride in his British heritage played a significant role in shaping not only Shields’ ideals, but also many of the rigid positions he took on issues throughout his contentious career.¹² Shields’ convictions were also strongly influenced by the fact that he was part of a lengthy ministerial family line dating back over 200 years.¹³ In this context, Shields inherited a broad spectrum of beliefs from his forefathers. Three in particular are worthy of note – Calvinism, a devotion to the Baptist tradition, and anti-Catholicism.

⁹Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, 31-32; See Stackhouse’s discussion surrounding the formation of the Protestant League.

¹⁰L.K. Tarr, *Shields of Canada* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1967), 160.

¹¹*The Gospel Witness*, January 2, 1941, 9. “We repeat what we said in this paper during the war and before the war, that the greatest enemy of all free countries, particularly Britain and the United States, is the Italian Papacy.”

¹²C.A. Russell, “Thomas Todhunter Shields, Canadian Fundamentalist,” *Ontario History*, (December 1979): 264.

¹³Russell, “Thomas Todhunter Shields, Canadian Fundamentalist,” 264

Theologically, Shields was essentially a Calvinist and stressed several basic concepts – the total depravity of humankind, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and the perseverance of the saints. In his views on election, however, Shields' theology tended to be more Arminian than Calvinistic. Shields attempted to affirm a universal (the Arminian position) rather than a limited atonement (the traditional Calvinist position). As Mark Parent maintains, this was always part of his theological outlook and was not something that evolved.¹⁴ Thus, "[i]n endeavoring to clarify his position, Shields declared that God chooses for such salvation those who have repented and believed in Christ. Ironically, this latter position was closer to original Arminianism than to the high Calvinism, in which Shields professed to believe."¹⁵

Nevertheless, Shields' theology was grounded in the principle of the sovereignty of God. For as Shields himself stated in a 1925 sermon entitled, "Kept by the Power of God," "I am a bit of a Calvinist myself. I mean by that, I believe in the sovereignty of God, that He chooses His people."¹⁶ This conviction invariably led Shields into conflict with Roman Catholicism, since he believed its sacramentarianism denied the individual true access to God.

[T]he sacrifice of the mass is a repetition of this – 'priests standing daily ministering', doing the same thing over and over again. Sin is never taken away by that means. And so all your prayers, and your penances, and all the

¹⁴Parent, *The Christology of T.T. Shields*, 154-157.

¹⁵C.A. Russell as cited in Parent, *The Christology of T.T. Shields*, 155-156.

¹⁶*The Gospel Witness*, March 19, 1925, 4.

severe discipline of that system is but a modern manifestation of this ancient principle, standing 'daily ministering', and yet never getting the thing done.¹⁷

Thus, Shields believed that Roman Catholicism "ha[d] taken every simple doctrine of the grace of God and made merchandise of it," with the practical effect being that the Church of Rome claimed to have a monopoly on salvation "and you can have it only at [their] price."¹⁸

Though he came from an Anglican tradition, Shields throughout his life was to retain a staunch and devout commitment to the Baptist tradition he adopted.¹⁹ In 1927, when asked to become the leader of a non-denominational tabernacle movement, Shields replied – "I am a Baptist by conviction, and I shall stand for those truths which have characterized Baptists through the centuries . . ."²⁰ Shields' commitment to Baptist tradition was in fact so strong that he stated on at least one occasion that only Baptists were doctrinally sound and thus one may conclude through inference the only true believers. In a 1923 sermon entitled, "Why Baptists should Proselytize Roman Catholics and Others," he stated:

I understand there are some Baptists who do not believe in making converts of Roman Catholics . . . I frankly confess I do, not only of Roman Catholics . . . but you Methodists and you Presbyterians; – I would like to make Baptists of everyone of you! You see, if I thought the Methodists were right, I would join the Methodists; if I thought the Presbyterians were right, I would join the Presbyterians; and if I thought the Episcopal Church were the only church, I would seek 'holy orders' there. But it is because I believe the Word of God

¹⁷*The Gospel Witness*, November 16, 1922, 3.

¹⁸*The Gospel Witness*, December 20, 1923, 4.

¹⁹His father's call to pastor a Baptist Church in Plattsville, Ontario in 1888 had brought the family to Canada. See Russell, "Thomas Todhunter Shields, Canadian Fundamentalist," 264.

²⁰As cited in Russell, "Thomas Todhunter Shields, Canadian Fundamentalist," 265.

teaches the very thing you saw tonight, as well as the body of principles for which Baptists have historically stood, that I would like to make Baptists of you all.²¹

Why would there be any need to convert people of these various denominations, unless Shields somehow believed that they were not in fact Christians in the New Testament sense of the word?²² Shields, it would appear, was claiming a Baptist monopoly over Christianity, the very thing he so harshly criticized Roman Catholics for doing. At another level Shields comments also reflect that not all Baptists shared the same passionate hatred of Roman Catholicism as he did, or at the very least questioned the assumption that it was necessary to convert Catholics to Protestantism in order for them to become Christian.

Shields' dedication to two Baptist distinctives invariably led him into conflict with Roman Catholicism. The first was the pattern of congregational polity, which was the logical expression of the teaching of the priesthood of believers and thus, a protest against hierarchical control; and the second, the consistent witness of Baptists to the principle of religious liberty, the corollary of which is the separation of church and state. As a minority group, during the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, Baptists had been subjected to serious restrictions upon religious liberty. In order to shield their belief in the priesthood of all believers and religious freedom, Baptists have insisted upon the complete separation of church and state. Thus, Baptists throughout their history have been prone to anti-

²¹*The Gospel Witness*, December 20, 1923, 2-3. Shields' statement indicates that on a more personal level some Baptists may have been questioning the appropriateness of converting Catholics or at the very least how truly Christian it was to continually subject them to the kind of attacks Shields was infamous for.

²²Shields even went so far as to characterize Pentecostalism as a cult and its beliefs were taught in the curriculum of Toronto Baptist Seminary in a Course dealing with such phenomena. See *The Gospel Witness*, January 30, 1930, 1; *The Gospel Witness*, July 2, 1931, 6. Almost no modern day evangelical would hold such a ridiculous position.

Catholicism as part of their larger goal of safeguarding the principle of religious liberty and the separation of church and state. As Robert G. Torbet notes “[b]asically it is a fear of their [Catholic] intolerance and political pretensions which underlies the universal attitude of Baptists toward Catholics.”²³ Baptists consistently defended the right of Catholics to worship according to the dictates of their conscience, even as they refused to accept the validity of the Catholic principle of intolerance. As Torbet further contends Baptists “have opposed such pretension as was expressed by Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical of November 1, 1885, *Immortale Dei*, when he declared that ‘the State must not only have care for religion, but recognize the *true religion*.’”²⁴

T.T. Shields, a bulwark of Baptist anti-Catholic sentiment in Canada, was able to disseminate his anti-Catholic rhetoric through his weekly publication *The Gospel Witness*, which reached over 30,000 subscribers in sixty different countries.²⁵ Even before *The Gospel Witness* went into circulation on May 20, 1922, Shields had already gained a reputation as a spokesperson against the Church of Rome. During the Great War Shields was a vocal critic of Quebec and its Roman Catholic clergy for hindering the war effort. He further

²³Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1950), 455.

²⁴Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, 520; For a further discussion of how this encyclical impacted upon the relationship between the Holy See and nation-states see John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII* (New York: Penguin Putnam Inc., 1999), 27ff.; Mark McGowan, “The Catholic ‘Restoration’: Pope Pius X, Archbishop Denis O’Connor and Popular Catholicism in Toronto, 1899-1908,” *CCHA Historical Studies*, Vol. 54, 1987.

²⁵Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, 23.

attacked Quebec political leaders for not supporting the Union government and impeding the implementation of conscription.²⁶

Though written at the outset of the Second World War, the following nevertheless expresses the attitude Shields held during the years of the First World War:

The Canadian Roman Catholic Hierarchy in the last war did everything in its power to restrict and retard Canada's war effort. I know there were individual Roman Catholics who were far otherwise: I speak now of the official attitude of the Church of Rome in this country. It was decidedly against us – against France, against Britain, and for Germany. Even many of our French-Canadian fellow-citizens put their religion before their social affinity, and stood for Germany as against France.²⁷

In response to such charges Neil McNeil, Archbishop of Toronto, asserted that “[t]he Pope is necessarily neutral in this war” and is “obliged to be impartial” given the “vast numbers of Catholics on both sides” of the conflict that he represented as head of the Church. As its head the pope’s primary responsibility McNeil pointed out was to, “as far as he can,” maintain the unity of the Church. To the cry that “[t]he Pope was pro-German” McNeil contended that this was merely another slur “used by those who seek the most unpopular attitude they can find in any period to attribute to the Pope.” The Holy See was the “only neutral power” to condemn the German invasion of Belgium. Furthermore, McNeil argued, if the Pope was to be blamed for those Catholics “not co-operating with the Allied forces energetically” then also it needed to be recognized that the “millions of Catholics”

²⁶Russell, “Thomas Todhunter Shields, Canadian Fundamentalist,” 266; Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, 23.

²⁷“Can the Pope and Mussolini Make Peace,” *The Gospel Witness*, January 4, 1940, 3. Dr. Frank Norris, while conducting a crusade in Massey Hall on invitation from Shields, went as far as to state that “the great war was instigated by the Pope and the Kaiser who were intimate friends.” He further blamed the Catholic influence for delaying America’s entry into the war by two years. Undoubtedly, Shields would have concurred with this assessment, since he provided the commentary on Norris’ message “The Doom of the Papacy Foretold in the Word of God.” *The Gospel Witness*, August 28, 1924, 7.

who were was also his doing. The Pope never instructed “us” on “how we should conduct military campaigns” or what role “we” should “take in wars.” McNeil warned his fellow Catholics to be on their “guard against the insidious persistence of this campaign” against the Church and its Holy See. It was unpatriotic and only served to undermine “our cause” in the war, which depended on the “loyal co-operation between Catholic nations and Protestant nations, as well as co-operation between Catholics and non-Catholics within each of the Allied Nations.”²⁸

Shields, however, remained unconvinced. In spite of his criticism of Quebec and French-Canadians’ contributions to the war effort, Shields later contended that the formation of the Union Government was the only time in Canada’s history that Parliament was ever independent of Roman Catholic Quebec.²⁹ According to Shields, it was too bad that the government did not seize upon the opportunity to cast off the Roman yoke in its entirety. Nevertheless, with his strong oratorical skills, position as a prominent minister, strong sympathy for the allied cause, and frequent trips to Britain throughout the war, Shields eagerly accepted the invitation of Canada’s Prime Minister, Robert Borden, to join a group of speakers whose task was to pump up support for the government and its call for conscription.³⁰

On May 17, 1922, following the war, Jarvis Street Baptist Church authorized Shields to begin editing a paper on a three week trial basis. The paper was to have a twofold

²⁸*Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto* (hereafter referred to as ARCAT), Archbishop Neil McNeil Papers, Pamphlets, PC 25.04, “The Pope and the War,” February 1918, 3-23.

²⁹*The Gospel Witness*, July 21, 1938, 5.

³⁰Parent, *The Christology of T.T. Shields*, 23.

purpose – “to exercise some little influence toward a clear and unwavering witness to the truth of the gospel and to the distinctive principles for which we stand in all our denominational activities.”³¹ Invariably, the paper became an instrument whereby Shields pressed his views on a variety of social and political issues, including his views of the Catholic Church. And as Shields saw it, the Church of Rome was a danger to Christendom.

According to its mission statement *The Gospel Witness*, was to disseminate the truth “as we may be given to see it.”³² During the early years of *The Gospel Witness*, Shields attacks on Roman Catholicism were essentially theologically oriented, and while he claimed to have nothing to say against Roman Catholics, he considered it his duty to point out the failures of Roman Catholicism. As Shields put it, the Roman Catholic Church was “a system that I venture to believe cannot stand in the light of God’s Holy Word; and yet I should accomplish nothing by mere denunciation.”³³ How Shields could have so much to say against Roman Catholicism and in the process avoid attacking Roman Catholics is difficult to comprehend. Nevertheless, he often tried to draw a distinction between believers and beliefs by claiming that his quarrel was not with individual Catholics, who in many instances were “most amiable people,” but with the Catholic system, its principles and hierarchy.³⁴ Though Shields may have attempted to draw this distinction, it was marginally successful at best, since his public attacks on Roman Catholicism often aroused

³¹*The Gospel Witness*, July 8, 1922, 7.

³²*The Gospel Witness*, May 20, 1922, 1.

³³*The Gospel Witness*, November 16, 1922, 3.

³⁴*The Gospel Witness*, December 17, 1925, 4. “It is against principles and not against personalities we protest.” See also *The Gospel Witness*, August 8, 1940, 3.

strong emotions amongst the Catholic population of the country.³⁵ Shields, however, simply regarded this as further proof of the control of the Church Hierarchy over its flock. In a 1940 sermon entitled, "The Pope's Fifth Column – Everywhere," Shields charged that: "[w]e should soon have no French-Canadian problem in this country if the Roman Catholic Church, with its priests and teachers, were not constantly instilling anti-British and separatist ideas into the minds of the people."³⁶ It need be pointed out that in spite of Shields' rabid anti-Catholicism during the inaugural years of *The Gospel Witness*, Roman Catholicism was not his first or primary target. This dubious honor fell to Modernism and more specifically the McMaster University controversy.³⁷

Indeed, Shields initially had some rather flattering notions about Roman Catholicism, particularly when judged in light of what he would say only a few years later. In terms of basic doctrine – belief in God, the inspiration of Scripture, the virgin birth, the deity of Christ, the origin and impact of sin, the final judgment, and the atonement – Shields contended that the Roman Catholic Church "as far as it goes . . . is perfectly orthodox according to Scriptural standards [and] therefore much is to be said in favour of the Roman Catholic Church."³⁸ He continued by stating,

³⁵See *The Gospel Witness*, September 4, 1924, 12; *The Gospel Witness*, September 11, 1924, 7.

³⁶*The Gospel Witness*, August 8, 1940, 7.

³⁷For a discussion of this crisis see chapter II and G.A. Rawlyk, "A.L. McCrimmon, H.P. Whidden, T.T. Shields, Christian Education and McMaster University," *Canadian Baptists and Higher Education* (Kingston: Queen's University Press, 1988); Russell, "Thomas Todhunter Shields, Canadian Fundamentalist," 269-273; Tarr, *Shields of Canada* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1967); L.K. Tarr, "Another Perspective on T.T. Shields and Fundamentalism," *Baptists in Canada* (Burlington: Welch, 1980), 209-223; Clark H. Pinnock, "The Modernist Impulse at McMaster University, 1887-1927," *Baptists in Canada* (Burlington: Welch, 1980), 193-207.

³⁸*The Gospel Witness*, December 20, 1923, 4.

that if I had to chose between being a Modernist – denying the inspiration of Scripture, denying the Deity of Christ, denying the blood atonement, denying all religious authority, and being a law unto myself – and a Roman Catholic . . . I can understand how amid all the darkness and superstition of Rome, men may somehow or another find their way to Christ and be saved; but this damnable philosophy . . . leaves us without any religion at all; it plunges us into darkness; it leads us straight on the way to agnosticism, and ultimately to infidelity.³⁹

Yet, if Catholicism was preferable to atheism, it was only by degree. Some years later

Shields asserted:

who that has any knowledge of the past will fail to recognize the ‘falling away’, the apostasy, which found, and still finds its supreme exemplification in the Roman Catholic Church was and is on a far greater, a more colossal scale than that which we call Modernism? The Roman Catholic Church, I believe, is represented in the final book of the Bible as the mother of harlots, and her illegitimate progeny under the Christian name are very numerous. She has corrupted the springs of Christian teaching in all ages, from her inception. When she says she is the original church, she is right historically. She is the church that became apostate, ‘falling away’ from the truth of Christ. But God has always had a remnant according to the election of grace . . . Whenever men have broken away from the darkness, and returned to the light, they have always done so as did Luther, by recognizing the supreme authority of the Holy Scripture.⁴⁰

Shields believed that Modernism had the tendency of reviving the Church of Rome in measure to the decline of Evangelical Christianity. Nevertheless, Catholicism was a revival of apostasy not spirituality. Furthermore, Shields contended that Modernism was “not comparable in its extent or in its blackness, to that of [the Church] of Rome” responsible

³⁹*The Gospel Witness*, December 20, 1923, 4; For a discussion of the Roman Catholic Church’s position on Modernism culminating in Pius X’s *Lamentabili* (1907) and *Pascendi* (1907), which established much of the dogmatic and centrist tone of papal teaching up until the time of Vatican II in the early 1960s see John Cornwell, *Hitler’s Pope*, 35-40.

⁴⁰*The Gospel Witness*, July 7, 1938, 3.

for some of "the vilest of all iniquities . . ." ⁴¹ Indeed, in a flip flop, by the late 1930s Shields was claiming he would rather be a Modernist than a pagan apostate Catholic.

What is reflected in all of this is Shields' utter distaste for both Roman Catholicism and Modernism. In spite of his statements to the contrary, Shields certainly would never have acquiesced to either of these positions. He judged Modernism to be the more pressing issue in the 1920s and thus it received the brunt of Shields' belligerent rhetoric. However, Roman Catholicism did not go unscathed during this period. Not only did Shields occasionally point out the doctrinal or theological errors of the Roman Church, but in August of 1924 he also brought Dr. J. Frank Norris, a fundamentalist evangelist from Fort Worth, Texas, to Toronto to conduct a five-day crusade on the errors of Romanism. Norris proceeded to provide a stinging attack on Catholic doctrine and to charge that Romanism was a tremendous political menace. ⁴² Both Norris and Shields concurred that the Catholic Church, as anti-Christ, was part of a world-wide conspiracy, attempting to install an ecclesiastical autocracy, superior to all nations and peoples. Norris charged that the only essential "difference between Romanism today and Romanism in the dark ages is that she does not now, on this continent at least, possess the civil power to enforce her persecuting decrees." ⁴³

Shields' shift from Rome's theological weakness to its political threats gradually came to dominate his attacks by the 1930s. Three basic factors essentially account for this.

⁴¹*The Gospel Witness*, November 10, 1938, 5.

⁴²*The Gospel Witness*, August 28, 1924, 6.

⁴³*The Gospel Witness*, August 28, 1924, 6.

The first was the recognition on Shields' part that he had essentially lost the debate with Modernism, and the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, since he had ceded control of McMaster University and in the process divided the Baptist Convention in 1927.⁴⁴ The second factor which fostered this intensified attack upon Roman Catholicism was Shields' reading of international events. The third factor was a more local political issue within the Province of Ontario.

Early in 1929, the Italian Government and the Vatican came to an agreement when both parties signed the Lateran Agreements, thereby reconciling the Papacy and the state after all but sixty years of enmity. Shields contended that this agreement amounted to a recognition of Papal temporal power, which had a negative significance for world affairs. In essence, Roman Catholics, he argued, owed their first loyalty to the Pope and not the country of their residence.⁴⁵ Accordingly, Shields harshly attacked Premier Taschereau's speeches in the Quebec legislature, in praise of the Lateran Agreements, as being in direct opposition to the "principles British citizens stand for."⁴⁶ Furthermore, he warned that

⁴⁴For a fuller discussion of this crisis see Tarr, "Another Perspective on T.T. Shields and Fundamentalism," 209-224; Pinnock, "The Modernist Impulse at McMaster University, 1887-1927," 193-208; W. Gordon Carder, "Controversy in the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, 1908-1928," *Foundations*, 16, 1973, 355-376; Charles M. Johnston, *McMaster University. Volume One: The Toronto Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979); John D.E. Dozois, *Dr. T.T. Shields in the Stream of Fundamentalism*, unpublished B.D. thesis, McMaster Divinity College, 1963; Walter Ellis, "Gilboa to Ichabod: Social and Religious Factors in the Fundamentalist-Modernist Schisms Among Canadian Baptists, 1895-1934," *Foundations* 20, 1977, 109-126; W. Gordon Carder, *Controversy in the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, 1908-1929*, unpublished B.D. thesis, McMaster Divinity College, 1950; Walter Ellis, "Social and Religious Factors in the Fundamentalist-Modernist Schisms Among Baptists in North America, 1895-1934," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1974; and my summation of this controversy in chapter two.

⁴⁵*The Gospel Witness*, February 21, 1929, 6. For further discussion of the *Lateran Treaty* see John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope*, 114-116. See also John F. Pollard, *The Vatican and Italian Fascism, 1929-32*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

⁴⁶*The Gospel Witness*, February 21, 1929, 8.

“Protestants of all denominations need to wake up, or one of these days they may discover the affairs of this country have passed into the hands of men who are but vassals of Rome.”⁴⁷

As Fascism in Italy and Spain and Nazism in Germany began to pose threats to international peace and stability, Shields came to the conclusion that both were part of an international Catholic conspiracy directed primarily against British democratic ideals.⁴⁸

The Roman Catholic religion differs from other forms of religion that bear the Christian name in that it believes and teaches that it should be propagated by force, that it has an inherent right to compel conformity to its doctrines. Hence it has always been a persecuting religion, even to the extent of shedding the blood of its opponents . . . Growing out of this, Romanism, of necessity is a political system. Hence it endeavors to secure control of the state, and use the powers of the state for its propagation . . . Moreover, the Roman Catholic Church, wherever you find it, is an enemy of human liberty: it always has been. It is the enemy of every state except a totalitarian state.⁴⁹

Shields further expressed outrage over the Pope’s blessing of Franco and “his bloody ways” arguing that this was tantamount to blessing Satan himself. Any institution that could associate the name of God and his Kingdom with the horrors of the war in Spain Shields maintained “will do anything.” Such actions on the part of the Church of Rome

⁴⁷*The Gospel Witness*, February 21, 1929, 8.

⁴⁸*The Gospel Witness*, “Shall Rome Be Permitted to Make a Spain of Canada,” July 21, 1938; “The Pope’s Fifth Column – Everywhere,” August 8, 1940, 3; August 15, 1940, 3. “Great Britain, to begin with, is the chief object of the Vatican’s Hostility and has been for many years.” For a discussion of the Spanish Civil War see Paul Preston, *A Concise History of the Spanish Civil War* (London: Fontana, 1996); Paul Preston, *The Spanish Civil War, 1936-39* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986); Paul Preston, *Franco: A Biography* (London: Harper Collins, 1993); Paul Preston (ed.), *Revolution and War in Spain, 1931-39* (London: Mathuen, 1984).

⁴⁹“Shall Rome Be Permitted to Make a Spain of Canada,” *The Gospel Witness*, July 21, 1938, 2-3.

only served to justify “an attitude of intolerance” towards this evil and corrupt institution.⁵⁰

By the outbreak of the Second World War Shields was willing to be called bigoted and narrow in his attitude towards Roman Catholicism. He repeatedly voiced the opinion that the Roman Catholic Church was the “Anti-Christ of Scripture out of which the ultimate anti-Christ will arise”⁵¹ In Shields’ view the Catholic Church was the world’s greatest totalitarian political organization and a “friend of neither democracy [n]or any democratic institution.”⁵² His only regret was that in speaking out against Roman Catholicism and its unholy alliances, he should have “spoken more frequently and more strongly.”⁵³

In February 1936, the Ontario Government of Mitch Hepburn proposed legislation designed to give Catholic elementary schools a greater share of funds through a more equitable distribution of corporate taxes.⁵⁴ Hepburn hoped that the legislation would not provoke a religious controversy. He was wrong. Almost immediately storms of protest from a variety of circles began criticizing the Government’s proposal, including an

⁵⁰*The Gospel Witness*, July 21, 1938, 8. “The civil war in Spain was a Catholic war, fermented by the Church, financed by the Church, blessed by the Church – witness the recent establishment of the Church in Spain.” See *The Gospel Witness*, January 4, 1940, 5.

⁵¹*The Gospel Witness*, February 16, 1939, 1.

⁵²See *The Gospel Witness*, August 8, 1940, 1; January 4, 1940, 5.

⁵³*The Gospel Witness*, August 8, 1940, 3.

⁵⁴See Neil McKenty, *Mitch Hepburn* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967), 76-89.

outburst from the pulpit of Jarvis Street Baptist Church. In spite of such opposition, the bill was passed on April 9, 1936 by a vote of sixty-five to twenty.⁵⁵

Shields in his customary manner launched a savage attack on the Premier and the entire concept of Separate School legislation. He had already charged that Hepburn was the "toll" of two organizations: organized liquor traffic and the Roman Catholic Church, "both of which were blights on any state."⁵⁶ The decision to go ahead with the funding of Separate Schools only seemed to validate his previous assessment.

Shields was convinced that the Roman Catholic Separate Schools were the "prolific mother of most of the political corruption" in Canada. The school funding bill was merely further proof that the Church hierarchy was hoarding national revenue in order to further the propagation of Romanism within the country. Thus, "no one at all conversant with the facts of the case can, for a moment, question that the Hepburn Government is subject to Roman Catholic direction and control."⁵⁷ It was clear to Shields that this legislation was simply further proof of a world-wide Catholic conspiracy working toward the suppression of democratic ideals, since it fostered division and henceforth made national unity impossible.⁵⁸

Shields claimed that if he were the Premier of Ontario the entire Separate School system would be abolished, since the avowed purpose of the Catholic hierarchy in Canada

⁵⁵McKenty, *Mitch Hepburn*, 80.

⁵⁶See *The Gospel Witness*, September 5, 1935; April 16, 1936; April 9, 1936; April 30, 1936.

⁵⁷*The Gospel Witness*, April 16, 1936, 14.

⁵⁸*The Gospel Witness*, April 8, 1936, 5-6.

“is to strengthen through Separate Schools, and by other means . . . the Roman Catholic Church in Canada, that it may be in a position to dictate to the Government of every Province in Canada.”⁵⁹ Catholics, he argued, should have freedom of religion only in the context of equality of religion. Since, according to Shields, they sought to dominate they were themselves rejecting freedom. Since the Catholic Church had initiated the battle cry and Romanism showed a complete lack of respect for civil law Shields was now convinced that the only way to deal effectively with the Church hierarchy was through an all out declaration of war. He declared, “it is with the political character of Roman Catholicism we are at war – and must ever be at war.”⁶⁰ The Separate School funding question in Ontario merely affirmed Shields’ contention that Roman Catholicism

is essentially parasitical in its nature and habits . . . It fastens itself upon every state as a leech, and sucks its very life blood. It infects the blood-stream of every political party, and, like a deadly bacillus destroys the red corpuscular principles by and for which the party lives, and reduces it to an anemic mass of potential corruption. Like a cancer, Roman Catholicism insinuates itself into every government and wraps its parasitical and strangling tentacles about every governmental organ, converts it into a banqueting house for political buzzards, and makes it a stench in the nostrils for every lover of righteousness . . . It impoverishes and befouls every non Catholic system of education by diverting its supplies to the support of its own systems of propaganda . . . I do not exaggerate, but speak the plain, sober, truth, when I say, that the only right the Roman Church has to the title ‘Catholic’ consists in the universality of its malignant influence.⁶¹

⁵⁹*The Gospel Witness*, April 30, 1936, 12.

⁶⁰*The Gospel Witness*, April 30, 1936, 9.

⁶¹*The Gospel Witness*, April 30, 1936, 8-9.

While Shields may have tempered his hostility toward Roman Catholicism in the early years of *The Gospel Witness*, by 1940 he was openly critical and hostile to the point of declaring a personal war with anything remotely associated with Romanism.

. . . [W]e should hate the system of Romanism. I do. I make no apology for it. I hate it as one of the world's greatest scourges; and all of history is confirmatory of that assertion . . . To me, the Roman Catholic Church is just as much an implacable enemy of mankind as Hitler himself.⁶²

By the outbreak of the Second World War, Shields was repeatedly charging that the Papacy and Nazism-Fascism were allied together as part of an international conspiracy to subvert British democratic ideals.⁶³ Early in 1940, Shields commissioned L.H. Lehmann, an ex-Roman Catholic priest and editor of *The Converted Catholic*, to write a series of articles for *The Gospel Witness*, outlining the extent of this relationship. Lehmann contended that,

[i]t can be safely said that Nazi-Fascism and Jesuitism, the two greatest reactionary forces in the world today are but two facets of the same unity – one civil, and the other ecclesiastical. Catholic Action was brought into being coincidentally with the rise of Nazi-Fascism, and was later consolidated by the Lateran Pact with Mussolini in 1929, and by the secret treaty with Nazi Socialism in 1933.⁶⁴

Shields accused these three “isms” of forming a tripartite pact bent on world domination. And Shields was not hesitant about drawing parallels between the Roman Catholic Church and Fascism, especially when the Church had signed a Concordat. Shields fed on

⁶²*The Gospel Witness*, September 5, 1940, 2. Though the Separate school legislation was eventually repealed, Shields charged that the Roman Church would stop at nothing “since [she was] like a burglar [who] would return under protection of darkness, and break in some quieter method.” See also *The Gospel Witness*, February 16, 1939, 1; September 29, 1937, 9.

⁶³*The Gospel Witness*, January 2, 1941, 9. “We repeat what we have said in this paper during the war and before the war, that the greatest enemy of all free countries, particularly Britain and the United States, is the Italian Papacy.”

⁶⁴*The Gospel Witness*, November 7, 1940, 6.

this. It proved that the Pope was in bed with the Fascists and was prepared to turn a blind eye to the worst of Hitler's criminal acts.⁶⁵ That some Protestant Churches proved equally guilty never really mattered to Shields.

Some in Shields' congregation charged their leader as going too far and Shields soon had a church split on his hands. In spite of several votes of nonconfidence in his leadership at Jarvis, Shields staunchly refused to resign. It was either "his way or the highway." Some of his congregation left. Others hung in under protest. Certainly, some protested that Shields had plans to "conquer" Canada with his own brand of Protestantism.⁶⁶

Through it all Shields kept attacking but he was beating a hollow drum. Though Shields' assertion that the Catholic Church was ecclesiastically authoritarian,⁶⁷ due to its Episcopal hierarchy, was true, his notion that it was in an alliance of world conquest with Hitler and Mussolini is ridiculous. From the earliest days of Fascism, some Catholic priests warned of the impending dangers associated with this ideology and risked their lives as members of the resistance movements in various countries.⁶⁸ Shields' militancy and dogma

⁶⁵ See John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII* (New York: Penguin Putnam, Inc., 1999), 232-233; 372-384; Saul Friedlander, *Pius XII and the Third Reich: A Documentation*, English trans. (London: Chatto and Windus, 1966); Carlo Falconi, *The Silence of Pius XII*, English trans. (London: 1970); Walter Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret: An Investigation into the Suppression of Information about Hitler's "Final Solution,"* (London: 1980); Anthony Rhodes, *The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973); "Vatican Repents Holocaust Cowardice," *The Toronto Star*, March 17, 1998, A2; "Pope Wants Talks With Jews," *The Toronto Star*, March 19, 1998, A3; See also Michael Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (Toronto: Lester, Orpen and Denys, 1987), 183ff., where he refers to the work of individual churchmen who intervened on behalf of the persecuted Jews.

⁶⁶Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, 26-27.

⁶⁷ For a discussion of the growing authoritarian nature of Roman Catholicism in the twentieth century see John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope*, 1-8; 41-58.

⁶⁸See for example John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope*, 130ff., 179ff., 219ff., 278ff., 298ff.; Owen Chadwick, *Britain and the Vatican During the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Guenther Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany* (New York: 1964); Klaus Scholder, *The Churches*

unfortunately never allowed him to look beyond the narrow confines of his own warped ideology in order to pursue the greater good.

But Shields could also be inconsistent. At the outset of the war, Shields issued a call for national unity, even though he believed the Catholic Church was behind both domestic and international problems.

We have come to a time when all differences in our national life should be forgotten or submerged, and freely and entirely subordinated to the cause of national unity. I hope we may ignore all political and racial distinction, the land of our birth, or the race of our origin, and reckon ourselves to be, all of us, Canadians, or better still, for the purposes of this war, British Canadians.⁶⁹

Was Shields sincere? In supporting the war effort, yes. In offering a hand to the Catholic Church, no. Shields could hardly expect Catholics and French-Canadians to forget his years of attacking their loyalty to Britain and British institutions.⁷⁰ Furthermore, his statement called on all Canadians to become true British-Canadians, somehow implying that French-Canadians were less than true Canadians, adding further insult to injury. And

and the Third Reich, Trans. by John Bowden. 2 vols. (London: SCM Press, 1987, 1988); Ernst Christian Helmreich, *The German Churches Under Hitler: Background, Struggle and Epilogue* (Detroit: 1979); J.S. Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches, 1933-45* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1968); Nathan Stoltzfus, *Resistance of the Heart: Intermarriage and the Rosenstrasse Protest in Nazi Germany* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996). It is also worth noting that a commission has recently been established which will be provided with access to previously classified Vatican documents surrounding the Church's role during the Second World War and the position of Pius XII with respect to the Holocaust. University of Toronto historian Michael Marrus is one of the scholars invited to serve on this commission. Marrus states, "I felt it would be an extraordinary challenge and I could not say no." He went on to add that a better understanding of exactly what happened will reinforce "the need to do the right thing should something like this come up again." Joining Professor Marrus on the commission are: Bernard Suchocky and Robert Wistrich (like Marrus also Jewish) and Eva Fleischner, Gerald Fogart and John Morley (all Catholic). See "Canadian Joins WWII Probe," *The Toronto Star*, November 24, 1999, A8.

⁶⁹"Watchman, What of the Night?" *The Gospel Witness*, September 7, 1939, 3. See his statement about not wanting to hamper the war effort in *The Gospel Witness*, September 28, 1939, 6.

⁷⁰See *The Gospel Witness*, July 7, 1938, 1; July 21, 1938, 4.

his talk of unity was short-lived. It took no more than a few weeks before he renewed his attacks upon Catholicism with as much vigor as ever.

The early years of the war became for Shields fodder for his ongoing crusade against the Roman Catholic Church as a threat to basic civil liberties, and a force for division between Canada and Britain. Pressing his anti-Catholic attacks, Shields and his *Gospel Witness* took on the tone of a sacred mission.

For the last six months we feel *The Gospel Witness* has exercised a very special ministry in calling attention to the danger which resides in the intrigues and machinations of the Papacy throughout the world. In no country is it more active than in the Dominion of Canada, and it is doing more to hamper Canada's war effort than all other enemy agencies combined.⁷¹

But, if Shields had hoped to awaken Parliament to the Catholic threat, his ploy backfired. The House of Commons on March 4, 1941, condemned Shields and his publication as subversive of the national unity of Canada.⁷²

In 1941, several incidents prompted Shields to take even more than verbal action against Catholicism, in particular a Roman Catholic mass for peace on Parliament Hill in September 1941.⁷³ Shields was pumped. On Tuesday, September 16, 1941, Shields called the leaders of Toronto's Protestant community together to voice their outrage and concern at the Government's recent action. Invited by Shields to speak from the Jarvis Street pulpit

⁷¹*The Gospel Witness*, February 13, 1941, 3.

⁷²*House of Commons Debates*, Tuesday, March 4, 1941, Vol. LXXIX, No. 33, 1326.

⁷³Shields was also angered over the fact that a Toronto book store had its mail service suspended because it was judged to be distributing anti-Catholic literature. The charge was apparently unfounded. These two incidents, however, outraged Shields and aroused the traditional Baptist antipathy toward linkage of church and state. See Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, 31; Donald A. Wicks, *T.T. Shields and the Canadian Protestant League, 1941-1950*, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Guelph, 1971.

in response to the Catholic mass, Rev. J.B. Thomson of Dufferin Street Presbyterian Church, charged that Quebec's opposition to conscription was hampering the ability of Canada to make all out war against Nazi aggression.

The Roman Catholic Church, because of her influence with the Government, is hindering Canada's war effort. For example: 'No conscription'! Why? Because Quebec objects . . . We are out to win the war. But I ask you this: Is it fair that Protestant boys who volunteer to fight Canada's battle, should leave Roman Catholic boys to take their jobs? ('No!') . . . It is a shame. It is not British.⁷⁴

More than ever Shields was convinced that Mackenzie King and his government were nothing more than the pawns of Quebec politicians and the Catholic Church. When the Federal Government allowed this special mass on Parliament Hill on Sunday, September 14, 1941, that excluded any mention of a concurrent Protestant service this proved too much for many Protestant clergy and laity to handle.⁷⁵ A resolution was presented attacking the mass "as an insult to the conscience of the majority of Canadian citizens and destructive of national unity."⁷⁶ In essence, the sponsoring committee charged that the mass was proof positive of the Catholic hierarchy controlling the political affairs of the country.⁷⁷ But Shields would not be stilled. In order to combat what he saw as devilish Catholic designs and to defend British civil leaders, Shields and his committee determined that a "Protestant Vigilance League" was needed. On September 18, 1941, with Shields

⁷⁴As cited, in Brent Reilly, "Baptists and Organized Opposition to Roman Catholics, 1941-1962," *Costly Vision* (Burlington: Welch Co., 1988), 183.

⁷⁵Reilly, "Baptists and Organized Opposition to Roman Catholics, 1941-1962," 182; See also Wicks, *T.T. Shields and the Canadian Protestant League 1941-1950*.

⁷⁶Reilly, "Baptists and Organized Opposition to Roman Catholics, 1941-1962," 183.

⁷⁷See *The Gospel Witness*, September 18, 1941.

leading the way, the Canadian Protestant League was born with Shields elected as president. The League had a three-fold purpose:

- (1) the preservation, maintenance, and assertion of the traditional, civil and religious liberties of British subjects;
- (2) . . . to practice, defend, maintain, and to propagate the great doctrines of the Protestant Reformation;
- (3) . . . [and to oppose], the supreme authority, falsely claimed by the Roman Catholic Church; and also against the Roman Church's political methods of propagating its tenets, and of extending and exercising this illegitimate authority.⁷⁸

The League's founders saw "British," "Protestant," and "democratic" as interchangeable terms. In the process, they equated loyalty to the British cause with defence of Protestant doctrine and anti-Catholic passion.⁷⁹

While many Protestants sympathized with the purpose and goals of the League, "they were constrained from too close an attachment to anything that involved the leadership of Dr. Shields."⁸⁰ Once again Shields' personality rather than his convictions limited the appeal of the League. Others, however, found Shields' blatant anti-Catholic stand and his conviction that only he and his followers were the true Christians, quite loathsome. While many Convention Baptists shared Shields' anti-Catholic sentiments, they were reluctant to support an organization under his leadership given their own denominational history.⁸¹ Nevertheless, the League did gain the support of several

⁷⁸*The Gospel Witness*, October 23, 1941, 1-2.

⁷⁹Reilly, "Baptists and Organized Opposition to Roman Catholics, 1941-1962," 185.

⁸⁰Reilly, "Baptists and Organized Opposition to Roman Catholics, 1941-1962," 185.

⁸¹ ARCAT, MG SU 27. 22 (g).

prominent lay people and clergy of Baptist, Anglican, Presbyterian, United, and Salvationist churches, including Rowland V. Bingham, founder of Sudan Interior Mission, and J.H. Hunter, Bingham's colleague at Evangelical Publishers.⁸² Claris E. Silcox, minister of Sherbourne Street United Church, in a letter addressed to Catholic Archbishop James C. McGuigan, noted the disapproval a Protestant leader like himself felt towards Shields. Silcox explained that rather than attacking Shields, the consensus was to support collaboration in Canadian Protestant-Catholic relations.⁸³ Attacking Shields only fed his zeal. The Archbishop seemed to agree. In spite of the outrage the Archbishop felt towards Shields' public campaign of hate against the Catholic Church, McGuigan tended to avoid public responses against Shields and his floridity. Linda Wicks notes that on September 27, 1941, *The Globe and Mail* advertised an evening lecture by Shields entitled, "Why the Italian Apostolic Delegate to Canada, Archbishop Antonutti, Should Be Expelled from Canada for Subversive Activities." The paper on September 29, 1941, subsequently

⁸²Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, 31; See also D.A. Wicks, *T.T. Shields and the Canadian Protestant League, 1941-1959*, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Guelph, 1977, 43. By 1941, membership had reached more than eighteen hundred and tripled following Shields' tour of western Canada. Support for the Protestant League came from across the country, though membership generally did not exceed six thousand. Most of the League's activities were situated in Toronto. These activities included distribution of anti-Catholic literature, mass rallies, and the endorsement and support of political candidates sympathetic to the goals of the League. In 1945, a "Protestant Party" was formed to oppose the intentions of Ontario Premier George Drew to introduce religious education into schools and increase funding for Catholic Separate Schools. The three candidates the Party ran were all soundly defeated. See Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, 32; Wicks, *T.T. Shields and the Canadian Protestant League*, 48, 60, 73-75.

⁸³ J.B. McLaurin, General Secretary of the Canadian Baptist Home Mission Board endorsed the Canadian Protestant League as an organization to combat the threat of Romanism. The leaders of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, however, withdrew their support due to denominational pressure. See David R. Elliott, *The Intellectual World of Canadian Fundamentalism*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1989, 162.

published a letter from McGuigan protesting the Shields' advertisement.⁸⁴ In a 1941 letter, McGuigan explained his position noting that,

Dr. Shields who so dishonours his own ministry is one of Canada's greatest enemies for he continually sows hatred and discord. However, one of the sanctuary cannot argue with him for we cannot stoop to his methods and his lying propaganda.⁸⁵

Others were not so quiet. Winnipeg Archbishop Alfred A. Sinnott responded to a Shields' lecture entitled, "Who Rules Canada: George VI or Pope Pius XII?" by forwarding letters to the Honourable J.T. Thorson, Minister of National Services, and McGuigan. In his letter Sinnott declared that Shields' lectures were promoting ". . . artificially manufactured discord [which was] most dangerous at this time . . . Can nothing be done?"⁸⁶ Others agreed. By the late 1940s the Toronto press refused to accept advertising from the Protestant League.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, the fact that Shields was not publicly confronted by any of his peers (in fact they ignored him recognizing that he thrived on confrontation), Linda Wicks maintains, highlights the difficulties that Archbishop McGuigan faced in promoting ecumenical relations. While Protestant denominations felt compelled to speak out against

⁸⁴Linda Wicks, *"There Must Be No Drawing Back": The Catholic Church's Efforts on Behalf of Non-English Speaking Immigrants in Toronto, 1889-1939*, unpublished M.A. thesis, OISE, 1999, 59. Such public attacks by Protestants extremists Wicks maintains tended to isolate the Archdiocese of Toronto from mainstream Protestant leadership despite the assurances of individuals like Silcox.

⁸⁵ ARCAT, SW GCO1. 37a.

⁸⁶Wicks, "There Must Be No Drawing Back," 60.

⁸⁷John Moir, "Toronto Protestants and Their Perceptions of Their Roman Catholic Neighbours," *Catholics at the 'Gathering Place'* (Toronto: Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 1993), 322.

anti-Semitism, “they remained for the most part silent against the anti-Catholic rhetoric of Dr. T.T. Shields.”⁸⁸

The Protestant League provided Shields a vehicle for spreading militant anti-Catholicism across Canada during the remaining years of the war. For the most part, Shields repeated the same tired warnings, though with fervent hostility, that British liberties in Canada were being threatened by the Catholic hierarchy, who were in complete control of Mackenzie King and his government. This fact was evidenced, according to Shields, by King’s failure to move forward with conscription in 1942, even though popular approval was expressed in a national plebiscite.⁸⁹

Again Parliament was enraged. The House of Commons, denounced Shields and his *Gospel Witness* (renamed *The Gospel Witness and the Protestant Advocate* in October, 1942). But a 1943 resolution debated in the House calling for the muzzling of the militant Baptist, failed when Prime Minister King opposed it on the grounds that he wanted to avoid religious controversy during the war and had no interest in making a martyr of a man for whom he had nothing but “utter contempt.”⁹⁰ Even the suggestion that he was at fault infuriated Shields. He asserted that the Roman Catholic Church “a blasphemous and anti-Christian system with no right to the name Christian,” was behind the effort to still his voice. Shields charged that,

[i]f Premier King desires to write his name into the history of this country as the supreme political protagonist and defender and the subtle and servile tool

⁸⁸Wicks, “*There Must Be No Drawing Back*,” 63.

⁸⁹Reilly, “*Baptists and Organized Opposition to Roman Catholics, 1941-1962*,” 186.

⁹⁰Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, 32.

of Antichrist, he is welcome to the ignominy which posterity will pour upon his name. For myself, I stand in this holy place, dedicated to the worship of God as revealed in Jesus Christ – and I stand on my rights as a British citizen, and contend that it is an element in the principle of religious freedom that I have a right to believe in and proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, and an equal right to denounce the blasphemous presumptions of the Papacy as representative of that ‘continuous person,’ the Antichrist. For that I stand, and shall continue to stand; and I challenge the Premier of Canada, his Minister of Justice and the Attorney-General of the Province of Ontario, to dare to try to stop me!⁹¹

Clearly, it was now political rather than theological aspects of Roman Catholicism that most concerned T.T. Shields. He saw Rome’s corrupting hand at work in three major areas of Canadian government policy: Separate School legislation, conscription and totalitarianism. But what of immigration policy? Here too, not surprisingly, Shields saw the Roman Catholic Church actively working to define and shape Canadian government policy. As early as 1928, he asserted that Canadian immigration policy seemed to favour the entry of southern Europeans, and Catholics while at the same time it tended to impede the entrance of British and Protestant immigrants into Canada.

Incidentally, I may remark that when crossing to England in 1928, I fell in with a Canadian National Official from England, who had been conducting a party of tourists to Canada. He told me that he spoke as a Canadian National official, and without political bias; but asked me if I could explain why the emigration authorities at Ottawa at that time afforded every facility for the bringing to Canada of immigrants from Southern Europe and Roman Catholic countries, while they seemed, at the same time, to put every possible obstacle in the way of getting British immigrants into Canada. They were sending them out to Saskatchewan and Alberta, establishing them in colonies of their own around the Separate Schools – a little bit of Austria, or Italy, or France as the case

⁹¹*The Gospel Witness and the Protestant Advocate*, March 4, 1943, 4; When Premier Drew of Ontario introduced legislation, in 1943, designed to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, creed or religion, though principally directed to protect Jews, Shields perceived it as a direct attack against his Protestant activities and defied the Premier to silence him, arguing that he would “absolutely ignore the legislation” and even if taken to jail would refuse to “pay the fine.” See David R. Elliott, *The Intellectual World of Canadian Fundamentalism*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1989, 163.

might be. The depression stopped the flow of immigration, but beyond any doubt, it was the far-seeing purpose of the Roman Catholic Church to build up, in Saskatchewan and Alberta, a great Roman Catholic Empire like the French-Canadian Roman Catholic solid block to the east; and in due time Ontario would be at their mercy.⁹²

And Shields continued to oppose the entrance of southern and eastern Europeans into Canada, largely on the grounds that they were predominately Catholics and, therefore, constituted a serious threat to the political and moral stability of the nation. In his judgment, the depression was in one sense a blessing, since it had largely put an end to any more of this "devilish horde" arriving in Canada.

Even after Canada imposed severe immigration restrictions Shields continued to warn that the entire Department of Immigration was controlled by the Roman Catholic Church. Knowing full well that it was "useless for this editor" to make an inquiry of Ottawa under "his own signature" on "information respecting the Roman Catholic question," Shields concocted a scheme in which a letter was sent to Ottawa in January 1944, through a third party, soliciting information as to the religious affiliation of the Director of Immigration and to confirm whether or not there was only a single Protestant employed by the Department.⁹³ Five days later the following response arrived:

. . . For your information I might state that all the staff of the Immigration Branch, from the Director down, occupy positions in Civil Service and were appointed in the manner provided for in the Act. In filling a position in the Service no cognizance is taken of the religious affiliation of any of the applicants.

⁹²*The Gospel Witness*, April 16, 1936, 11.

⁹³*The Gospel Witness and the Protestant Advocate*, January 13, 1944, 12.

It might interest you to know that the late Director of the Branch and the Acting Director, happen to be Protestant.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) C. W. Jackson

Chief Exec. Assistant⁹⁴

Shields reacted to this letter in his usual manner charging that the letter, while “cleverly written,” was in “perfect consonance with Ottawa’s usual evasions.” “To say,” he went on to assert that “no cognizance is taken of the religious affiliation of any applicant, is absolutely untrue.” In Shields’ mind the main paragraph of the letter answered the letter of inquiry “by implication in the affirmative.”⁹⁵ Thus, in Shields’ judgment the entire Department of Immigration was under the complete domination of the Roman Catholic Church, bent on the extension of its empire in Canada through manipulation of existing immigration laws so as to ensure that a disproportionate number of Catholic settlers arrived in the country. In Shields’ opinion, this dare not go unchallenged since it constituted a threat of the highest magnitude to the country. Cranking up his anti-immigrant rhetoric, Shields protested, “Canada is not yet a Roman Catholic country – and some of us are resolved by God’s help that it shall never become so!”⁹⁶

⁹⁴*The Gospel Witness and the Protestant Advocate*, January 13, 1944, 12.

⁹⁵*The Gospel Witness and the Protestant Advocate*, January 13, 1944, 12.

⁹⁶*The Gospel Witness*, July 16, 1942, 9.

What conclusions can be drawn with respects to Shields' anti-Catholic bias? Shields was theologically predisposed to anti-Catholicism and was driven, by personality and missionary zeal, to excess. He saw the threat of Catholic political expansion in every shadow. But not content to point out what he saw as doctrinal errors in Catholicism, he saw the Church in bed with Hitler and Mussolini – a triumvirate, he believed, intent on world domination. To Shields the signing of the Lateran Treaty in 1929 between Mussolini and Pope Pius XI, which recognizing Catholicism as the sole religion of the state and providing for Catholic religious instruction in schools was a clear sign of the forging of an imperialistic alliance. Shields could never buy into the mainstream historical conclusion that the Treaty's primary motive was to marginalize the Church's role in Italian politics to the hundred acres of its independent sovereignty, Vatican City.⁹⁷ By settling the outstanding disputes between the Catholic Church and the state, Mussolini effectively limited a major source of opposition and criticism to his regime, in the process transforming the office of Pope from one which had been influential in European politics into essentially a spiritual leader. Nor was the Pope as docile as Mussolini intended. Mussolini's interference with the Catholic Action, the church's youth program, brought on a denouncement by the Pope in the Encyclical of 1931 (*Non Abbiamo Bisogno*).⁹⁸

Within Germany, the Nazi Party initially tried to harness the German churches, both Catholic and Protestant, to the service of nationalism, self-sacrifice for the national cause,

⁹⁷G.B. Montini (aka. Paul VI) actually opposed the treaty because it could compromise the church to Mussolini.

⁹⁸ This was followed by the trio of 1937: *Divini Redemptoris* (contra Communists); *Mit Brennender Sorge* (contra Nazis); and *Firmissimum* (contra revolution in Mexico).

belief in a chosen people and the removal of Jews from national life. While petitions to self-sacrifice and destiny were expedient to some aspects of Christianity, by 1937, Hitler lost all faith that the churches could be of any use to his goals for Germany. Though German resistance to Nazism was divided and weak, it nevertheless convinced Hitler of the worthlessness of Christianity, since it represented an obstruction to his geo-political goals of world domination. Hitler's intention was to eradicate the Church from European affairs, following his victory over the Soviet Union. In the interim, the Church was subjected to a series of persecutions largely carried out by local Nazi officials.

These persecutions helped further fuel the resistance movement, which in early 1940 Pope Pius XII secretly supported, when he allowed himself to be used as a channel of communication between the conspirators and the British government on the grounds that it would save lives.⁹⁹ Nevertheless, some recent historiography is far less charitable to the Papacy. In a recently published, and highly controversial work, John Cornwell asserts that, Eugenio Pacelli, Pius XII, prompted events in the 1920s and 1930s that helped sweep the Nazi to unhindered power. As papal nuncio in Munich and Berlin in the 1920s Pacelli used cunning and moral blackmail to impose the Vatican's power on Germany. In 1933 he

⁹⁹Owen Chadwick, "Great Britain and Europe," *Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 354-367; See also Owen Chadwick, *Britain and the Vatican During the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Other important works that deal with the Churches and the Nazi regime are: Guenther Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany* (New York: 1964); Klaus Scholder, *The Churches and the Third Reich*, Trans. by John Bowden. 2 vols. (London: SCM Press, 1987, 1988); Ernst Christian Helmreich, *The German Churches Under Hitler: Background, Struggle and Epilogue* (Detroit: 1979); J.S. Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches, 1933-45* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1968); Michael Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (Toronto: Lester, Orpen and Denys, 1987), 179-183. For a discussion of Pacelli's involvement in the anti-Hitler plot see John Cornwell's *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII* (New York: Penguin Putnam Inc., 1999), 234-240. For a discussion of Catholic opposition to the Nazis see 194-199. See also Nathan Stoltzfus, *Resistance of the Heart: Intermarriage and the Rosenstrasse Protest in Nazi Germany* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996).

negotiated a treaty with Hitler , the Reich Concordat, that ensured that the Nazis would rise to power virtually unopposed by the most powerful Catholic community in the world, thereby sealing by Hitler's own admission, the fate of the Jews in Europe. As Cornwell notes,

The abdication of German political Catholicism in 1933, negotiated and imposed from the Vatican by Pacelli with the agreement of Pope Pius XI, ensured that Nazism could rise unopposed by the most powerful Catholic community in the world . . . As Hitler himself boasted in a cabinet meeting on July 14, 1933, Pacelli's guarantee of nonintervention left the regime free to resolve the Jewish question . . . The perception of papal endorsement of Nazism, in Germany and abroad, helped seal the fate of Europe.¹⁰⁰

Nevertheless, Shields' notions of a tripartite pact between Roman Catholicism, Nazism and Fascism bent on world conquest and domination are unwarranted. More or less, as much as Shields associated the anti-Christ with any position or view differing from his own, he saw himself in a holy war against Catholicism.

Shields claimed that his anti-Catholic attitude was aroused during the Great War, when he entered Westminster Catholic Church and saw a book written by Cardinal

¹⁰⁰John Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope*, 7. J.P. Stern writes that "[i]t seems beyond any doubt that if the churches had opposed the killing and the persecution of the Jews, as they opposed the killing of the congenitally insane and the sick, there would have been no Final Solution." See J.P. Stern, *Hitler: The Fuhrer and the People* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 116. This view is also shared by Nathan Stoltzfus in *Resistance of the Heart* (New York: 1996) and Guenter Lewy in *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany* (New York: 1964). Historian John S. Conway, however, seriously doubts this. Conway argues that both Protestant and Catholic churches in Germany were "unprepared and totally unsuited to cope with the situation." Conway further contends, that "[n]either the hierarchy nor the laity had the courage or the means to mobilize the Church against the embattled might of Nazism, and thereby to jeopardize the very existence of their own institutions." Only when it was too late did the German Evangelical churches lament this failure. Conway asserts that four factors were largely responsible for this meager resistance to Nazism: ingrained pietism; a characteristic German readiness to accept existing political order without criticism and to exact obedience to an established authority; the fact that many in the churches supported the Nazis' call for renewal of the nation and a revival of its spirituality; and the generally conservative outlook of the churches, which led them to accept without question the Nazis' claim that they were the only alternative to Communism. See Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches*, 329-337.

Mercier entitled *The Duty of Catholics*. The book, according to Shields, argued that it was the duty of all Catholics to marry at maturity and produce a population for the Church. Parents were to encourage their offspring in this direction. Shields held that, "I have never seen the distinction between Christianity in the New Testament sense, and Roman Catholicism, more clearly defined."¹⁰¹ The Roman Catholic Church was thus propagated through human initiative, while a truly New Testament Church was fostered through the infinite grace of God. Whether it was this particular incident, his strong association with British ideals and Britain herself, or the traditional evangelical Protestant aversion to Popery, that shaped his attitude towards Roman Catholics, the fact still remains that T.T. Shields was militantly anti-Catholic. Though Shields' militancy and dogmatism on issues would eventually force him to the fringes of mainstream Canadian evangelicalism, it is clear that not only many Baptists, but other Protestants found his combination of principle and pugnacity appealing, as evidenced by their support of the Protestant League during the Second World War. The activities of this organization, and especially its leader T.T. Shields, were responsible for fostering division within the country and seriously undermining national unity. In T.T. Shields, militantly anti-Catholic, Canadian Baptists indeed found a "champion."

Shields' crusaded against what he saw as Roman Catholic doctrinal deviations from Evangelical faith, linked with Catholic involvement in political intrigue. While Shields was willing to accord Catholics the right to exercise and to a lesser extent propagate their erroneous beliefs, he acridly assaulted their venturing into the political arena and felt

¹⁰¹*The Gospel Witness*, April 16, 1936, 7.

duty-bound to warn the nation of the impending peril should such papal meddling proceed unabated.

Nobody was immune to Shields anti-Catholic assaults. Even former supporters of Shields could themselves in turn be subjected to the wrath of the Baptist crusader. In 1947, J. Frank Norris, who had conducted a crusade for Shields on the errors of Romanism in 1924, praised Pope Pius XII for his opposition to Communism. Shields, on hearing this, was horrified and pronounced with a royal "we," "We absolutely withdraw our fellowship from anyone who [shakes] hands with the bloody hand of the Papacy."¹⁰²

Nor can one accept the argument of Dr. Olive Clark, one of Shields' close associates at Toronto Baptist Seminary, that Shields promoted an anti-Catholicism of love aimed at liberating laity and priests who had been duped by the diabolical Roman system and its authoritarian Bishops during his attacks upon Roman Catholicism. Shields' bigoted and outright religious attacks upon individuals and their values is hardly a measure of love. Furthermore, it may be argued that the fact that many people were "saved" does not mark some type of God-ordained blessing upon the means and efforts of Shields in this capacity.¹⁰³ The fact that people were "saved" is not any testimony to justify Shields' passionate vendetta against Roman Catholics, nor a sanctioning of his methods, which he claimed were correct, but, believers might argue, points instead to the power of the Gospel to affect change even beyond the shortcomings of human endeavor. For believers God brings about wondrous events, like salvation, in spite of human motives and

¹⁰²See "Dr. J. Frank Norris Visits and Praises the Pope," *The Gospel Witness and the Protestant Advocate*, September 11, 1947, 1-3.

¹⁰³L.K. Tarr, *Shields of Canada*, 161.

shortcomings. The damage that T.T. Shields and other fundamentalists like him caused is still being felt by Baptist churches today. Sectors of Protestant Christianity, particularly within Baptist circles, have never sufficiently redressed nor apologized for the excesses of those like Shields and below the surface bitterness between Baptist and Catholics still remains.

Chapter 6

“Thou Shalt Say unto Him, the Lord God of the Hebrews Hath Sent Me unto Thee, Saying, Let My People Go, That They May Serve Me in the Wilderness”: Canadian Baptists and the Jewish Refugee Question of the 1930s

Recent events in the former Yugoslavia have again heightened awareness that the world has largely failed to learn the lessons of the Holocaust. Kosovo is unfortunately just another in what seems to be an endless series of genocide, ethnic cleansing and refugee crises that have plagued the world since 1945. The woeful reality is that governments around the world continue to systematically utilize torture, arbitrary arrest, detention, forced exile, denial of freedom of conscience and genocide. These actions are generally defended on the basis of economic development, national security, historic right or religious prerogative. The comments of a local high school principal in Toronto, who urged his staff not to become “partisan” on the issue of Kosovo, and who then compared the pain and suffering of a teacher declared surplus to that of victims of the Nazi death camps, only further illustrates how little our society has learned from the experiences of the 1930s and 40s.¹

¹Note also the continued attacks on Gypsies around the world themselves major victims of the Holocaust in the Second World War. See Gwynne Dyer, “Europe’s Gypsies Consider Their Future,” *The Toronto Star*, August 6, 2000.

This lack of respect for the dignity and sanctity of life, as well as flagrant violations of human rights globally, constitutes not only a major political and social issue, but also a religious one as well. Clearly, religious institutions have a responsibility to speak out against atrocities and to campaign for the cause of rights and freedoms. Due to their historic advocacy of liberty of consciousness, and their own historical experience as nonconformists who were victims of persecution, it might be reasonable to expect that Baptists would be at the forefront of any such campaign. To what extent, however, has this been the case?

This chapter examines this issue in light of the responses and actions of Canadian Baptists (Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec) to the plight and flight of Jews in Europe from 1933 to 1939. Did Baptists, who were once themselves a persecuted religious minority, forced in some cases to seek asylum, speak out against atrocities being perpetuated on the Jews of Europe? How aware of these atrocities were they? What actions if any did they encourage their government to take? Was the response limited to a few prominent individuals or was it more widespread? Were there significant differences in the responses of fundamentalist and liberal Baptists? As we have seen elsewhere in this dissertation, Baptists were not always consistent in their application to others of the standard of human rights that they demand for themselves so was this true of their reactions and responses to the Jewish question of the 1930s?

With the onset of the Great Depression of the 1930s, Canada had all but barred its doors to the influx of further immigration. By the mid-1920s, years of public agitation, nativism and xenophobic fears ultimately persuaded the Canadian government to institute

various regulations designed to control the continuing influx of immigrants. Furthermore, without explicitly changing the Immigration Act, the government also “made several administrative refinements” that were deliberately intended to prevent any further admission of Jews into Canada. In a series of rulings, designed to control the admission of those “races that cannot be assimilated without social or economic loss to Canada,” potential immigrants were ranked according to the similarity of their “‘racial characteristics’ to the Anglo-Canadian majority.”² Consequently, those seeking admission to Canada as immigrants were divided into three groups: Preferred Class, Non-Preferred Class and a Special Permit Class. As historians Irving Abella and Harold Troper have pointed out:

it was obvious that the Special Permit Class was devised and implemented largely to restrict the immigration of Jews. In effect, therefore, immigration officials and their cabinet allies had deliberately revised regulations after the war, without consulting Parliament so as to make immigration more difficult for Jews than for others holding the same citizenship.³

Consequently, racism, nativism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, pervasive in Canada, especially after the First World War, had “found formal expression in revamped immigration regulations.”⁴ With the onset of the Depression, the government was handed the opportunity to tighten its restrictionist umbrella over Canada even further. With the subsequent passage of two orders in council (PC 1957 and PC 659) in 1930/31, “for all

²I. Abella and H. Troper, *None Is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948* (Toronto: Lester Publishing Ltd., 1983), xii-xiii.

³Abella and Troper, *None Is Too Many*, xii-xiii. As Abella and Troper further point out “the 1923 immigration regulations had turned the law on its head. Rather than permit immigration of everyone except specially prohibited groups, the regulations now prohibited everyone except specially permitted groups.”

⁴Abella and Troper, *None Is Too Many*, xi.

intents and purposes, just at the time when she was most needed, Canada [had] shut herself off from the rest of the world."⁵

Anti-Jewish sentiment had deep roots in Canadian society. Jewish immigrants were not admitted to New France, nor were Protestants either, although some Huguenots did manage to settle in Quebec during the eighteenth century.⁶ While circumstances changed following the British Conquest of 1759, setting the stage for future anti-Jewish incidents, under the provisions of the Quebec Act of 1774, French Canadians were permitted to maintain their language and their religion. As such, the Roman Catholic Church remained the dominant institution within the province of Quebec well into the twentieth century. The Church saw as its primary duty the defence of "both the faith and the faithful from any external threat." Consequently, for the Roman Catholic Church "the Jews – alien, commercial, cosmopolitan, and rejecters of Christ – personified this threat."⁷ Church writings throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries consistently portrayed Jews and Judaism "in a medieval Christian mould, i.e., as a deicide people under a self-inflicted curse destined to suffer dispersion until the end of time."⁸ The Jew, "in league with the devil," was thus once again perceived as a conspirator against Christendom, as they had been during the latter part of the Middle Ages. Against these "Christ-killers," "exploiters"

⁵Abella and Troper, "Canada and the Jewish Refugees, 1933-39," in *Twentieth Century Canada: A Reader* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1986), 258. Under PC 1957, only those immigrants with enough capital to allow themselves to establish and maintain farms were permitted access, while PC 659, banned all non-agricultural immigrants of non-British or non-American heritage.

⁶A. Davies and M.F. Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches? Canadian Protestantism and the Jewish Plight During the Nazi Era* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1998), 5.

⁷Abella and Troper, *None Is Too Many*, x.

⁸Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 6.

and cheats, who as “parasites were spreading an insidious disease” that would destroy the very fabric of society, church and nationalist leaders in Quebec felt impelled to lead a movement to not only boycott Jewish businesses, but also to keep Jews out of public life and Canada altogether.⁹

Anti-Jewish sentiment, however, was not strictly the purview of French Canada. In much of English Canada anti-Judaism “took the form of classical and social imagery – the thieving Fagen-like figure of western folklore immortalized by Charles Dickens – together with certain Protestant religious fixations not unlike their Catholic counterparts.”¹⁰ The widely held sentiments of Goldwin Smith, Stephen Speisman notes, however, were “not typical of Gentile attitudes towards Jews in Toronto.” Speisman points out that the English and German Jewish families of Holy Blossom synagogue enjoyed a degree of integration into the civic life of the city. In the private, as opposed to the official social sphere Speisman maintains there was “probably considerable exclusion even of the most ‘accepted’ Jews.” So while anti-Semitism may not have been so overt in some sectors of Toronto initially, once the eastern European Jews began arriving in greater numbers, “the public attitude toward the Jewish population became more ambivalent.” Speisman notes that the anti-Semitism experienced by the Jews of Toronto was characteristic of that manifest throughout North America. It was not a “nationalistic anti-Semitism” like that found in Russia that affected all Jews, but was instead “rooted in traditional religious prejudice [namely western Christian culture and sources] and affected individuals rather

⁹Abella and Troper, *None Is Too Many*, x.

¹⁰Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 6.

than the entire group."¹¹ Canadian Protestantism in this period was still dominated by its Anglo-Saxon character. At its worst, this age of "Anglo-conformity," implied the rule of Anglo-Saxon tribalism and suppression of religious and ethnic minorities. At its best it represented the spirit and principles of Anglo-Saxon political democracy, with its notions of toleration and fair play. Both of these viewpoints found expression in Canadian Protestantism. Protestant churches, while regarding Canada as a Christian nation, were still not willing to deny its non-Christian citizens a measure of civil equality. In other words, Jews were allowed to be Jews, even though they were often the target of missionary outreaches, and expected to "adjust to the Christian ethos of the nation."¹² Like Roman Catholicism, English Canadian Protestantism was tainted with the ancient Christian misconception about Jews and Judaism. These misconceptions ranged all the way from fundamental ignorance of Jewish life, values and beliefs, to outright anti-Semitism.¹³

With the arrival of large numbers of Eastern European Jews at the turn of the century, most of whom tended to settle in urban as opposed to rural areas, the social climate of English speaking Canada, especially Toronto, was also unfavourably upset. Not only did Jewish settlement in urban centres conflict directly with government policy,

¹¹Stephen A. Speisman, *The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1997), 117-122.

¹²Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 18; For a discussion of Protestant missionary activities among the Jews of Toronto see R. Gruneir's "The Hebrew-Christian Mission in Toronto," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. IX, No.1, 1977, 18-28. Protestant efforts to proselytize Jews largely ended in failure. Nevertheless after the First World War Jews found a country that was "smugly Christian and xenophobic, but they did not face overt Christian missionary attacks on their ethnic and religious dignity."

¹³See Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 17-29.

designed to settle foreigners in rural areas, but even more worrisome was the trepidation that many of these Jews represented “a seditious radicalism that could only bode ill for the peace and order of the Canadian nation.”¹⁴ With the press, business, political and religious leaders reinforcing such assertions, many English speaking Canadians came to believe that their values and way of life were under siege. Their “hopes of keeping Anglophone Canada [as] an island of British civility in North America” seemed in jeopardy. Consequently, at a time when the Jews were seeking refuge from the Aryan Laws of Hitler’s Third Reich, the corresponding boycotts and acts of brutality that attended their implementation, culminating in the *Kristallnacht* pogrom of 1938, and an ever mounting refugee crisis, the Canadian government “as much in defence of a narrow notion of Canada, as out of direct hostility to Jews” had erected barriers not only “against their full participation in community life,” but more importantly, given the growing crisis in Europe, their admission into Canada.

When it came to the subject of Jews and Judaism, Canadian Baptists were no better or worse in their views than any other Canadian Protestants. Like other Protestants of the day, they held to the same “general misconceptions and endemic ignorance of Jewish history and religion . . . as well as to certain anti-Judaic sectarian strains.”¹⁵ Even

¹⁴See Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 8.

¹⁵See Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 80; “How Jews Regard Christ,” *Canadian Baptist*, January 4, 1923, 7. Rabbi Stephen Wise was quoted in the *Canadian Baptist* concerning his views on the divinity of Christ: “the Jews were right in having chosen and in continuing to chose the truth as they see it.” “Jesus was ‘not a God’ nor was he a ‘being who died that others might live.’” These views were clearly the antithesis to those of Baptists. General Allenby’s capture of Jerusalem in the First World War was viewed by Baptists as an “epoch in Jewish history.” Not only did it raise all kinds of millennial issues, including the return of Jews to Palestine, but for many Baptists it also signified that [w]e must give back the Christ of God to the Jews, who first gave Christ to us.” See the *Baptist Yearbook*, 1918, 238.

prominent references to Jews as Christ “rejecters” and “killers” found their way into denominational literature. As the *Canadian Baptist*, on April 6, 1933 lamented:

But to read the shameful story
How the Jews abused their King,
How they killed the Lord of Glory,
Makes me angry when I sing.¹⁶

Furthermore, these attitudes of Baptists in Canada to Jews tended to be found in both the liberal and the fundamentalist strains of the denomination. Liberal or modernist Baptists tended to deal somewhat ambiguously with Jewish issues. On the one hand, Jews were praised for their ‘religious genius;’ yet on the other, Jesus was revered as a Jew, who had transcended Judaism with his “universal mind and heart.” “The Christian of any nation,” the *Canadian Baptist* went on to assert, “never thinks of him as a Jew. Jesus belongs to all nations and to all ages. He is the world’s centre.”¹⁷

Fundamentalists, like the dogmatic T.T. Shields of Jarvis Street Baptist Church in Toronto, espoused the traditional fables and clichés about Jews in conjunction with typical evangelical appeals:

When Pilate said to the Jews of his day, “Will you crucify your King?” They said, “His blood be on us, and upon our children.” And it has been! Oh, it has been! The Jews have already reaped a terrible harvest whatever their future may be. Their isolation, their place in history, the fact that no nation can assimilate them, that there is no possibility of obliterating their distinctiveness, whether in Germany, or in France, or Italy, or Britain, or Canada or America . . . they stand out identified as the children of those who shed the blood of the Lord Jesus, and His blood has been upon them! The awful record of their sufferings from then until now attests the fact.

¹⁶“Holy Ground,” *Canadian Baptist*, April 6, 1933, 10; See also Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 80.

¹⁷“Why was Jesus a Jew?” *Canadian Baptist*, December 14, 1933, 6.

Oh, my Hebrew friends who hear me by radio, turn ye to Jesus of Nazareth. He is the solution of your problems¹⁸

While willing to affirm the Jewishness of Jesus,¹⁹ Shields, however, occasionally allowed anti-Jewish slurs to creep into his sermons.

Oh, but have you never heard the proverb, 'Worth a Jew's eye'? It means that a Jew can see money where nobody else can. That is the explanation of their searching around the garbage cans, picking up the world's refuse and getting rich on it.²⁰

If Baptists' relationship with the Jewish community may be described as ambiguous at best, this was certainly no less true when it came to dealing with refugee questions in the past either.

Like Jews, Baptists recall a history of persecution and rejection. With its stress upon individual conversion, the Free Church movement made a direct contribution to the notion of liberty of conscience, holding that a church is only truly free when it can assemble individuals who have a right to exercise their own personal beliefs, governed not by political or cultural influences, but by the Spirit of God. The emphasis that Baptists placed upon this principle of liberty of conscience is one of their most important contributions.²¹ In upholding this principle, many Baptists were forced to not only forfeit their lives, but in many other cases, were disavowed by other Christians or deprived of rights and privileges in the state. Consequently, Baptists constituted a distinctive religious minority,

¹⁸"Watching Jesus," *The Gospel Witness*, July 6, 1933, 4-5; See also Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 80.

¹⁹See "When a Christian is Not a Christian," *The Gospel Witness*, April 15, 1937, 5. "Jesus was a Jew."

²⁰"My Beloved is Mine and I am His," *The Gospel Witness and the Protestant Advocate*, preached November 7, 1937, November 5, 1953, 12-13.

²¹Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, 31.

often referring to themselves as Dissenters rather than Protestants, who emerged during a period of religious persecution that they suffered at the hands of both the Roman Catholic Church, and other Protestant groups, as well as governmental authority. What is significant here is that the history of Baptists is a history of a religious group whose origins are rooted in persecution and exile. Given this fact, how sensitive were Canadian Baptists to other victims of persecution?

Canadian Baptists' efforts to address refugee concerns were mixed at best. During the nineteenth century, Canadian Baptists took a stand against slavery and actively engaged in missionary work amongst the fugitive slaves that had fled to Canada from the United States in search of freedom. While most Baptist congregations in Canada were willing to admit people of colour, separation of the races soon became the rule. As Paul Dekar has argued, while some of the initiative for this separation came from Blacks, "growing white racism was much more significant as a factor in the developing pattern of Canadian segregation."²² Paul Dekar further notes that Baptists were willing to "welcome," "assist," and evangelize fugitive Blacks when their numbers in Canada were relatively small. However, once their numbers increased and contributions and conditions worsened, especially after 1850, when the United States Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act "the main burden of Baptist support for the fugitive fell upon blacks

²²Paul Dekar, "Human Rights," *Baptists in Canada* (Burlington: G.R. Welch and Company, 1980), 118; See also Robin W. Winks, *The Blacks in Canada – A History* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1971), 337-361. Winks notes that while the Negro initiated churches in Upper Canada were initially interracial "few remained so past the early 1840s." The impetus for segregation came not only from whites "who, when numerous enough formed churches of their own", but "equally strong was the desire of fugitive slaves to restrict membership to blacks lest the pharaohs from whom they had fled infiltrate them."

[themselves] whose resources and capacity to respond were severely limited. With some notable exceptions, white Canadian Baptists limited their concern for the black opposition to slavery in the United States. The refugee in their midst received scant notice."²³

In the immediate aftermath of the First World War, Canadian Baptists were forced to address the plight of co-religionists in war shattered Europe. At the annual Conference of the Baptist World Alliance held in London in July 1920, the Alliance unanimously decided,

[t]o deal not with the needs of the entire population in each land, but with those of Baptist [heritage]. The just and sufficient cause for this action being, that in other schemes of relief carried on largely by Catholic and State authorities, Baptists (and other dissenting bodies) are systematically overlooked.²⁴

The Alliance further unanimously concurred that Canadian Baptists should assume one-third of the annual cost estimate for relief work in Estonia and Latvia (ca. \$5,000.00 per year) for three years and also one-third of the cost for capital expenses (\$17,000) amounting to a total of \$32,000.00. The money was to be used primarily for salaries, religious schools, tuition fees for ministerial students, rebuilding churches and other religious work and the distribution of literature.²⁵ But Baptist compassion reached beyond Baptist boundaries.

²³P. Dekar, "Human Rights," *Baptists in Canada*, 122. See also Daniel G. Hill, *The Freedom-Seekers: Blacks in Early Canada* (Agincourt: The Book Society of Canada, 1981), 126-145.

²⁴*Baptist Yearbook*, 1921, 80.

²⁵*Baptist Yearbook*, 1921, 81; See Robert Wright, *A World Mission: Canadian Protestantism and the Quest for a New International Order 1918-1939* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 75-89.

The following year the Convention passed the following resolution which called upon Baptists to fulfill their "Christian obligation" in heeding the plight of Armenian orphans and refugees:

Resolved, That this Convention place on record its profound interest in the remarkable story, presented by Dr. Vining, concerning the desperate condition and indescribable need of the Armenian orphans and refugees in the Near East, and would urge upon our people everywhere the Christian obligation to respond generously to the appeals that shall be made to preserve the child life of this people, the oldest Christian nation in the world.²⁶

Given their relatively small numbers, Baptists raised considerable funds, not only for the Armenian relief program, but also for victims of the Russian Famine.²⁷ In addition, Baptists strongly protested the treatment and denial of religious liberty that many of their brethren suffered in both the Soviet Union and Romania during the interwar years.²⁸

However, while recognizing the urgency of the refugee problem after the First World War and the need to address this problem as an act of "Christian charity," the Social Services Committee of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec at their annual convention in 1923 passed the following reform that called for the "immediate attention of those who call themselves Christian in our land." The reform demanded:

[a] careful selection of immigrants to Canada, with reference to child immigration, more careful examination as to the physical and mental fitness of immigrants before being brought out, and better supervision in placing them in homes after their arrival; a friendly reception to all newcomers to our land; and scientific efforts to solve the problems of Canadianization.²⁹

²⁶*Baptist Yearbook*, 1922, 58.

²⁷See the *Baptist Yearbook*, 1922, 88. They did however fail to reach the target established for relief funds.

²⁸See the "Baptist Preachers Jailed in Rumania," *Canadian Baptist*, December 29, 1938, 6.

²⁹*Baptist Yearbook*, 1923, 190-191.

In effect, the proposal called for stringent regulations on the type of orphan children from Europe being allowed into Canada, in effect limiting their numbers. While it is difficult to know if the Baptist resolution of 1923 was even known to immigration officials in Ottawa, the following year the Immigration Children Protection Act (1924) was passed. The Social Service Board of the Convention reported that the Act not only regulated the selection of children for immigration, but also the circumstances under which they would be placed into homes for adoption, and supervision of the conditions under which they lived or worked.³⁰ As a result, many children in need of refuge in Canada were denied access, on the basis of their "unsuitability." Thus, while Canadian Baptists may have demonstrated a track record of concern, and in some instances, positive action to aid victims of persecution or severe economic hardship, in many cases this aid was directed to members of their own religious affiliation and at times tainted with racist overtones.³¹ Given this rather muddled approach to the plight of refugees, how did Baptists respond to the crisis of Jewish refugees seeking asylum from Hitler's Germany in the 1930s?

As strong advocates and defenders of the principle of religious liberty, Baptists were extremely apprehensive about the plans of the Nazi regime to construct a national Protestant church in Germany under the patronage of the state. This meant, warned Stanley High, that the Protestant churches of Germany were no longer answerable "to the voice of God, but to the voice of Hitler."³² As Dr. J.H. Rushbrooke, a leading figure in the

³⁰*Baptist Yearbook*, 1924, 247.

³¹*Canadian Baptist*, February 1, 1934, 9.

³²"Religion Beyond the Rhine," *Canadian Baptist*, November 15, 1934, 16. Yet, Baptists in Canada appeared more alarmed by the rise of Hitler than did their German Baptist brethren in Europe. Baptist

Baptist World Alliance remarked, “[i]t is impossible for them to accept any such relation with the State as would make them merely its dependents or tools.”³³ The Nazis’ intention to foster a monolithic culture inside of Germany understandably aroused the suspicion of Canadian Baptists, as it reminded them of their own historical struggles against the Roman Catholic Church during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Consequently, it is not surprising that many Canadian Baptists were resolved in their opposition to fascism, which for some [namely supporters of Shields] was manifest in three forms – Italian, German, and Roman Catholic totalitarianism.³⁴

Baptists distrust of Hitler’s intentions, with respect to the Protestant churches in Germany undoubtedly also “alerted them to other aberrations in the new German Reich, particularly the Aryan laws and the persecution of the Jews.”³⁵ As early as April 6, 1933, in an article entitled “Germany and the Jews,” the *Canadian Baptist* recorded:

historian Robert G. Torbert notes that “with the infiltration of Nazism into German political life and its ultimate triumph in the rise of Hitler to power in 1933, the [German] Baptists showed little concern.” Torbert argues that this was due to their “strong antipathy to involvement of the church in politics,” and the fact that since they were not a state-church sect the new regime did not really interfere with their work. As a result, they seemed “somewhat blinded to the real issues involved in the emergence of totalitarianism.” At the sixth World Congress of the Baptist Alliance, held in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1939, “German Baptists were warned of the dangers facing them.” See Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists*, 175. *The Toronto Daily Star* carried an article on Tuesday April 4, 1933, in which it reported that “Portestant [sic] Nazis assembled in a national convention to-day celebrated the triumph of the Nationalist revolution led by Hitler. ‘Race purity’ was declared to be the guiding principle of the new organization known as the ‘German Christian movement.’” See “Britisher is Seized Then Spirited Away by Nazis in Berlin,” *The Toronto Daily Star*, April 4, 1933, 1.

³³“From Many Lands,” *Canadian Baptist*, June 29, 1933, 11.

³⁴Robert R. Smale, “‘The Voice of One Crying in the Wilderness’ or Verbal Bigotry – T.T. Shields,” *The Gospel Witness and Roman Catholicism, 1922-1942*, *Historical Papers 1997 Canadian Society of Church History*, 16; *The Gospel Witness*, November 6, 1940, 6; *Canadian Baptist*, April 5, 1934, 4; In the mind of at least one Canadian Baptist, T.T. Shields, these three bodies were bent on world conquest and domination.

³⁵Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 81.

When the world in the Great War termed the German nation Huns, the great nation along the Rhine writhed under the insult. In the heat of warfare truth has a habit of becoming sadly twisted at times; in calmer days less passionate terms are employed. But if a fraction of the atrocities against Jews with which Germany is charged to-day be true, Hun is the only word that can be used to describe the Hitlerite Teutons. In fact, it may be that an apology is due the ancient barbarians, for apparently nothing to equal the cruelties of the modern attack on Jews in Germany has been seen since Bartholomew's day in France, and that other period when the Spanish Inquisition was in full flower. The entire world is horrified by the tales of barbarism, which are coming from Germany through devious channels; its like reading the story of the Armenian massacres again. One did not expect much better things from Turks, but Germany, the birthplace of Protestantism, is on a different plane surely. German Jews, from peasant to professor, are in their dark Gethsemane and the rest of the world stands powerless to interfere. In fact, the lot of the sufferers seems to become more desperate every time a foreign voice is lifted in protest. More and more it is evident that Berlin was an impossible meeting place for the Baptist World Alliance in 1933 . . . Baptists . . . would find a cold welcome, if any at all, in Germany now. One could never imagine that the Christ whom German Protestants and Catholics alike worship was a Jew.³⁶

³⁶*Canadian Baptist*, April 6, 1933, 3; See also "Ill Treatment of Jews," *Canadian Baptist*, April 27, 1933; "Barring the Jews," *Canadian Baptist*, May 4, 1933, 3; In the fall of 1933, the *Canadian Baptist* reported, forty delegates of the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work met in the city of Novi Sad. The new German church organization sent five delegates to present the point of view of German Christianity under the Hitler regime. The other delegates of the Council vigorously protested against "the evil things that are taking place in Germany." The meeting inevitably created a split between the German and non-German delegates who withdrew from the meeting. Following a letter from the German delegation expressing their desire to not only remain in the council, but exoneration for the German state and German church, the Stockholm Statement was re-affirmed as a basis for continued cooperation. The Council, however, "expressed the anxiety occasioned in all lands by the ruthless persecution of the Jews, as well as the complete denial of freedom of thought and conscience by the Hitler Government." The persecution of the Jews by the Church was acknowledged as "the blackest page in the whole history of Christianity," something that all nations and all churches were in the past responsible. It was, however, believed that such evil had been "outlived." However, as Henry A. Atkinson, General Secretary of the Church Peace Union and Member of the Executive Committee of the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work added, "[t]his latest outbreak of fanaticism and savagery is all the harder to understand and cannot be excused or condoned, even on the grounds of a 'revolution in Germany.'" "German Jew Problem at Novi Sad," *Canadian Baptist*, October 12, 1933, 14. One Baptist commentator Reverend Richard Roberts, in almost a premonition of Canada's reaction to the crisis asserted, "[d]on't suppose that it is only in Germany today that Jesus [Jews] would be put out of the way. Are you sure that we might not deport Him as an undesirable alien?" See "If Jesus Went to Germany," *Canadian Baptist*, February 1, 1934, 4.

In fact, as one Baptist commentator remarked, “[i]f I were a Jew to-day I might wonder how one who professed to love Jesus, the Hebrew, could treat my race so despicably.”³⁷

Accounts of abuse of Jews in Germany, appear to have influenced the tone of Dr. M.F. McCutcheon’s 1933 Presidential Address to the Convention. Speaking on “The Church’s Task in the Modern World,” President McCutcheon asserted:

If true to our faith every human life must be regarded as a reflex of divinity. Every act of wrong and injustice therefore, mars and defaces the image of God in man. ‘Oppression and exploitation are more than violations of social law. They are sacrilege and blasphemy.’ They thwart life – God’s life in man. The religious man will not rest content with personal salvation. He will strive to bring about a social order which will issue to all men freedom for self-realization. He will weigh all social institutions in the balance of spiritual utility: If found wanting, he will set about to reconstruct them, or, if need be, to destroy them. His morality will be militant, and when necessary revolutionary’ . . . This makes it clear that the ‘preaching of principles’ is not enough. ‘A principle after all, is a poor ghost, unless expressed in concrete material.’³⁸

McCutcheon’s challenge to the Convention reflected the social gospel theology he espoused. Dogmatics were not enough. Sound theology had to be coupled with concrete action. Any theology that did not directly impact society in the interest of “freedom for self-realization” was deemed spiritually wanting.

The question of freedom and liberty, especially religious liberty, seems to have been of paramount concern to Baptists in 1933.³⁹ Dr. J.H. Rushbrooke, General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance commented that while there were elements of policy in the German

³⁷ “If I Were a Jew,” *Canadian Baptist*, March 8, 1934, 4.

³⁸M.F. McCutcheon, “The Church’s Task in the Modern World,” *Canadian Baptist*, October 19, 1933, 5.

³⁹See “Hitler and Jesus,” *Canadian Baptist*, February 15, 1934, 3. “It is strange for the land that gave birth to the Reformation now to be the centre of the most violent attack in years on religious liberty.” This issue would remain a constant fixation of Baptists throughout the 1930s.

government “which commanded the strong support of Baptists,” but the Reich would “gain enormously if it adopts a policy of respect for the rights of the free evangelical communities.”⁴⁰ G.W. Brooker, enunciated the threat to religious liberty of Hitlerian policies, with the historic experience of Baptists even more precisely. He asserted that,

[t]he dilemma of the German Christians in 1933 is exactly the same dilemma which confronted British Baptists and Congregationalists and Presbyterians in the 16th and 17th centuries. The cardinal and crucial question of the spiritual independence and spiritual autonomy of the Christian Church, was under debate and discussion . . . Their position is parallel to that of their British Baptist predecessors during the reign of the Stuarts.⁴¹

Hitler’s suppression of free speech, freedom of the press, and spiritual liberty created the “unsettl[ing] conditions” that prevented the Baptist World Alliance from holding its fifth Conference in Berlin in 1933.

The Conference was eventually rescheduled and held in Berlin from the fourth to the tenth of August, the following year. This decision only served to fuel a fierce international debate in the Baptist community on the “suitability of this location.” Canadian, British and American Baptists expressed deep reservations about whether or not they should attend the Conference.⁴² Canadian Baptists’ decision to send delegates to the Conference was predicated on Hitler and his associates “guaranteed freedom of deliberation to the

⁴⁰“From Many Lands,” *Canadian Baptist*, June 29, 1933, 11.

⁴¹G.W. Brooker, “The Dilemma of German Baptists and German Christians,” *Canadian Baptist*, September 7, 1933, 3.

⁴²See the *Canadian Baptist*, April 5, 1934, 3ff.

Baptists."⁴³ Nevertheless, the decision to go was the "subject of adverse criticism."

Canadian Baptists felt, however, that

[i]f a Congress can be held in Berlin, it offers a literally unparalleled opportunity for witness to distinctive Baptist principles.⁴⁴

The Committee, therefore, felt that such a Congress "can" and "should be held," since a "definite and unmistakable testimony" to distinctive Baptist convictions could be accorded in a nation whose political regime accorded marginal regard for principles of religious liberty or democratic rights. Baptists also wanted to ensure that the decision to hold a Congress in Berlin in no way implied their "approval of anti-Semitism, or any weakening in their view of our Lord's authority and of the Christian faith as supernatural and interracial"⁴⁵

Delegates to the Convention were of course obliged to listen to a number of addresses promoting the virtues of the "new Germany"; nevertheless, opposition to a number of Nazi policies was voiced, including Hitler's oppression of the Jews.⁴⁶ The Baptist World Congress voiced their utter commitment "to the conviction that racial prejudice and national antagonism are entirely at variance with the Christian conscience and that Baptists everywhere should seek by every possible means to exemplify and

⁴³"The German authorities with full knowledge of the program have given the assurance of *volie verhandlungsfreiheit*." See the *Canadian Baptist*, June 21, 1934, 16. Of the forty Canadians who attended the Berlin Conference twenty-two were from the West.

⁴⁴"Baptists and Berlin," *Canadian Baptist*, April 5, 1934, 3. Shields would not have attended this Conference because of the liberal theology espoused by many of its members.

⁴⁵*Canadian Baptist*, January 18, 1934, 15.

⁴⁶See the *Canadian Baptist*, July 16, 1934, 2; *Canadian Baptist*, August 23, 1934, 3; *Canadian Baptist*, August 30, 1934, 2-7; *Canadian Baptist*, September 6, 1934, 3-5.

promote good will and understanding among all peoples."⁴⁷ The Congress further held that racialism, with specific reference to anti-Semitism, was "unchristian."⁴⁸

The Congress, however, did allow the Nazis to achieve a kind of propaganda victory. First of all, the delegates were accorded the liberty they were promised at the Congress, but second and more importantly, some left Berlin no doubt convinced that Nazi atrocities toward the Jews were grossly exaggerated and perhaps in some way understandable if not justifiable. As the September 6, 1934 *Canadian Baptist* report on "Berlin 1934" remarked:

It was revealed from many sources that the recent movements in Germany against the Jews were not religious or racial, but political and economic. Since the war some 200,000 Jews from Russia and other Eastern places had come into Germany. Most of these were Communist agitators against the government. The German Jews had also monopolized a majority of government, educational and economic positions . . . The German people resented this [control]. Naturally excesses occurred and irresponsible persons committed some atrocious deeds. But at the worst it was not one-tenth as bad as we had been made to believe. The new Government became the agent of adjustment of positions proportionate to population.⁴⁹

Less than two years later the *Canadian Baptist* changed its tune. In discussing Nazi allegations against Jewish invasion of Germany the paper noted that:

[i]nstead of hundreds of thousands of Eastern European Jews these official statistics reveal that between 1910 and 1925 the total number of Jewish immigrants into Germany and these immigrants included both Eastern and Western Jews, – did not exceed 31,000. Between 1925 and 1933 9,000 of them

⁴⁷*Canadian Baptist*, September 6, 1934, 3.

⁴⁸See the *Canadian Baptist*, September 6, 1934, 3; *Canadian Baptist*, August 16, 1934, 7; *Baptist Yearbook*, 1934, 215-216; See also Walter B. Shurden (ed.), *The Life of Baptists in the Life of the World – 80 Years of the Baptist World Alliance* (Nahville: Broadmen Press, 1985), 91-106; See Erwin S. Shank's address "A World in Commotion" in which he denounced prejudice and war.

⁴⁹"Berlin 1934," *Canadian Baptist*, September 6, 1934, 3. While Robert Wright notes that there is "no evidence to suggest Canadian Baptists came away from Berlin with such a favourable impression of Hitler's racial policies" it was perhaps significant that Dr. M.E. Dodds', of the Southern Baptist Convention, "reflections were widely distributed in Canada." See Wright, *A World Mission*, 103.

had left the country again. There were thus no more than a net of 22,000 foreign Jewish immigrants . . . among a population of 67,000,000. The devouring hordes are a myth.⁵⁰

The article also went on to point out that Jews neither had a “stranglehold nor a monopoly” upon the professions and that Nazi allegations in this regard were “completely unfounded.”⁵¹

The readership of the *Canadian Baptists*, it would appear, were also concerned about the existence of concentration camps in Germany as early as 1933/34.⁵² In a letter that was reprinted from the *Manchester Guardian*, Mr. Rennie Smith compared his visit to Dachau concentration camp outside of Munich to his experience as a prisoner of war in Germany in the First World War. Smith asserted that,

I do not hesitate to say that even at the height of Prussian Jingoism, in the early months of the war, the humanities as between German jailer and British civilian prisoners were on an incomparably higher level in 1914 than is the treatment of Germans by Germans in the concentration camp of 1933.⁵³

The article went on to assert that even “the most sympathetic . . . spirit cannot blind one to [the] prevailing danger to German Jewry and [the] potential danger to the world.”⁵⁴

By the mid-1930s it was clear that many Canadian Baptists recognized the inherent dangers that totalitarianism, whether Communist or Fascist, represented to international

⁵⁰“Germany and the Jews,” *Canadian Baptist*, February 20, 1936, 15.

⁵¹“Germany and the Jews,” *Canadian Baptist*, February 20, 1936, 15.

⁵²See “Dismissal of Jews in Nazi Germany,” *Canadian Baptist*, April 12, 1934, 14.

⁵³“Dismissal of Jews in Nazi Germany,” *Canadian Baptist*, April 12, 1934, 14.

⁵⁴“Dismissal of Jews in Nazi Germany,” *Canadian Baptist*, April 12, 1934, 14.

peace and security, as well as their overtly anti-Semitic biases.⁵⁵ Many Baptists expressed utter amazement and repulsion at the remarks of Germany's great military strategist of the First World War, General Erich Lunendorff, that Christianity had been created for the special advancement of the Jews and that its one purpose was to "help the Jewish people to domination." His call for the complete renunciation of Christianity convinced many Baptists of the utter paganism of Hitler's Germany.⁵⁶ As Lloyd M. Houlding of Leamington, Ontario remarked: "I have just been reading Adolf Hitler's book entitled, "My Battle," and I pray that God will deliver us from his philosophy of life, and from his fanatical destruction of all the forces that stand in the way of his passion, his love, the Totalitarian State."⁵⁷ In an almost prophetic overtone, Houlding went on to warn that,

[w]e dare not close our eyes to the warnings prevalent in Fascism. It is true that Jews are building their ghettos in Germany to-day, and I venture to prophesy that it is equally true that the Christians will be building their catacombs, and twenty-five years from now there will be no Jews in Germany except in the ghettos and Christians except in the catacombs.⁵⁸

Some Baptists at least were beginning to realize that Nazi ideology constituted a danger not only for Jews, but the Christian Church as well. Both the Church and society at large, Houlding seems to imply could no longer ignore "the warnings" that characterized the intentions of totalitarianism. Failure to heed these warnings could have dire consequences for both.

⁵⁵See "Liberty Lives, in the Middle Road," *Canadian Baptist*, October 13, 1936, 3.

⁵⁶"Ousting Religion," *Canadian Baptist*, May 2, 1935, 2.

⁵⁷"Totalitarian State," *Canadian Baptist*, March 12, 1936, 16.

⁵⁸"Democracy and Religion," *Canadian Baptist*, August 6, 1936, 15.

While many Baptists were aware and appalled at Hitler's treatment of the Jews, totalitarianism's (whether Fascism, Nazism or Communism) threat to religious liberty, democracy, and peace was the paramount concern of Baptists.⁵⁹ In fact, as Baptists gathered in 1936 with other Protestants, Catholics and government officials at the public service to commemorate the eightieth anniversary of Holy Blossom Synagogue in Toronto, during the tenure of Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath, the *Canadian Baptist* remarked that the "anniversary itself was not the greatest thing," but the fact that this diverse group could meet together, bringing "greetings to the Jewish people" and sharing the "joy of the festive occasion." As the editor, Lewis F. Kipp, went on to remark,

[t]he service reveals what is meant by British religious and civil liberty; the service so largely attended by Gentiles could not have been held in many lands to-day – lands where Jews are treated as outcasts and harried from pillar to post, or rather, to prison and poverty. In British domains the Jew has rights equal to all other citizens; his liberty and life are as sacred as any other man's . . . The whole service was a tribute to British fair-mindedness and justice.⁶⁰

One Baptist commentator, the Reverend R.G. Quiggin, even went so far as to describe the events unfolding in Europe as part of some apocalyptic vision reminiscent of pre-war years, in which God would usher in a new Christian age. As the writer remarked, "these

⁵⁹See "Democracy and Religion," *Canadian Baptist*, August 6, 1936; "Baptists and Religious Liberty," *Canadian Baptist*, March 16, 1938; *Canadian Baptist*, November 16, 1933, 2; "The Baptist Challenge of the Hour," *Canadian Baptist*, July 8-15, 1937; "1936 Year of the Dictators," *Canadian Baptist*, January 7, 1937; As L.M. Houlding remarked, "of all the enemies of democracy Fascism is the worst." Reverend J.A. Johnston's address to the Convention entitled, "The Baptist Challenge of the Hour," asserted, that "[n]ever since the days of Diocletian have these life-principles of the Cause of Christ been so sternly denied or so ruthlessly crushed as they are denied and crushed today. Talk of our Baptist mission being realized. It was never so urgently needed."

⁶⁰"When Jews and Gentiles Sit Together," *Canadian Baptist*, October 29, 1936, 3. The editor's comments about the so-called equality of Jews in British dominions was a slight exaggeration as they were subject to prejudice there as well. Two years later, this scenario was re-created when Holy Blossom dedicated its new Temple. Lord Tweedsmuir, Canada's Governor-General, delivered the address. See "This Could Not Happen in Germany," *Canadian Baptist*, June 2, 1938, 22.

violent dictatorships are not thwarting but fulfilling the will of God. They are but puppets in the hands of the Almighty." The church, the writer stated, had been "too soft" and "persecution" would only serve to "purify" it. "We are witnessing not the twilight of Christianity, but the dawn of a more Christian age." Then, in rhetoric so characteristic of Baptists in the past, the writer asserted that, "Canada's contribution to the somewhat new civilization of North America [was] the strength and purity of British institutions," and that Baptists should march "shoulder to shoulder" with their "fellow Christians in a common effort to make Canada Christian."⁶¹

At this juncture, it would perhaps be appropriate to compare the views of two leading Baptists of the period – one the rather volatile fundamentalist preacher of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, T.T. Shields, the other, a liberal-minded Baptist scholar and academic, Watson Kirkconnell. Perhaps not surprising given his own dictatorial tendencies, Shields initially held a certain fascination for the Fascist movements of Europe. He rejected the popular notion that Benito Mussolini, Fascist dictator of Italy, was the Anti-Christ.

I grow very tired of some of my orthodox friends who continually prate Mussolini. To me, Mussolini is one of the world's greatest benefactors, and has not the first mark of the AntiChrist about him. He is a fine business manager who has saved Italy from a revolution like that of Russia. And who knows but he has saved Europe too?⁶²

⁶¹R.G. Quiggin, "Crisis and Challenge," *Canadian Baptist*, October 28, 1937, 7.

⁶²"The Truth About Mussolini," *The Gospel Witness*, September 14, 1933, 5; See also D.R. Elliott, *The Intellectual World of Canadian Fundamentalism, 1870-1970*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1989, 159-60; Shields admiration for Mussolini seems to have stemmed from the religious liberty he appeared to grant to Protestant missions in Italy and his expression of admiration for the British constitution.

Shields' early admiration for European Fascism, however, appears to have abruptly ended following Italy's rape of Ethiopia and the "Night of the Long Knives" in Germany. Thereafter, Shields saw both Hitler and Mussolini as nothing more than international gangsters. He even went so far as to suggest that a price should be put on Hitler's head:

It is though the blood-lust of that human devil must actually see blood or he cannot be satisfied. May the stroke of God Almighty fall upon that world-curse, unless he repents. I cannot ask for anything less. It would be a world-deliverance if such a man as he could by some divine interposition be removed. His reign provides a picture of how sin rises to supreme authority and reigns unto death.⁶³

Having already gained a noted reputation as an impassioned orator, Shields soon unleashed his fervour, in typical Shieldsian style, against Hitler and Nazi Germany. Hitler, Shields charged, was an "unspeakable criminal," and "execrable murderer," "the biggest liar and the ugliest human creature the devil ever produced," the most "infamous deceiver and murderer of all time." He was, Shields contended, the very embodiment of the Anti-Christ.⁶⁴ Germany he charged "as a nation had been the world's greatest criminal since 1914," "the plague spot of the world for several generations," a greater menace to the moral health of the world than "Sodom and Gomorrah," the breeding ground "for everything that is criminal to human interest and divine government," and hence a "bandit" that needed to be hunted by the police.⁶⁵

⁶³*The Gospel Witness*, March 14, 1935, 3; Shields charged that he would be "ashamed of the flag" if the government gave into Mussolini with respect to Ethiopia. See *The Gospel Witness*, September 5, 1935, 4.

⁶⁴See *The Gospel Witness*, March 12, 1936, 3; *The Gospel Witness*, September 29, 1938, 6; *The Gospel Witness*, October 27, 1938, 7; *The Gospel Witness*, September 29, 1938, 6.

⁶⁵See "Menace of Pacifism," *The Gospel Witness*, July 5, 1934, 4-6; "What Will Happen to Germany," *The Gospel Witness*, July 26, 1934, 6-7; *The Gospel Witness*, March 12, 1936, 2.

Shields was not under any illusion that “if the present tendency of European affairs continues it will produce a crisis” – namely a war.⁶⁶ As a result, he encouraged the Allied powers to take decisive action against Germany, including sending “an army of occupation in[to] Germany at once to enforce the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.”⁶⁷ Shields was highly critical of British foreign policy toward Germany. As such, he warned that this policy was “preparing the world for disaster.”⁶⁸ Pacifism, he argued, had not only “poisoned” the British mind, but was as “unscriptural as it is illogical.”⁶⁹ Shields contended that pacifism was “distinctively anti-Christian” (he even referred to it as a “sin”), and as a philosophy “so far from producing peace, issues in a condition of life in which peace becomes an absolute impossibility.”⁷⁰ And for Shields the threat was not just from those who ruled Germany, but from those who would disarm Britain.

Shields’ savage attacks against pacifism simply provided him another opportunity to attack his liberal enemies, especially those in the Baptist Convention, many of whom were strong advocates of disarmament and anti-war motions.⁷¹ Shields blamed “modernist

⁶⁶See *The Gospel Witness*, April 4, 1935, 7; *The Gospel Witness*, December 6, 1934, 7; *The Gospel Witness*, March 12, 1936, 2.

⁶⁷See *The Gospel Witness*, April 4, 1935, 7.

⁶⁸*The Gospel Witness*, March 12, 1936, 4.

⁶⁹*The Gospel Witness*, March 12, 1936, 1; *The Gospel Witness*, September 5, 1935, 3.

⁷⁰“The Perils of Pacifism,” *The Gospel Witness*, March 19, 1936, 1; *The Gospel Witness* March 12, 1936, 1; Shields held that those who sought to bring about peace through a reduction in arms were “the worst enemies of the Empire,” and that citizens of the Empire would be forced to surrender their citizenship “if the counsel of the pacifists had prevailed.” See also “Saul and Jonathan,” *The Gospel Witness*, May 4, 1933, 5-6; “The Menace of Pacifism,” *The Gospel Witness*, July 5, 1934; *The Gospel Witness*, September 5, 1935, 3ff; “Folly of Pacifism,” *The Gospel Witness*, May 21, 1936, 5-6.

⁷¹This battle had been raging since the 1920s, when Shields broke ranks with the Convention and formed his own separate Baptist denomination.

influences”⁷² for not only stripping Britain of her might, but also for the direction of her foreign policy, which sought to pacify and appease Hitler.⁷³ Shields expressed utter disdain for British Prime Ministers, Stanley Baldwin and his successor, Neville Chamberlain, both of whom he felt were leading the Empire into the abyss.⁷⁴ Responding to the Munich Agreement, Shields vociferated,

I cannot but believe that we lost a golden opportunity of breaking forever the power of Hitlerism and saving ourselves from the enormous burdens that now we must carry, but the utter unwisdom, the political and moral blindness of Premier Chamberlain. Surely there is no page in Britain’s history of which we have a deeper reason to be ashamed than that which has been written by those who have managed our foreign policy in the last few years.⁷⁵

Shields often expressed his opposition to racial and religious discrimination. Having read *Mein Kampf*, Shields condemned both its anti-Semitism and its anti-Christianity. He, likewise, dismissed the Aryan theories of the Nazis as being entirely unfounded.⁷⁶ As early as 1933, Shields’ associate at Jarvis Street Baptist Church, W. Gordon Brown, warned that, “Anti-Semitism . . . to-day . . . has formed an alliance with national consciousness, in

⁷²Shields also asserted that modernist impulses were responsible for the “ravings of Hitler and his Lieutenants [and] of a Germanized, Hitlerized religion,” which he had predicted more than twenty-five years before, when she “let loose her poisonous philosophies that polluted the springs of learning in all the universities of the world.” See “Answering By Fire,” *The Gospel Witness*, November 9, 1933, 4.

⁷³“Canada’s Duty in View of the World Menace of Hitlerism,” *The Gospel Witness*, September 22, 1938, 4.

⁷⁴*The Gospel Witness*, July 2, 1936, 2. Has Britain ever been “burdened with a more incompetent government than that of Premier Baldwin?” Anthony Eden “is about the most disappointing Foreign Minister Britain ever had.”

⁷⁵“How God Provides for Refugees,” *The Gospel Witness*, November 24, 1938, 3; See “When Will ‘the Jews’ Enemy’, the German Haman, Hang on the Gallows Prepared for Mordecai?” *The Gospel Witness*, November 17, 1938, 6; “Amazing Credulity,” *The Gospel Witness*, February 9, 1939, 2ff.

⁷⁶See *The Gospel Witness* September 17, 1936, 5; “When Will ‘the Jews’ Enemy’, the German Haman, Hang on the Gallows Prepared for Mordecai?” *The Gospel Witness*, November 17, 1938, 4.

Germany, and there is every prospect that anti-Semitism in this form will spread into all countries where the Jewish question exists."⁷⁷ And Shields, himself, noted that the violence being perpetrated towards Jews, "but fulfills the threat Hitler made before he assumed power."⁷⁸ "Hitler's insincerity," he remarked, "is perfectly apparent in his attitude toward the Jews. His attitude is as vicious as that of Haman toward the Jews of his day."⁷⁹

The *Kristallnacht*, the infamous Nazi pogrom organized to terrorize the Jews on November 9, 1938, aroused an impassioned sermon from Shields entitled, "When Will the 'Jews Enemy', the German Haman, Hang on the Gallows Prepared for Mordecai?"⁸⁰ While Shields noted that he could not condone the assassination of a German official in Paris by a Jewish student, such a tragedy did not warrant the persecution of a people for something for which they had no responsibility, namely, that they were born Jews."⁸¹ Shields carried his polemic even farther;

... by remarking that THE ANTI-SEMITISM AND EXTREME RACIALISM OF OUR DAY ARE UTTERLY ANTI-CHRISTIAN, contrary to the spirit and genius of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ . . . if you allow yourself to take up an attitude of antipathy toward any race, however loudly you may profess your orthodoxy, in attitude and spirit, you are positively anti-Christian . . . While we have much to be proud of, we have plenty of which to be ashamed, whether we regard the history of the Anglo-Saxon people as a whole or read the story of our own particular family tree. This whole notion of racial

⁷⁷"Jews Opposing and Opposed," *The Gospel Witness*, July 27, 1933, 6

⁷⁸*The Gospel Witness*, March 2, 1933, 4.

⁷⁹*The Gospel Witness*, September 22, 1938, 6.

⁸⁰Davies and Nefsky note this sermon was delivered at Massey Hall, as the Jarvis Church had been recently damaged by fire, which many in the congregation felt was set by Nazi sympathizers. See *How Silent Were the Churches?* 83.

⁸¹"When Will 'the Jews' Enemy' . . . ?" *The Gospel Witness*, November 17, 1938, 6; See similar remarks in "How God Provides For the Refugees," *The Gospel Witness*, November 24, 1938, 3.

superiority is a fiction which flatters human vanity. I am by no means sure that the boasted 'Aryan' purity of the blood that flows in German veins can be absolutely demonstrated . . . The alleged superiority of the Aryans to the Jews, I say, has no foundation in fact . . . Let us remember that the attitude represented by modern Germany and Italy, and a great many people in this country and in the United States – the anti-Jewish, anti-Semitic attitude is anti-Christian. It is not of God . . . The whole programme of Hitlerism is against God! We cannot take the bloody hand of Hitler, who is the devil's chief representative on earth, in friendship, I will not. . . .⁸²

Shields held that the actions of the German government during the *Kristnallnacht* demanded nothing less than a "universally prevailing indignation" of all peoples and all governments towards "Germany's atrocious treatment of the Jews."⁸³ He further expressed how "interesting," "hopeful," "encouraging" and "thankful" "we ought to be . . . though we are not Jews – to see the nations conferring together to see what can be done for the exiled Jew! . . . May God support those who provide a place of refuge for people so terribly oppressed. . . ."⁸⁴

Yet, in spite of all his acrimonious rhetoric against Hitlerism, racism and anti-Semitism, Shields' relationship with the Jewish community was certainly ambiguous at best. He often allowed anti-Jewish (and some would argue anti-Semitic) slurs to enter his sermons, and in the final analysis, there is not really any difference between "social" and "real" anti-Semitism, except that one makes the other possible. Racism of any kind begins with a feeling of physical or intellectual rejection of a human being who is seen as different from oneself, and here degrees of feelings or in the expression of such feelings are

⁸²"When Will 'the Jews' Enemy' . . . ?" *The Gospel Witness*, November 17, 1938, 4-5. One wonders how Shields expected to reconcile much of what he says here with his own anti-Catholic bigotry.

⁸³"How God Provides for Refugees," *The Gospel Witness*, November 24, 1938, 3.

⁸⁴"How God Provides for Refugees," *The Gospel Witness*, November 24, 1938, 5.

immaterial. Shields, in fact, had already gained a noted reputation as a religious bigot, even going so far as to acknowledge that fact himself.⁸⁵ Viewed in this context, his charges against racism and prejudice are shallow at best. Furthermore, unlike most of his fundamentalist associates, Shields was completely against Zionism and the restoration of Jews to Palestine, then a British mandate territory. "The Jews have had no claim upon Palestine for many centuries, and we are convinced that the idea that they are destined to make that country a Jewish home, and that a Jewish temple is to be erected there, is without a vestige of scriptural warrant."⁸⁶ While Shields' focus here may have been partially directed at another theological enemy of his – dispensationalists⁸⁷ – in whose eschatology the restoration of the Jewish state was a significant step to ushering in the millennium, it nevertheless illustrates the obscure nature of his relationship with the Jewish community. Like so many, Shields was horrified at the treatment of the Jews by the Nazis, but in the final analysis his hatred of Nazism had less to do with anti-Semitism and more to do with the imminent danger Hitlerism posed to the British Empire, its institutions and its values (especially religious liberty), that Shields so dearly loved. "I thank God that we are still Britons, that the British flag still flies, and that we enjoy our British liberty"⁸⁸

⁸⁵In one of his many attacks against Roman Catholics he asserted, "I do not trust them. Bigotry? All right. I will rest under the accusation[.] Intolerant? Very well, I am intolerant" "Shall Rome Be Permitted to Make a Spain of Canada?" *The Gospel Witness*, July 21, 1938, 8.

⁸⁶"Palestine and the Jews," *The Gospel Witness and the Protestant Advocate*, February 10, 1944, 5.

⁸⁷Shields himself was an a-millennialist.

⁸⁸"Life's Complement," *The Gospel Witness*, October 19, 1933, 5.

Unlike Shields, Watson Kirkconnell was not a clergyman, but an academic and a scholar. After graduating from Queen's University in 1916 with an M.A. in Classics, Kirkconnell eventually attended Lincoln College, Oxford, as the first recipient of an I.O.D.E. Scholarship in Ontario. Intending originally to enter a career in journalism, Kirkconnell graduated (1921) with a B.Litt. (Econ.), and went on to a distinguished academic career as a professor of English and Classics, culminating in his appointment to the Presidency of Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia in 1948, a post he held for sixteen years. In the words of one commentator, he was the "best layman appointed President."⁸⁹ Though not a clergyman, Kirkconnell nevertheless played a leading role in denominational affairs, especially as one of the principal architects of the Baptist Federation of Canada, which brought Baptists into a nation-wide organization for the first time in 1944.⁹⁰

Kirkconnell, the theological liberal, and Shields the fundamentalist, though both Baptists, despised one another.⁹¹ Kirkconnell, like Shields, possessed the ability, albeit in prose, to deliver rather scathing assaults against his enemies, especially communism. In his inaugural address as President of Acadia University on October 22, 1948, Kirkconnell spoke of the "crocodile of communism," a "satanic system," which in his mind was the

⁸⁹E.T. Salmon, "Watson Kirkconnell," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada*, Series IV, Vol. XV, 1977, 85.

⁹⁰E.T. Salmon, "Watson Kirkconnell," *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada*, 8. He also served a three year term as President of the Federation.

⁹¹W. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 196.

“venom of civilization.”⁹² Kirkconnell charged that, “the most relentless enemy that Christianity has ever known is the militant movement of Communism,” but scorned the fact that “Canadians have known all too little of this threat . . .”⁹³ But if Communism was the major focus of Kirkconnell’s wrath throughout much of the late 1940s/50s, Nazism bore the brunt of his onslaught throughout much of the 1930s and early 1940s. Noting that he had been the “first and only Canadian not merely to expose and denounce Hitler and Mussolini in Europe, but also to reveal in detail their intrigues against the political life of Canada,” Kirkconnell warned that,

Naziism [sic], like Communism is a dynamic force that is world-wide in its activities, and no one who has even caught the perspective of its ‘global’ ambitions can forget for a moment the fate that awaits human liberties if the Brown Terror should ultimately prevail. The *national interest* of Canada surely includes the defeat of that revolutionary force which seeks to impose its brutal mastery, directly or indirectly, on all countries, including our own.⁹⁴

Yet, like so many others of his day, Kirkconnell initially expressed some degree of reluctance at expressing outright condemnation of Nazism. In a lecture he delivered over CJRC radio in Winnipeg on Sunday May 7, 1939, Professor Kirkconnell, then President of the Baptist Union of Western Canada, remarked, “[in] a wholesale condemnation of that regime (i.e. Nazis) and all its works, I am not prepared to join. It has done wonders in rehabilitating German industry, in giving new spirit to the youth of the country and in

⁹²W. Kirkconnell, “The Dykes of Civilization,” Inaugural Address as President of Acadia University, October 22, 1948, 5.

⁹³W. Kirkconnell, *The Red Foe of Faith*, n.p., n.d., 2.

⁹⁴W. Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler* (Toronto: Oxford Press, 1939), 190. As he stated earlier in the book, “[e]ven more than Communism, Naziism [sic] is today a force seeking to dominate the world through revolution . . . The symbol of the Nazi world revolution is the concentration camp, the living grave of civil and religious liberty.” Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, 5-6.

redressing many historic wrongs against the nation."⁹⁵ While what Kirkconnell stated holds some merit, all this was accomplished under the guise of planning another war, and some of Germany's industrial recovery in the 1930s was due more to the policies of previous government administrations than to Hitler's. Nevertheless, to be fair to Kirkconnell, he also goes on in the same address to assert,

[o]n the other hand, it has worked ruthlessly by cold pogrom and concentration camp to suppress and exterminate every opinion and party differing from the will of the National Socialist Workers' Party. Towards the Jew in particular the regime has been brutal beyond description; but of the estimated million and a half victims of the police policies of the Third Reich fewer than fifty percent are Jews. Most of these are still in Germany, but subjected to such economic pressure as to make life increasingly impossible. Refuge abroad is imperative, yet the place of that refuge is still largely uncertain.⁹⁶

Kirkconnell, as well, was certainly under no delusion about the impending fate of the Jews, and why it was imperative for them to escape from Germany. In this regard he expressed his utter annoyance at the Canadian government's handling of the situation.

It is futile for us to relieve our feelings by denouncing the European governments that persecute these unfortunate beings or cast them penniless abroad. Our own guilt in the matter is not much less serious if we coldly allow them to perish on the doorstep of the world. In reading the parable of the Good Samaritan, the scorn of nineteen centuries has been directed far more against the stony-hearted indifference of the Priest and the Levite than against the thieves who had stripped and wounded the unfortunate Jew. And we, the heirs of the Christian tradition, run the risk of playing the role of the Priest and the Levite . . . Powerful interests, both political and economic, are strongly against the admission of these unfortunates on any grounds . . . The present emergency is a searching test for the professing Christians of the world.⁹⁷

⁹⁵W. Kirkconnell, "Canada and the Refugees," *Canadian Baptist*, May 25, 1939, 14.

⁹⁶W. Kirkconnell, "Canada and the Refugees," *Canadian Baptist*, May 25, 1939, 14.

⁹⁷W. Kirkconnell, "Canada and the Refugees," *Canadian Baptist*, May 25, 1939, 14-16.

Unfortunately, it was a test they failed miserably. As historian David S. Wyman phrased it:

The Holocaust was certainly a Jewish tragedy. But it was not only a Jewish tragedy. It was also a Christian tragedy, a tragedy for Western civilization, and a tragedy for all humankind. The killing was done by people, to other people, while still other people stood by. The perpetrators, where they were not actually Christians, arose from a Christian culture. The bystanders most capable of helping were Christians yet comparatively few [North] American non-Jews recognized that the plight of European Jews was their plight too. Most were unaware, did not care, or saw the European Jewish catastrophe as a Jewish problem, one for Jews to deal with.⁹⁸

The rescue of Jews and other victims of Nazi persecution depended first of all on acknowledgment, for without a full appreciation of what was happening, one could not expect a suitable response in the form of action. Yet even when that knowledge was both available and acknowledged it did not ensure that action was taken in the direction of rescuing the victims of Nazi persecution from Europe. In this regard human indifference and prejudice ensured that very few Jews escaped the horrors of Nazi occupied Europe. While some individual Christians exemplified the highest degree of humanitarianism in their assistance of victims of Nazi persecution the vast majority chose to remain as Wyman contends, even when confronted with mounting evidence, either unaware or unconcerned. Such a response on the part of the Church was indeed tragic.

Watson Kirkconnell, however, was one of a handful of Christian leaders during these years who was bold enough to not merely lament the treatment of Jews, but to actively adopt a pro-refugee stance. While deploring Hitler as "a savage tyrant whose insatiable ambition will not stop short of world domination," he asserted that Hitler had to be

⁹⁸D. S. Wyman, *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust 1941-45* (New York: The New Press, 1984), XVI.

stopped.⁹⁹ Kirkconnell also launched a bold attack against Nazi “reptilian propaganda,” which he charged had “already insinuated itself into our national life” with its “anti-Semitic virus of race hatred be[ing] injected into our veins.”¹⁰⁰ The chief source of much of this propaganda was Bernhard Bott’s *Deutsche Zeitung fur Canada*. Kirkconnell denounced its claims as “morbid and fantastic.”¹⁰¹

But more than that, Kirkconnell actively supported the work of the Canadian National Committee on Refugees and Victims of Political Persecution, headed by Senator Cairine Wilson (Chairperson) and Sir Robert Falconer (Honourary Chairperson).¹⁰² As well, he served as a board member of the Committee on Jewish-Gentile Relations. Throughout this period he actively campaigned and urged the government to alter its policies on refugees so more victims of Nazi persecution could be admitted into Canada. His efforts did not cease with the outbreak of hostilities in 1939, even though by that point they were in vain. As Baptists became aware of the extent of Hitler’s homicidal anti-Semitism, Kirkconnell actively campaigned on behalf of the National Committee in an attempt to once again force the government to alter its stand.¹⁰³

⁹⁹W. Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, 7.

¹⁰⁰W. Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, 189; See also W. Kirkconnell, *Canadians All – A Primer of Canadian National Unity* (Ottawa: The Director of Public Information, 1941), 39-40.

¹⁰¹W. Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, 123; See also his comments on 10-11 concerning Hitler’s racial theories and policies.

¹⁰²For a discussion of the formation and work of the CNCR see Abella and Troper, *None is Too Many*, 45-46; 50-51; 57-58; 101-102; 158-162.

¹⁰³See “They Were Not Just Foreigners,” *Canadian Baptist*, February 1, 1943; “Men and Affairs,” *Canadian Baptist*, July 1, 1943.

A challenge to the Christian conscience is to be found in a petition now being circulated by the Canadian National Committee on Refugees. This document entreats the Government of Canada to offer sanctuary 'to refugees from political or religious persecution without regard to race, creed or financial condition' . . . If the world ever needed to heed Christ's stern words on behalf of those who are [the] 'hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison' surely now is the hour. Britain, into the narrow limits of the United Kingdom, has already admitted some 700,000 refugees to share her limited rations; but Canada has kept her door almost completely locked against them. How can we in our relative prosperity, justify this attitude of refusal?¹⁰⁴

In the end, the Canadian government ignored this petition as it did all others.¹⁰⁵

Throughout the 1930s, Canadian Baptists were kept abreast of the latest "accounts of the ill-treatment of Jews in Germany."¹⁰⁶ Two events appear to have altered the tone and nature of Baptist responses to the plight of Jews in Germany. On November 7, 1938, Herschel Grynszpan, a Polish Jewish student, assassinated Ernst vom Rath, a minor German embassy official in Paris. This assassination provided Reinhard Heydrich, Head of the SD, the pretext to order, in retaliation, the destruction of all Jewish places of worship both in Germany and Austria. In a period of approximately fifteen hours, bands of Nazi thugs systematically destroyed hundreds of synagogues and thousands of Jewish owned stores. In addition to countless arrests, Jews were also forced to pay for the damages the Nazis claimed they had provoked. This amounted to one billion marks for the

¹⁰⁴W. Kirkconnell, "Canada and the Refugee Problem," *Canadian Baptist*, January 1, 1944, 2; See also his poem "Agony of Israel," which lamented the Jewish martyrdom in Europe and deplored the unwillingness of North America to accept other than a handful of Jewish refugees. W. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada*, 273.

¹⁰⁵Abella and Troper, *None Is Too Many*, 284.

¹⁰⁶See "Hitler and Jesus," *Canadian Baptist*, February 15, 1934; "Dr. Hoffman on Germany," *Canadian Baptist*, March 14, 1935; "Germany and the Jews," *Canadian Baptist*, February 20, 1936; "Moose Jaw and the Jews," *Canadian Baptist*, December 1, 1938; "Favourite Game of Europe is Baiting the Jews," *Canadian Baptist*, April 14, 1938; "The Plight of Jewish Refugees," *Canadian Baptist*, June 15, 1939, et al.

assassination of vom Rath and a further six million marks to cover the cost of the broken windows.¹⁰⁷ This incident and its aftermath fostered international outrage and unfavourable publicity for the Nazi regime.

The initial reaction of the *Canadian Baptist* to these atrocities was to a degree impertinent in its implying that Grynszpan was somehow responsible for the persecution of Jews in Germany in the wake of the assassination, when in reality the assault had long been planned. As the commentator in the *Canadian Baptist* remarked,

[p]erhaps he thought he would be doing his people a fine service by the slaying, but, in reality, he has added immeasurably to their sad lot . . . Probably his action will result in foreign Jews being driven from Germany – cast adrift in a friendless world once more. Hard has been the lot of the Hebrew the ages through; the brainless youth has made it infinitely more difficult for the race to live. Many people who had nothing to do with the deed . . . will have to suffer untold hardship because this Polish Jew killed an official of the Nazi regime.¹⁰⁸

Not all Baptists, it seemed, shared these sentiments. One, Reverend W.T. Steven of the Moose Jaw Church penned the following resolution;

We the members of the Moose Jaw Ministerial Association, at an especially called and largely attended meeting of the association on Nov[ember] 18th, 1938, did unanimously direct the framing and publishing of the following resolutions:

Whereas the persecution of religious or racial groups is entirely opposed to the principles of **Christianity, democracy and freedom** which are dear to the hearts of Canadians, and Whereas there has broken out a fresh and bitter persecution of the Jews in Germany, of which all our people are aware through the press,

¹⁰⁷Louis L. Snyder, "Kristallnacht," *Encyclopedia of the Third Reich* (New York: Paragon House, 1976), 201.

¹⁰⁸Lewis F. Kipp, "I See in the Papers," *Canadian Baptist*, November 17, 1938, 2. The commentator was at least right in recognizing that the Jews were largely friendless in the world.

1. Be it resolved, that we express our deep and prayerful sympathy for these suffering people and that we sincerely commend them to the care of the Father of all the families of the earth, and that we ask our people to join us in praying that the hands of all right-thinking leaders may be so strengthened that they may be able to discover a generous, happy and abiding solution to this problem.

2. That we express our confidence in the right purpose of our Government that Canada make take her place in the solution of the problems of the world. We desire only to strengthen the hands of those charged with the framing of particular policies. **We believe that Canada should be prepared to receive a generous quota of those unfortunate Jewish refugees . . .** Canada's part in the solution of the problem may call for unusual determination on the part of her leaders and sacrificial co-operation on the part of her people; that we shall make a place for these persecuted people than waste our energies in condemnation of the persecutors. Finally we believe that through the bold action of her Government, morally supported by a strong and co-operating opposition and by a united and intelligent citizenry, Canada has an unparalleled opportunity of demonstrating a new spirit in international affairs.¹⁰⁹

Some Baptists were beginning to realize that indignation, sympathy, prayers, and supplications¹¹⁰ were not enough – the plight of European Jews demanded action.¹¹¹

On May 15, 1939, the luxury liner "St. Louis" set sail from Hamburg with 907 "desperate German Jews" on board. These Jews considered themselves fortunate, since they were after all escaping the horrors of Hitler's Germany. Their fortune was to change rather quickly upon reaching Havana, Cuba, on May 30, 1939. The Cuban government refused to recognize their entrance visas and their desperate search to find admittance to

¹⁰⁹"Moose Jaw and the Jews," *Canadian Baptist*, December 1, 1938, 12.

¹¹⁰See H.H. Bingham, President of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec's call for intercessory prayer "on behalf of the so-called Aryan and non-Aryan sufferers inside and outside of Germany." "A Call to Prayer," *Canadian Baptist*, October 13, 1938, 3.

¹¹¹See the resolution put forth by the Baptist World Alliance at their Congress held in Atlanta, Georgia. "Baptist Alliance and Anti-Semitism," *Canadian Baptist*, December 29, 1938, 2; For further discussion of the Atlanta Conference see Shurden, *The Life of Baptists in the Life of the World*, 107-133.

another Latin-American country ended in failure. On June 2, the ship departed Havana harbour, hoping that Canada the United States or some other new world state might grant them entrance. In the end, even this hope was dashed and the ship was forced to return to Europe, where the governments of Great Britain, Belgium and Holland finally offered "temporary shelter." After Germany invaded Belgium and Holland, many would "die in the gas chambers and crematoria of the Third Reich."¹¹²

In referring to this "voyage of the damned," the *Canadian Baptist* lamented the plight of Jewish refugees:

There are few things more terrible than the plight of the shipload of banished Jews who sail the Atlantic coast forbidden to land anywhere. Cuba refused them sanctuary and the United States has coast guard ships trailing the ocean vessel to prevent attempts to land illegally by jumping overboard and swimming to shore. The fugitives are in such sorry state that many would gladly risk the terrors of the sea rather than be returned to the appalling conditions of Germany . . . [O]ffer[ed] no haven, the poor people are in a desperate condition...How the horrible condition can be remedied no land has discovered yet; in the meantime the cry of Israel is heard in the whole world.¹¹³

This Jewish tragedy finally prompted the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec at its Golden Jubilee Convention to pass a resolution imploring the Canadian government to admit refugees.¹¹⁴ In addition "special petitions" were sent to the Department of

¹¹²Abella and Troper, " 'The Line Must Be Drawn Somewhere': Canada and the Jewish Refugees, 1933-39," *Twentieth Century Canada: A Reader* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1986), 256; *The Voyage of the St. Louis*. [Videorecording]. Toronto: The National Film Board of Canada, 1995; G. Thomas and M.M. Witts, *The Voyage of the Damned* (New York: Stein and Day, 1974), 135-217.

¹¹³"The Plight of Jewish Refugees," *Canadian Baptist*, June 15, 1939, 3.

¹¹⁴*Baptist Yearbook*, 1939, 78. In addition the Baptist Union of Western Canada and the United Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces passed similar resolutions. See "Convention of the Baptist Union of Western Canada, July 11-14, 1939 – Broadway First Baptist Church," *Western Baptist*, October 1939, 7-8; *The United Baptist Yearbook of the Maritime Provinces*, September 2, 1939, 19; See also the resolution passed by the Canadian National Council of the World Alliance for International Friendship endorsed by the Executive Committee of the Christian Social Council of Canada, *Canadian Baptist*, July 20-27,

Immigration urging the government to lower its barriers.¹¹⁵ And even individuals, such as the former President of the Convention, pastor F. M. McCutcheon of First Baptist Montreal, urged the government to take action. In February 1940, the Social Service Board announced an essay writing contest, one of the four topics was "What Will the Church Offer the European Refugee in Canada?" Miss Marjorie Campbell, of 26 Queen's Drive Weston, who would later go on to a teaching career at Weston Collegiate, won the contest with her essay entitled, "Canada's Responsibility For European Refugees."¹¹⁶ Token gesture though it might be, the essay contest does reflect a concern on the part of some Baptist lay people concerning the fate of European Jews. In the end, all efforts were in vain. Not only did the Canadian government ignore them, but on September 1, 1939, war erupted in Europe, which essentially ended any hope for Jews trying to escape. These appeals on the part of various Baptist groups and individuals had quite simply come too late.

Throughout the 1930s, Canadian Baptists were quite well informed of the political situation in Europe and of Nazi policies toward Jews, not only through their denominational papers, but through various religious organizations of which Baptists

1939, 13. Note the tone of the statement "we warn our Government that no nation can successfully prosecute a holy crusade today when its own hands are stained with the blood of the innocent, and when it puts considerations of trade above those of law, sworn obligation and international morality." The various Baptist Conventions continued to pass various refugee resolutions throughout the war. See the *Canadian Baptist*, July 1, 1940, 2; "Supporting Jews Claims," *Canadian Baptist*, February 13, 1944, 3; *Baptist Yearbook*, 1940, 362; *Baptist Yearbook*, 1941, 208; "On Refugees and DPS," *Baptist Yearbook*, 1945/46, 54.

¹¹⁵"Social Service Board Report – Golden Jubilee Convention," *Canadian Baptist*, June 15, 1939, 5.

¹¹⁶"Baptist Social Service Board Essay Contest," *Canadian Baptist*, February 1, 1940, 5; "Winners in Essay Contest," *Canadian Baptist*, October 1, 1940, 2. Efforts to procure a copy of this essay proved futile.

were members. Many Baptists, both denominational leaders and some lay people, expressed absolute abhorrence at the utterly brutal and totally uncivilized actions Hitler and his supporters directed towards the Jews of Europe. Inevitably, Baptists even began to question the ethics of the Canadian government (who had essentially barred Jewish admission), calling for a change in policy so that these victims of persecution might find refuge in Canada. While Canadian Baptists can certainly be commended for this, their reactions and responses to the treatment of Jews was as much motivated by a fear of loss of the principle of religious liberty (especially for Baptists in Europe), as it was out of a genuine abhorrence and concern as to what was happening to the Jews. Even as late as 1938, while noting the fact that "European nations are harrying the Jews of their territories as if they were gangsters of the vilest types," the *Canadian Baptist* went on to assert,

[b]attles that were thought fought forever may have to be re-fought for the dearly purchased principle of religious liberty will not be surrendered without a struggle. Perhaps the Baptists, foremost fighters for this idea in the past, will be required again to gird on their arms and lead in making the world safe; someone apparently must undertake the task or liberty will perish from the earth.¹¹⁷

And even following the *Kristallnacht*, one Baptist commentator remarked: "The persecution of the Jews in Germany rightly rouses our indignation and protest, but what is happening now in Rumania and what has been happening to Baptists for the past ten years in Russia is just as bad."¹¹⁸ There is almost a sense here that the writer is admonishing his fellow

¹¹⁷"Baptists and Religious Liberty," *Canadian Baptist*, March 10, 1938, 5; See also "Dr. Rushbrooke at Convention," *Canadian Baptist*, June 30, 1938, 4.

¹¹⁸ "Baptist Preacher Jailed in Romania," *Canadian Baptist*, December 29, 1938, 6; See also the *Canadian Baptist*, November 3, 1938, 6; Dr. E. Gill, "Romanian Baptists at Last Ditch," *Canadian Baptist*, November 3, 1938, 14.

Baptists to keep their focus primarily upon the sufferings of their religious brethren in Europe to ensure that religious liberty was preserved.

Evangelical concerns also remained part of Baptist response to the refugee crisis. Hazel E.R. Bates of Sutton, Quebec, admonished, “[w]hat is the Baptist Church as an organization doing to get the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Jews of Canada and of the world?”¹¹⁹ The *Canadian Baptist* also carried a report in 1939, which graphically recounted the flight of a group of German Jewish refugees to Belgium. R.M. Stephens, who visited the camp at Merxplas, in the course of his description, however, could not refrain from noting that,

[w]hile much is being done for the moral and physical welfare of the refugees nothing is being done for their spiritual needs. Belgium is, of course, a Roman Catholic country, and there is a Roman [Catholic] Church on the premise, so that the matter is not an easy solution. The Jews, moreover, are not [e]specially attracted by this form of religion. Even if a colporteur, were allowed inside the camp, the refugees have no money to buy Gospel and Testaments. For the moment, therefore the most practical means of helping spiritually is to show them that not only Jews, but Christians also, sympathize with them in their troubles. Then, as opportunity offers, such as when personally visiting the camps, a Gospel and a kindly word may be given here and there.¹²⁰

This is not some kind of “afterthought,” as Davies and Nefsky¹²¹ assert, but reflects the traditional evangelical concern of Baptists in believing that even in the midst of unimaginable physical horrors, the Jews’ greatest need was spiritual conversion. President L.H. Crandall of the United Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces went so far as to assert: “There is **no other remedy** to-day for the fever of ultra-Nationalism and

¹¹⁹“Baptists and the Jews,” *Canadian Baptist*, March 17, 1938, 12.

¹²⁰R.M. Stephens, “In a Jewish Refugee Camp,” *Canadian Baptist*, March 16, 1939, 11.

¹²¹See Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 91.

Totalitarianism than that same Gospel proclaimed in the power of the Holy Spirit and exemplified in the life and character of Christian people."¹²² Not only is this response overly simplistic and naive, but even more tragically it paved the way for inaction.¹²³

When the *Canadian Baptist* lamented the fate of the liner "St. Louis," and its Jewish passengers, in 1939, with the words "how the horrible condition can be remedied no land has discovered yet; in the meantime the cry of Israel is heard around the world," the answer was apparent. The passengers were seeking refuge, but no country in the Americas, including Canada, was willing to provide it. Yet, inevitably it was this incident and the *Kristallnacht* that finally aroused the passions of Baptists enough that their Conventions adopted the following (or similar) resolution:

WHEREAS there is still needed, on a vast scale, amelioration of the lot of the refugees and potential refugees, whether Jewish or Gentile, in Europe; AND WHEREAS some steps already have been taken to provide sanctuary for certain of these refugees in Canada;

NOW BE IT RESOLVED that this Baptist Convention do urge upon the proper governmental authorities the desirability of admitting to Canada of carefully selected individuals or groups of refugees, as being desirable, not only from humane and ethical standpoints, but also because such immigration should prove a valuable addition to our national economy, by introducing skilled workers and new arts, crafts and industries.¹²⁴

¹²²L.H. Crandall, "Facing the New Year," *Canadian Baptist*, January 5, 1939, 6.

¹²³The conversion of Jews to Christianity, offered them no more "salvation" from Hitler's genocide than had they remained Jews. Edith Stein, who was born of Jewish parents, converted to Catholicism in the 1920s and entered the Carmelite Order in 1933, was taken by the SS in 1942 from a convent and sent to Auschwitz, where she died two days later. Countless thousands of other "converted Jews" suffered similar fates.

¹²⁴*Baptist Yearbook*, 1939, 78-79; See also the Social Services Board's Report calling for the admission of "good settlers." *Baptist Yearbook*, 1939, 199-200.

Once again Canadian self-interest clouded the wording of this resolution. To put the best face on this, one could argue that the resolution reflected a kind of awareness of what might be possible. If appeals for a mass humanitarian act by Canada to admit refugees would surely be a flop, how about an appeal to self interest? The grounds for the refugees' admission to Canada would fundamentally rest on their ability to aid Canada economically. Yet, from the point of view of Frederick Blair, Deputy Minister of Immigration, "certain of their habits" made Jews unassimilable. Nor were they desirable from an ethical or humane standpoint. They were unsuitable to the immigration needs of Canada given the existing economic conditions of the 1930s. So while Baptists may have eventually petitioned their government to admit more Jewish refugees, that government ignored the petition at least partially on the basis of the criterion it set forth as terms of admission.

As historian Robert Wright has noted, Canadian Protestantism maintained an "essentially ambivalent view of Jews and Judaism."¹²⁵ Failure to address traditional anti-Jewish intolerance inevitably affected the responses towards not only Nazi persecution of the Jews, but also their subsequent flight from Europe. While anti-Semitism remained "unconscionable to most twentieth-century Protestants," subterranean strains within Canadian Protestantism that had on several occasions "nourish[ed] Christian vainglory, Anglo Saxon nativism and, . . . other forms of ethnic nationalism" still, nevertheless, found continued manifestation. Such tenets must be held accountable for the exclusion of racial aliens during the anti-immigrant, anti-refugee years of the 1930s. Yet, at the same time this

¹²⁵Wright, *A World Mission*, 220.

Anglo-Saxon ethos also fueled a strain of idealism that defined itself in altruistic terms associated with the principles of fair play and democratic commitment. Some Protestants, "as liberty-loving Anglo-Saxons," therefore felt a profound moral obligation to aid the Jews in their plight.

Just as Protestant Christianity possessed a divided mind on Jews and Judaism, so also did Canadian Baptists. Whether of the fundamentalist/evangelical or modernist/liberal persuasion, Baptists were "no worse and no better than other Canadian Protestants on the subject of Jews and Judaism." Like other Protestants they reflected "general misconceptions and endemic ignorance of Jewish history and religion, . . . as well as certain anti-Judaic sectarian strains."¹²⁶ Nevertheless, Baptists of all theological persuasions, generally shared the same antipathy toward National Socialism, especially its anti-Semitism. T.T. Shields and Watson Kirkconnell, the leading Baptist spokespersons of their day, both condemned anti-Semitism as utterly "pagan" and "anti-Christian," at its core the very essence of the new Germany's "atavistic tribalism."¹²⁷ Kirkconnell's exceptional knowledge of Nazi ideology and its sanguinary practices ominously foretold what was in store for what one of his "small daughters once accidentally called 'the Refujews' . . . [that] this ancient people has been specially marked down for extermination by the Nazi regime."¹²⁸ Both Kirkconnell and Shields were equally outspoken on the obstinacy of Mackenzie King and his government on the question of Jewish refugees. For both men,

¹²⁶Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 123, 125, 80.

¹²⁷*The Gospel Witness*, November 17, 1938, 3-6; Watson Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, 23.

¹²⁸"Canada and the Refuge Problem," *Canadian Baptist*, January 1, 1944, 2.

“imperial patriotism and Anglo Saxon liberty served as a powerful stimulus” in forging their “anti-Nazi sentiment.”¹²⁹ However, T.T. Shields’ own parochialism, personal obsessions and hostility to Roman Catholics and liberals, whether political or religious, inevitably undermined both his defence of the Jews and his criticisms of the Canadian government’s restrictive immigration policies.¹³⁰ Yet his defence of Jews was at times clouded by his own anti-Semitic inclinations. Decades of malignant polemics against a wide range of “evils” and “evil” individuals had largely marginalized Shields and his influence both religiously and politically. While Shields’ voice carried some influence, his personal militancy and arrogance precluded the forging of a lasting or powerful alliance that might have lobbied the government effectually on the issue of Jewish refugees.

Clearly reticence did not characterize the response of Baptists, whether fundamentalist or liberal, to the plight of European Jews in the years from 1933 to 1939. Nevertheless, while some Baptists were extremely vociferous, as was the case with Kirkconnell (and Shields), many, however, at best remained indifferent. Furthermore, though events like *Kristallnacht* and the “St. Louis” had some traumatic effect upon Baptists, and served to heighten awareness of the horrors being experienced by Jews, neither was able to elicit a massive outcry from the rank and file. For a denomination who had themselves once been victims of persecution and refugees in search of asylum, this is indeed shameful.

¹²⁹Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 97.

¹³⁰Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 97-98.

Irving Abella and Harold Troper presumed that, had the churches not “remained silent,” but instead voiced an unified petition in favour of rescuing the Jews, the Canadian government would have at least been forced to hold such “an appeal in earnest.” Whether this would have also helped negate its dismissal of the National Committee on Refugees and Victims of Political Persecution as little more than “impractical idealist to be patronized but not taken seriously” we cannot know.¹³¹

Always politically cautious, Mackenzie King was constantly mindful of public sentiment and opinion. When it came to the question of aid for Jewish refugees, racism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism all helped to fuel public antipathy to the plight of the Jews. The intransigent attitude of the general public, rather than the alleged church silence, was ultimately what allowed King’s government to maintain the restrictionist policies that had been adopted throughout the 1930s. The Protestant churches, and particularly Baptists, reached only a tiny minority of the population, hardly significant enough to have radically altered the state of public opinion in Canada.¹³² Yet, Baptists, perhaps more than any other religious group in Canada, had the opportunity to exact direct influence on the nation’s refugee policy, since one of their own co-religionists, Fredrick Charles Blair (a church elder)¹³³ “as director of the Immigration Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources

¹³¹Abella and Troper, *None Is Too Many*, 284.

¹³²In the case of the more monolithic Roman Catholic Church, this was probably less true, since it frequently made its influence felt in not only religious affairs but also political and cultural life as well. Had the Catholic Church, especially in Quebec, adopted a more pro-refugee stance, given King’s strong sentiments toward that province, the issue would have been more arduous to simply disregard. Unfortunately, anti-Semitism strongly permeated Catholic ranks. See Davies and Nefsky, *How Silent Were the Churches?* 130.

¹³³Blair became a member of First Baptist Church, Ottawa, Canada being received through experience on April 19, 1899. On April 7, 1915 Blair, his wife and several other members of First Baptist transferred

. . . made almost all of the decisions – no matter how small – concerning who got into Canada.”¹³⁴ As the individual responsible for the enforcement of Canadian immigration policy, Blair, however, “mirrored the increasingly anti-immigration spirit of his times.” He believed that, given the present economic conditions, “people should be kept out of Canada instead of being let in.” Baptists must, therefore, reflect on the fact that when European Jewry “most needed a friend at the gate, they had an enemy; instead of the philo-Semite they required, they had an anti-Semite; instead of a humanitarian, they got a narrow-minded bureaucrat.”¹³⁵ Blair’s utter “contempt for the Jews was boundless,” yet his ideas were entirely compatible with those of the Canadian government, the public at large, and even other members of his own denomination. In the final analysis, responsibility for excluding Jews from Canada rests with Mackenzie King and his government. Nevertheless, it is extremely disheartening to acknowledge that a religious man – a Baptist – was largely responsible for the administration of that policy.

As advocates of religious liberty, Baptists in Canada have not consistently expressed a concern for human rights issues. Church ecclesiology on some occasions has hampered

their membership to Ottawa-East Mission, a church planting effort. In 1921, the mission became Ottawa Eastview Baptist Church. Unfortunately, no membership records exist for the mission from the period of 1915-1921. Blair does not appear in any subsequent membership lists of either Eastview or First Baptist nor McPhail Baptist in Ottawa either. All three of these churches remained with the Convention following the schism of 1927. In all likelihood therefore we can conclude that Blair most likely was a liberal Baptist and not a fundamentalist. See the *Membership Rolls and Records of First Baptist, Eastview Baptist and McPhail Baptist Churches*, Canadian Baptist Archives, Hamilton, Ontario. Blair was a founder of Union Mission in Ottawa, a member of its first Board of Directors, and by the 1940s President of its Board. See the *Records of the Public Service Commission, Historical Personnel Files*, Record Group 32, C-2, Vol. 21, F.C. Blair, Part 1, and Vol. 420, F.C. Blair, Part 2.

¹³⁴Abella and Troper, “‘The Line Must Be Drawn Somewhere’: Canada and the Jewish Refugees, 1933-1939,” *Twentieth Century Canada: A Reader*, 258-259.

¹³⁵Abella and Troper, *None Is Too Many*, 7.

such support, while on others (e.g. temperance laws) has offered no fundamental road blocks to denominational resolutions and actions. Nevertheless, Baptists' distinctive polity has meant that even when denominational resolutions are passed, their implementation (and support) resides with each local congregation. Baptist involvement in broader social issues has therefore largely been dictated on the basis of (local) self interest or evangelistic concerns. As a result, Baptists have tended to demonstrate not only an insensitivity to many of these issues, but also a larger pattern of inaction. This lack of a theological framework that not only permitted, but also demanded, intervention on behalf of the interests of the oppressed, is ultimately what limited Baptist responses to the plight of European Jews in the 1930s. While some prominent individuals spoke out against such oppression, like Kirkconnell and Shields, still others, like Blair, condoned it. Without large scale public support, it is highly unlikely that the Canadian government would have altered its refugee policy during the 1930s. Nevertheless, as once victims of oppression themselves, Baptists should have been the vanguard of a movement to open Canada's doors. Unfortunately the one with the most political influence was ensuring they stayed tightly closed.

Chapter 7

'The Prophet of Canadian Multiculturalism': Watson Kirkconnell and the Struggle Against Canadianization

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Baptists continued almost unabated in their efforts to "Anglicize" and "Canadianize" immigrants. Anglo-conformity was believed essential to the successful development of Canadian society and the preservation of those Anglo-Saxon traditions that Baptists both nurtured and prized. The First World War, it seemed, had done little to dampen their vision of turning Canada into "His Dominion."

By the late 1920s, however, some Baptists began to adopt a somewhat moderate view of assimilation, at least partially out of the recognition that immigrants could make valuable cultural contributions to Canada. These assimilationists envisioned a kind of merging of Anglo-Canadianism with the immigrants, "and a blending of their cultures into a new Canadian type."¹ The essence of assimilation was not fundamentally questioned. Like Anglo-conformity, this Canadian version of the melting pot was also deemed necessary in order to ensure immigrants fit into Canadian society.²

With the onset of the Great Depression "nativist" fears were once again aroused. The decade marked the "high point of discrimination against non-Anglo-Saxons," as

¹Howard Palmer, "Reluctant Host: Anglo-Canadian Views of Multiculturalism in the 20th Century," *Readings in Canadian History* (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston of Canada Ltd., 1990), 202.

²In other words, the melting pot was still an "Anglo-Saxon pot." See Palmer, "Reluctant Host," 202.

xenophobia gripped the nation.³ Yet, in spite of the “continuing dominance of the old stereotypes concerning non-Anglo-Saxons and continuing dominance of assimilationist assumptions, the 1930s also saw the emergence of the first full blown pluralist ideas [albeit in a] somewhat ambiguous form”⁴ One of the advocates of this pluralist ideology was a Baptist, the previously discussed Watson Kirkconnell. In contrast to most discussions of immigrants in Canadian society, Kirkconnell sought to promote tolerance towards ethnic minorities through a sympathetic portrayal of their cultural backgrounds, their countries of origin and by demonstrating the cultural creativity of these minorities through translating and publishing their writings.⁵

Kirkconnell attacked the fundamental assumptions of both Anglo-conformity and the melting pot. In their place he advocated a “multicultural” vision of society, that would allow immigrants to maintain pride in their heritage. As Kirkconnell himself asserted in his memoirs, *A Slice of Canada*, the Preface to his 1935 work *Canadian Overtones*, set out his “philosophy of the multicultural state in categorical terms.”⁶

There is nothing so shallow and sterile as the man who denies his ancestry. The ‘one hundred per cent’ American (or Canadian) is commonly one who has deliberately suppressed an alien origin in order to reap the material benefits of a well-advertised loyalty. There can be little hope of noble spiritual issues

³See Palmer’s summary of these fears in “Reluctant Host,” 203-205.

⁴Palmer, “Reluctant Host,” 205.

⁵The other major advocate of pluralist ideas in this period was John Murray Gibbons (*The Canadian Mosaic*). See Palmer, “Reluctant Host,” 205; For further discussion of changing Protestant attitudes towards missions and a moving away from paternalism and ethnocentrism to a more heterogeneous conception of Protestant Christendom see Robert Wright, *A World Mission: Canadian Protestantism and the Quest for a New International Order 1918-1939* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1991), 142-177.

⁶W. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1967), 280.

from such prostituted patriotism. Unfortunately, it is abetted by the ignorant assumption of many English-speaking citizens that alien origin is a national mark of inferiority. He who thinks thus is a mental hooligan – whether he be [a] lawyer, militia colonel, or a bishop of the church. What we sorely need, on the contrary, is enough common intelligence to recognize both the rich diversity of racial gifts on this earth and the strength which racial roots can contribute to the individual . . . Prophetic hopes would envisage a future Canada in which every individual would be thus inspired to fuller citizenship . . . [t]hat they should be speedily integrated into loyal co-operation with the general Canadian population is, of course, of supreme national importance. But it would be tragic if there should at the same time be a clumsy stripping-away of all those spiritual associations with the past which help to give depth and beauty to life . . . Canada has not yet achieved any such spiritual integration . . . If . . . we except with Wilhelm von Humboldt ‘the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity’, then we shall welcome every opportunity to save for our country every precious element of individuality that is available.⁷

Kirkconnell was not advocating a form of separatism for ethnic minorities in order to preserve their culture. He firmly believed that integration needed to occur in the realm of political and economic values as well as in institutions. At the same time he believed “that some of the conservative values and folk-culture of immigrants could be preserved.”⁸

Thus, Kirkconnell did not believe that ethnic diversity was incompatible with national unity. In his judgment unity did not mean uniformity. “Unity does not, however necessarily mean uniformity. A country in which all people spoke the same language, attended the same church, and had the same opinions on all important subjects would be in sorry danger of developing sleeping sickness.”⁹ He believed that the existence of many different European traditions in Canada only served to heighten both the “hazards and

⁷W. Kirkconnell, *Canadian Overtones* (Winnipeg: Columbia Press Ltd., 1935), 4-6.

⁸Palmer, “Reluctant Host,” 206.

⁹W. Kirkconnell, *Canadians All – A Primer of Canadian National Unity* (Ottawa: The Director of Public Information, 1941), 11.

possible rewards of a multi-national state." Nevertheless, such a state was the "surest guarantee of progressive and intelligent national policies." Allowing for divergence of opinion and opposing points of view, Kirkconnell believed, added value to the cultures of others and provided the "opportunity for developing the highest qualities of citizenship through facing the problems of national harmony."¹⁰ Kirkconnell reflected not only a commitment to ethnic minorities, but also a dedication to liberal ideals. As he once expressed it, "[b]asic to the liberal ideal is faith in the dignity and the worth of the individual. The freedom of the Canadian democracy is intimately bound up with the freedom of the single citizen and his right to individual differences of thought and action."¹¹

Watson Kirkconnell was born May 16, 1895, in Port Hope, Ontario (d. February 26, 1977), "a fourth generation Anglo-Canadian."¹² His father, Thomas Allison Kirkconnell, was the headmaster of a local high school for over forty years and was acknowledged by his son as the major influence in his life. "No other man has moulded my life so profoundly for good or given me a higher ideal of education."¹³ His mother, Bertha (Watson), it seems was only slightly less influential on her son. From her, Kirkconnell maintained, he "derive[d] a certain intrepidity of public utterance, both of tongue and of

¹⁰W. Kirkconnell, *Canadians All*, 12.

¹¹W. Kirkconnell, *Liberal Education in the Canadian Democracy* (Hamilton: McMaster University Press, 1948), 15.

¹²W. Kirkconnell, "European Elements in Canadian Life," Address delivered to the Canadian Club, November 4, 1940, 3; For further discussion of his early life see J.R.C. Perkin and J.B. Snelson, *Morning in His Heart: The Life and Writing of Watson Kirkconnell* (Wolfville: Lancelot Press, 1986), 9-14.

¹³W. Kirkconnell, "A Tale of Seven Cities," Address given at a public dinner in his honour by Women's Civic Club Hamilton, April 9, 1948, Toronto: Mission Press, 1948, 5.

pen, that was lacking in my father. If I have shown any devout pugnacity in thumping big bad dragons on the snout, the hereditary source is my high-mettle little mother."¹⁴ Communism and Fascism would inevitably become two victims of Kirkconnell's "devout pugnacity in thumping big bad dragons on the snout." Kirkconnell was baptized at the age of twelve and joined the fellowship of a local Baptist church. He was to remain a committed Baptist throughout his life and played an active role in denominational affairs, including serving as President of several of its Conventions and one of its affiliated universities, Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

In 1908, the Kirkconnell family moved from Port Hope to Lindsay, Ontario. These years in Lindsay left a lasting impression upon the younger Kirkconnell. It was during his tenure in Lindsay that Kirkconnell professed he "learnt the meaning of democracy," and it was also his first exposure to people of other races. "It is," he said, "only gradually that I myself have become aware of the diversity of our Canadian population. My earliest impressions of Canada was of a homogeneous Anglo-Saxon country, whose settled way of life I did not question."¹⁵ His experiences in the local high school also helped to shape the direction of his life. The local Collegiate "achieved something of a classless society. The students represented both Catholics and Protestants and families of every degree of affluence or indigence . . . we played and worked together without the slightest consciousness of any social castes."¹⁶

¹⁴W. Kirkconnell, "A Tale of Seven Cities," 5; Kirkconnell became nationally known as an anti-Communist lecturer. See Perkin and Snelson, *Morning in His Heart*, 26.

¹⁵W. Kirkconnell, "European Elements in Canadian Life," 4.

¹⁶W. Kirkconnell, "A Tale of Seven Cities," 6.

After graduating from high school, Watson Kirkconnell attended Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, graduating with an honour's degree in Classics, as a double gold medalist.¹⁷ Following his discharge from the army, in 1919¹⁸, Kirkconnell briefly stayed in Toronto studying Music at the Toronto Conservatory of Music, before being awarded a generous IODE scholarship in 1921, "as the first overseas post-graduate scholar for Ontario."¹⁹ His time at Oxford not only kindled a "burning interest in human welfare and world history," but also proved to be profoundly influential in helping to shape his views with respect to race. Kirkconnell wrote that he found the "cosmopolitan diversity" of Oxford's enrollment to be "particularly stimulating." Furthermore,

with students from every continent and most countries of the world . . . I was particularly impressed with the intellectual quality of my new Chinese and Hindu colleagues. In the commonwealth of scholarship, race and nationality meant nothing; while character and intelligence was everything.²⁰

It was during his tenure at Oxford that Kirkconnell found time to travel extensively to Europe and the Near East. This added exposure to foreign cultures inevitably helped to shape his appreciation of their value and worth. Kirkconnell maintained that his foreign

¹⁷J. Gordon Jones, "Twelve Men – Tried and True – Part II," *Canadian Baptist Home Mission Digest*, Vol. 7, 1966/7, 131.

¹⁸See Watson Kirkconnell, *Climbing the Green Tree and Some Other Branches*, Wolfville: 1976; *A Slice of Canada*; and Perkin and Snelson, *Morning in His Heart*, 12-13 for a discussion of his war time experiences. In 1912, at the age of seventeen he had enrolled in an officer's course in Stanley Barracks in Toronto. During the war, he spent three and a half years in the army. Physically unfit for overseas service, Captain W. Kirkconnell served at Dunefield Camp, an adjutant at Fort Henry, and a paymaster at Kapuskasing. In 1919, shortly before his discharge, he was the transportation officer in charge of a shipload of German prisoners being taken from Quebec to Rotterdam for repatriation. W. Kirkconnell, "Clippings," *Canadian Baptist Archives, Winnipeg Tribune*, June 14, 1940.

¹⁹W. Kirkconnell, "A Tale of Seven Cities," 8.

²⁰W. Kirkconnell, "A Tale of Seven Cities," 9.

travels taught him that people from all countries of the world, regardless of creed or culture, are inevitably a mixture "of good and bad" and no different from his neighbours at home in Canada. Prejudice based on race, language, colour, creed or class defied human logic and "ought to be impossible for the thoughtful person." "Tolerance and inter-racial good will" he maintained "ought to be as natural as the area we breathe."²¹ Thus, when Kirkconnell left Oxford in the summer of 1922, so broke that he was forced to sell his bike and a pair of German field glasses in order to cover the cost of his steerage ticket, he recalled that while in the bowels of the ship as "a mess mate of hundreds of Ukrainian, Polish and Belgium immigrants," he soon came to realize that in spite of their dilapidated appearance there were amongst them rather cultured individuals. Not only could these individuals speak several languages, but they were well schooled in literature and "their musical talents were prodigious." Kirkconnell maintained that this experience foreshadowed the life that opened up for him when he joined the staff of Wesley College, Winnipeg, in September 1922.²² The cosmopolitan nature of that ship had helped to prepare him for a similar experience in Canada's gateway to the west, the city of Winnipeg.

It was during his eighteen year stay in Winnipeg (which he originally anticipated would be one) that Kirkconnell championed the cause of immigrants and ethnic minorities in Canada. He maintained that the nation had remained "effectively bifocal for me . . . until 1922, when I went west to live in Winnipeg. There I found a population as different

²¹As cited, in J.G. Jones, "Twelve Men – Tried and True – Part II," 132. I found it somewhat perplexing that he does not mention religion here.

²²W. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada*, 259.

from that of the East as the Prairies are from the St. Lawrence basin . . . This was still Canada, but a Canada profoundly different from the little towns of my boyhood."²³ The city reminded him of his travels and his experiences in Europe " and these [the linguistic and cultural traditions] as the living ingredients in an evolving commonwealth." In his *Memoirs*, he asserted that,

it was my fortune to live in communities where the process of acculturation was active and to have intimate contact with scores of ethnic organizations by which the newcomers have sought to cherish the values that they have brought with them from their past . . . They are neither angels nor devils, but three-dimensional human beings like the rest of us, striving to build themselves a new existence in a new country.²⁴

Kirkconnell was one of the first to recognize that the aspirations of the immigrant communities were not any different from any other communities in Canada. Both established and immigrant communities were striving to create the best possible life for themselves and their descendants. The fusion of this mosaic of peoples, languages and cultures "into a Canadian people of diversified richness caught my imagination" and became not only Kirkconnell's "vision," but also his lifelong goal for Canada.

Beginning in 1928, he commenced work on translating a series of twenty-four volumes of European literature by which he hoped to enlighten "our Canadian culture . . . of all the noble traditions that were blending in our common life."²⁵ After completing work

²³W. Kirkconnell, "European Elements in Canadian Life," 4; For further discussion of his years in Winnipeg see Perkin and Snelson, *Morning in His Heart*, 15-24. Perkin writes: "He was one of the first to recognize and draw upon the polyglot literature of the new Canadians who flooded to the Prairies after the First World War."

²⁴W. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada*, 260.

²⁵W. Kirkconnell, "A Tale of Seven Cities," 10.

on only three volumes his publisher went bankrupt, in 1930, and the project lapsed. Nevertheless, Kirkconnell soon discovered that many of these new Canadians had been producing “a good deal of significant literature in their own mother tongues” and so in 1935, he produced a volume of poetry of Icelandic, Swedish, Norwegian, Ukrainian, Modern Greek, Italian and Hungarian poetry that revealed the experiences of these peoples in adjusting to pioneer life on the Canadian frontier – his *Canadian Overtones*. Much of the poetry Kirkconnell translated was dedicated to showing the heartfelt thanks many of these immigrants felt to Canada, as well as their dedication and loyalty to the nation. For example, Joseph Yasnuchuk’s “Thanks to Mother Canada”:

O Canada, I give glad thanks to thee,
 Thou light amid the darkness of my days,
 A beacon of transcendent liberty
 To guide me and my brothers in our ways!

Thou art to us as a mother, and we greet
 Thy justice with unbounded gratitude.
 Even as Ukayina dost thou treat
 And shelter at this time her wandering brood.

I thank thee for thy motherly concern,
 Thy even-handed justice toward the weak;
 Yea, and my brethren thank thee in their turn
 Because thy love receiveth those who seek.

We who are sons of Slavia, Cossack kin,
 True children of the great Slavonic race,
 Greet thee, and ask no better than to win
 Beneath thy rule a calm and loyal place.²⁶

²⁶As cited, in Kirkconnell, *Canadian Overtones*, 90-91; Kirkconnell himself stated: “Perhaps the one thing for which I shall be remembered a century hence will be that single-handed I discovered, surveyed, and recorded in Canada’s Cultural Registry of Deeds this diverse collectivity of literary achievement, revealing as it does a major factor in the life of the New World.” As cited in Perkin and Snelson, *Morning in His Heart*, 21.

Another example of this poetry that exemplified the dedication immigrants felt to Canada was Ivan Danylchuk's "To Canada."

O Canada!
 Before thy feet my praise I strew
 Heartfelt my tribute is and true;
 I hail thy prairies, free and wide,
 That once saw tattooed Redskins ride
 Ere dawn to fight.
 The mighty elk once wandered there;
 All vastness was the day's calm care
 Until the night;
 Then floating o'er in silent dream
 The loitering stars took up the theme.
 In autumn, steppe and forest slept;
 The popular-leaves no longer kept
 Their joy delight.
 To thee, O Canada, be praise
 From every guest that hither strays,
 Breaking some fate that mars his folks,
 Escaping from an ancient yoke
 And ageless pain.
 All have found refuge in thy grace
 And work to justify their race.
 To one the serried forest gave
 Long years with axe and saw to slave,
 And at the last a toiler's grave . . .
 Forgive, O Canada, nor grieve
 If sometimes thou shalt still perceive
 The step-son nourished by thy hand
 Turn back in love to that far land
 From which his flesh and spirit came.
 No one can halt the river's flow
 Nor autumn birds that southward go.
 Quite blind and deaf to all I am,
 Men mould me.
 But their task's a sham:
 They cannot yet uproot my heart.²⁷

²⁷As cited in Kirkconnell, *Canadian Overtones*, 102-103.

Kirkconnell hoped that the book would not only reveal to the rest of Canada "a transient, but intensely significant phase of our national literature," but also

. . . an incomparable revelation to Canada of the mind and heart of these more recent Canadians. Our national attitude towards them have already passed through two ignorant and discreditable phases. In the first phase we tended to despise them as European coolies, imported to do heavy work for which our hands had already grown too delicate. In the second and more recent phase, we have been patronizingly interested in their folk-costumes and folk-dances, picturesque incidentals which have about as much vital share in their lives as the kilt and the Highland fling have in that of the average Scotch-Canadian. Their poetry, however, may help us to develop a third and much truer attitude toward them as 'beings breathing thoughtful breath' men and women as capable as any amongst us of appreciating the beauties and the philosophies of this world. I foresee further value in this poetry. It should help to develop in succeeding generations a Canadianism nourished by pride in the individual's racial past.²⁸

Kirkconnell not only dedicated himself to promoting the values and virtues of immigrant cultures, but also to extirpate the ignorance, stereotypes and racist attitudes that so many "old Canadians" held. The root of much of this he believed was ignorance. Far too few "old Canadians" or "their newspapers," he once remarked "have even an elementary knowledge of the history of Central and Eastern Europe."²⁹ In responding to "a hysterical newspaper letter from a Saskatchewan bishop," that urged "true British Canadians to unite against the admission into Western Canada of 'non-British stocks,'" Kirkconnell charged:

It would be unfortunate if these insolent and un-Christian fulminations against European immigrants were to be accepted as a typical Western utterance. Intolerance is bad enough, but such crass ignorance of history and ethnology would probably be repudiated with scorn by most Westerners of average education . . . The scientific truth of the matter is that greatness in civilization

²⁸Kirkconnell, *Canadian Overtones*, 3-4.

²⁹Kirkconnell, "A Tale of Seven Cities," 24-25.

has almost invariably come from a blending of race and cultures . . . The history of France and other European countries shows us that the intermixing of all races of Europe is not a handicap, but a positive enrichment of national life. What excuse then have we, in the name of reason, self-interest, and common decency, for excluding the overflow of crowded Europe? Our needs are mutual, our hopes are mutual. Let us have an end of this muddy-minded contempt for those by whose gifted help we are to build up a great and richly dowered nation!³⁰

Cultural diversity, Kirkconnell maintained, was not a deterrent to the growth and development of a civilization, but rather “a positive enrichment of national life.” So long as ignorance and intolerance were allowed to flourish a nation would be prevented from achieving its true greatness. Cultural diversity in Canada was thereby the means through which the nation could ultimately develop to its full potential.

With the publication of *Canadian Overtones*, Kirkconnell had tactfully castigated his fellow countrymen for considering “New Canadians” merely “minimal races,” who were “incapable of intellectual development and fit only to serve their masters.”³¹ The task, however, had not been a popular one and Kirkconnell was vilified on the left for advocating the status of cheap labour and on the right for his seeming levelling of Anglo-Saxon values.³² Nevertheless, the work was a significant milestone in not only pointing out the erroneous beliefs and prejudices of so many “old Canadians,” but also in laying the foundation for the edification of future generations of those ethnic nationalities with whom he expressed concern, by providing for them an important link to their ancestral

³⁰Kirkconnell, “Western Immigration,” *The Canadian Forum*, Vol. VIII, No. 94, July 1928, 706-707.

³¹C.H. Andrusyshen, “Canadian Ethnic Literacy and Culture Perspectives,” *The Undoing of Babel – Watson Kirkconnell – The Man and His Work* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1975), 33.

³²W. Kirkconnell, “A Tale of Seven Cities,” 7.

heritage. In this sense, Kirkconnell hoped, however Anglicized and Canadianized these immigrants and their future generations might become, that this assimilation at least would not be total. His goal was not to deny the value of a national culture or traditions, but to enrich it.

I do not wish to belittle or deny the value of a national culture and a national tradition in giving a warm core of spiritual significance to our Canadian community. I hope for the fullest possible development of such a national culture, blending and cherishing here all the rich legacies of European gifts that are found in our land.³³

In other words, any national Canadian culture had to encompass the cultural legacies of its diverse ethnic components if it was to truly be a national culture. All of Canada's rich diversity Kirkconnell believed had something to offer to the defining of nationhood.

With the onset of the Great Depression Kirkconnell's task became even more daunting. In a period of growing hostility and resentment toward ethnic minorities, he was increasingly challenged to both interpret these new Canadians to the rest of the country, and to defend their loyalty as well. Many Canadians, including Kirkconnell's own Baptist brethren, saw these immigrant communities as breeding grounds for all kinds of seditious and pagan ideologies bent on the destruction of Canadian democracy. The 1932 *Baptist Yearbook* recorded:

It surely is worthwhile when we think of our national aspirations and the fact of what unChristianized Central and Eastern European peoples and pagan Orientals will do to this fair land, if allowed the ascendancy, in a few years to come. We shudder to think of it. Does Canada want, can Canada afford to have communism, atheism, and paganism rule her? The only preventative is a true

³³Kirkconnell, "European Elements in Canadian Life," 17.

Christianization of such peoples who come to our shores and have been allowed to become an antagonistic 'ism' because of indifference on our part.³⁴

Many of Kirkconnell's Baptist brethren it would appear did not share his views on cultural diversity, fearing that such diversity would bring an end to their vision of Canada as an Anglo-Christian nation.

While acknowledging the fact that these immigrant communities were "susceptible to the gospel of revolutionary Communism," since as a result of the onset of the Depression they were most often the first to be laid off by industry, Kirkconnell, nevertheless, charged that

[t]he smallest success of the conspirators, whether Nazi or Communist, has been amongst the European Canadians. These people know far better than the average English or French Canadian the reality of the horrors that rules in Europe today.³⁵

While *Canada, Europe and Hitler* was Kirkconnell's "categorical statement" of his anti-Nazi position, it was equally his conscious attempt to discount the fears of many "old Canadians" that immigrant communities were likely to become partisans of Communist agitation and that those of German heritage in Canada posed a serious threat.

³⁴*Baptist Yearbook*, 1932, 227; Note similar charges in "'Canadianize!' Evangelize," *Canadian Baptist*, February 24, 1938; "Bible as the Basis of the British Empire," *Canadian Baptist*, February 24, 1938; "The Task at Home," *Canadian Baptist*, August 2, 1934; "Their Influence Now is Not Beneficial," *Canadian Baptist*, April 11, 1935; "Necessity For Work Among Our New Canadian Citizens," *Canadian Baptist*, May 15, 1944. We must recognize that "enemy activities" are "one of the most serious threats which endangers our life as a unified democratic nation." These threats are present among a "large body of people who have not been assimilated into our national life and are separated from us and each other by many bars", particularly "language and race." Some Baptists even went so far as to call for the deportation of such radicals. See "Home Mission Work," *Canadian Baptist*, November 21, 1935, 5. The Convention, however, to its credit did object to the government's utilization of Sections 40/41 of the Immigration Act that provided for the deportation of non-Canadian citizens on relief. *Baptist Yearbook*, 1933, 203.

³⁵W. Kirkconnell, *Canadians All*, 17.

While some of the groups have been seriously exposed to the propaganda of Communism and Fascism, and a minority among them have even succumbed to such external pressure, the majority, by reason of these very attempts at penetration, are all the better aware of the challenge to democracy and liberty involved in the rise of Hitler.³⁶

Following an exhaustive, more than seventy page survey on the European press in Canada, Kirkconnell came to the conclusion that it "shapes itself nevertheless into a pattern of quite astonishing unanimity on the issue of supporting Canada and its armed opposition to Hitlerian aggression."³⁷

In short, Kirkconnell argued that there was no questioning the loyalty of these new Canadians to Canada. "Canadians of all origins are today thinking as Canadians and responding as Canadians to the greatest responsibility our country has ever had to face."³⁸

He went on to charge:

[t]he thing that unites a people into singleness of nationhood is sharing together in great causes. Out of the world's tragic errors and the black ambitions of wicked men, a monster of hate and horror has been let loose on the world; and it is our perilous privilege to stand beside Great Britain in withstanding and overcoming the evil creature. That task has accelerated by half a century the growth of Canadian national unity. The threat to human, national, and religious freedom has challenged us all alike and brought us together in a struggle of ever-increasing gravity and resolution.³⁹

In defending the loyalty of these multi-ethnics, Kirkconnell argued that it did not nor did it necessarily have to include filial affections for all things British. Their allegiance was to

³⁶W. Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, 117; Critics of the work said it was "too emotional" and was "lacking in objectivity." See also Perkin and Snelson, *Morning in His Heart*, 22.

³⁷W. Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, 188.

³⁸W. Kirkconnell, *Canadians All*, 19.

³⁹W. Kirkconnell, *Canadians All*, 19. Kirkconnell would also point to the fact that most of these folk of the second generation insisted that they were Canadian, and how could their loyalty be "contradicted" "when they signed up for their citizenship with their blood."

Canada. That allegiance precluded any corresponding affection for Britain, which would not only be historically impossible for them, but equally hypocritical to assume.⁴⁰ As he himself phrased it,

All the values of civilization are not summed up in the Anglo-Saxon. To weave into the Canadian fabric the multicoloured threads of all of Europe's cultural legacies ought, if it were possible, to produce in the end a civilization of unusual richness.⁴¹

Perhaps Kirkconnell was somewhat of an idealist given the immensely partial attitudes of his day. But on the other hand, he possessed a keen understanding of the human psyche. "A man," he said,

is likely to become a better Canadian, and to make a more confident and valuable contribution to Canadian life, if he is led to feel pride in his own national past and to realize that his fellow-Canadians, because they admire and respect his national tradition, expect great things from him. On the other hand, he is under a psychological handicap of bitterness or humiliation if he is regarded as belonging to 'lesser breeds without the Law' and only permitted to share in the life of the Chosen People on condition, compulsorily applied, that he renounce his own people and all they have stood for.⁴²

By creating an environment of respect and toleration, Kirkconnell believed people would feel more confident and willing to make a contribution to the general welfare of the nation. In this respect, the more that immigrant communities felt a part of Canada, and their traditions respected, the more willing they would be to adhere and comply with the broader cultural social norms, since their own values and norms would inevitably help to shape those of the broader culture.

⁴⁰W. Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, 197-200.

⁴¹W. Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, 202.

⁴²W. Kirkconnell, *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, 202.

Watson Kirkconnell passionately believed that Canada as a liberal democracy had the responsibility to meet the demands of social justice, and at the same time guard the values of the individual. As such, he challenged “old Canadians” to show “tolerance and justice” toward the loyal majorities in all of these new immigrant communities and to “help them rather than malign them in their almost universal struggles against the [seditious] minorities in their midst.”⁴³

When Watson Kirkconnell left Winnipeg in 1940 to become Head of the English Department at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, the *Winnipeg Tribune* paid him the following compliment: “No man has done more to help the peoples of Winnipeg to live as neighbours . . . He will be able to interpret the life and thought of the new peoples who today are making some parts of Ontario as cosmopolitan as Winnipeg. To this extent the exchange may be to national advantage.”⁴⁴ In 1940, Louis Rosenberg, Executive Director of the Canadian Jewish Congress Western Division, charged that Watson Kirkconnell was “unique in Canadian life.” He added, that Kirkconnell “has gone out to meet us more than

⁴³W. Kirkconnell, *Towards a Christian Social Order*, 8. See also his impassioned plea in “Twilight of Canadian Protestantism,” *Canadian Baptist*, December 1, 1942, 2, where he argued that “vociferous loyalty to the British crown is not enough. It needs to be followed by a conscientious application of the principles for which Britain has stood in her best and highest moments – principles of liberty, justice and goodwill. If we can [constitute] a political and social [order] in which there is no hint of discrimination against any group, we shall have done much to ensure the future welfare of the Canadian people.”

⁴⁴ “Editorial,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, June 15, 1940, “Watson Kirkconnell Clippings,” *Canadian Baptist Archives*. Kirkconnell himself remarked that “Winnipeg taught me the vital importance in our national life of the two million Canadians whose ancestry is neither English nor French.” W. Kirkconnell, “A Tale of Seven Cities,” 12; For further discussion of his years in Hamilton see Perkin and Snelson, *Morning in His Heart*, 25-31.

half way, and when he ceases to be an isolated phenomenon and becomes one of many there will be greater hope for mutual understanding in Canada."⁴⁵

The pioneering efforts of Watson Kirkconnell, in an era of indescribable nativism and support for immigration restrictions, were praised but dismissed. But that does not mean they were without impact, especially in the long haul. His thinking, so revolutionary in its day, helped pave the road to the Canada of today. As J.R.C. Perkin asserts:

Kirkconnell is one of that small band of individuals who, to a significant degree, helped create modern Canada. He would not have like every part of today's Canada any more than he approved of every aspect of it in his own day, but if the worst excesses of racial prejudice have been avoided, and if the experiment to create a cultural mosaic has been partly successful, some of the credit is surely due to him.⁴⁶

He was among the foremost Canadians of his age and, perhaps surprisingly given the usually conservative tone of Baptist thinking, he helped to effect an eventual concord between his own national heritage and those who had most recently arrived seeking new lives and a new land.

Watson Kirkconnell rightly deserves, in the words of the late George F.G. Stanley, to be recognized as the "prophet of Canadian multiculturalism."⁴⁷ Unfortunately, few Canadians and few Baptists during the first half of the twentieth century were willing to

⁴⁵Louis Rosenberg, *The Israelite Press*, as cited in W. Kirkconnell, *A Slice of Canada*, 274.

⁴⁶Perkin and Snelson, *Morning in His Heart*, 63; For further discussion of Perkin's assessment of Kirkconnell see "There Were Giants in the Earth in Those Days: An Assessment of Watson Kirkconnell," *Canadian Baptists and Higher Christian Education* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 89-110.

⁴⁷This epithet was used by Stanley in his address delivered at the dedication of the Watson Kirkconnell Room in the library of Acadia University on October 12, 1979. See J.K. Zeman, "They Speak in Other Tongues: Witness Among the Immigrants," *Baptists in Canada* (Burlington: G.R. Welch Co., 1980), 81,85.

adopt his vision of Canada.⁴⁸ He passionately believed that recognition of the cultural contributions of ethnic minorities would not only heighten their sense of belonging to Canada, but also strengthen national unity. In the end, Kirkconnell was the true Baptist voice 'crying in the wilderness' – a wilderness unfortunately still dominated by discrimination and racism, and a wilderness inhabited by many, but by no means all, of Kirkconnell's fellow Baptists.

⁴⁸Kirkconnell, it would appear, was at least having some influence on his Baptist brethren by the late 1930s. Lewis F. Kipp, editor of the *Canadian Baptist*, in an article entitled "Strangers Within Our Gates," for the first time clearly enunciated and admitted the racist attitudes of the church towards immigrants. Kipp wrote: "that some non-English families are not desirable neighbours is admitted, but it equally true that not all English-speaking are of angelic type. There are fine and undesirable people in every race, colour and creed. No district has a right to withhold its hand of fellowship to a newcomer simply because he is not of its race or language . . . race feeling exists in the Dominion [and] the racial colour splinter that we find in some other eye should not blind us that there are splinters in our own . . . In this ostracism of other races and colours the church has not always been without fault . . . He (the foreigner) will not think well – can you blame him – of a religion that teaches brotherliness in its place of worship on Sunday, but which is anything but brotherly on Monday. This country of Ours would be a great deal lovelier if the Spirit of friendly brotherhood was extended to take in the brother of other tongues, colours and different habits." Lewis F. Kipp, "Strangers Within Our Gates," *Canadian Baptist*, December 1, 1941, 3.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

Mission had become the dominant definition of the Church by the latter half of the nineteenth century. Armed with the belief that their vision of Canada was under attack from foreigners holding alien world views, Evangelical Baptists formulated a mission that was designed to defend their Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture and values. In this sense, Baptist identity paralleled that of many others in the Canadian Protestant community.

The leadership of Baptist churches during this period believed that the church had a significant role to play in the assimilation process of immigrants. From the churches' perspective, this was viewed partly as fulfilling the mandate of the Great Commission and therefore, doing the Will of God. While Baptists' faith in their ability to convert and assimilate the immigrant generally remained strong gradually it , came to include advocacy of more restrictionist immigration measures, particularly in the aftermath of the First World War and in the growing economic distress of the 1930s. Thus, what had begun as a campaign designed to "win" the immigrant for the Kingdom eventually came to demand immigrants be kept out of the Dominion. For many of those who found themselves subject to the churches' missionary activities, saw nothing but racism in the attack upon their religious traditions and cultural values.

Strangely enough religion is also dragged in as a motivating factor in prejudice. Among the most prominent opponents of 'foreign' immigration are ministers of religion of various denominations who are so absorbed in their desire for the supremacy of their particular denomination and their self-

righteous belief in the superiority of their particular brand of salvation that they forget all about the common fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.¹

The talk of religious welcome that dominated Baptist discussion of immigration was at least partly code for hatred of Roman Catholics. In determining the desirability of an immigrant, purging him or her of Catholicism was critical to Baptists, although during the 1930s ethnicity and race became increasingly significant measures of an immigrant's desirability and some Baptists were swept up by scientific racist theories. This abhorrence of Roman Catholicism fostered a nativism that was replete with religious bigotry and prejudice. This anti-Catholicism, which amplified Baptists' fears of foreign "isms" and a belief in Anglo-Saxon superiority, translated into a general suspicion of the "stranger within our gates." Therefore, in the face of ever increasing numbers of immigrants from Catholic, and from non-English speaking countries, Baptists generally lined up with those advocating the cultural dominance of an English-speaking Protestant tradition in Canada. Translated into action, this Baptist vision of Canada as "His Dominion" dictated an assimilationist agenda. Canada, as a result, of this "providential gathering" would become the Kingdom of God on earth. This millennialist view of Canada's future as a Christian nation prepared the way for the propagation of the social gospel. As a result,

[t]he nationalist hopes for Canada were linked to the modernist social gospel as a principle for building a truly Christian nation, and for avoiding the problems of urbanization, industrialization and immigration as experienced by the older nations of the United States and England.²

¹N.K. Clifford, "A Vision in Crisis," *Religion and Culture in Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1977), 32.

²Beth Profit, "The Making of a Nation: Nationalism and World War One in the Social Gospel Literature of Ralph Connor," *Historical Papers: Canadian Society of Church History*, 1992, 129.

“Canadianizing” through “Christianizing” the immigrants became the social mission of those seeking to preserve the church’s vision of Canada. Baptists, like other Protestants, therefore, “had succeeded in welding together their millennial hopes for the establishment of Christ’s kingdom in Canada with their deep desire to serve their nation and to save it from racial and ideological contamination.”³ In the end, Baptists’ vision of a “terrestrial Jerusalem characterized by Puritan morals, social justice, and English supremacy did not materialize.”⁴ As historian Ramsay Cook noted, “it remained easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a Canadian society to become the kingdom of God on earth.”⁵ In fact, the “union of the sacred and the secular,” Cook argued, produced not the intended kingdom of God, but “the birth of a secular view of society.”⁶

Canadian Baptists during this period underwent a crisis of identity. On the one hand, they increasingly associated themselves with the mainstream of Protestantism, and hence the predominant Anglo-Saxon culture of the day – a culture whose values and ideals they believed would bring on the Kingdom of God. What Baptists failed to realize, however, was that the Kingdom of God was not a democracy, but a theocracy. And what of Baptist views of immigrants? On the one hand, Baptists regarded immigrants, whose customs and beliefs they saw as threatening to Canadian society, as undesirable. Alternatively, they spoke of the virtues of immigrants, the fact that many would make “good citizens,” and

³Clifford, “A Vision in Crisis,” 32.

⁴W.E. Ellis, “Baptist Visions of the New Jerusalem,” *Celebrating Canadian Baptist Heritage*, The McMaster Conference, n.d., 68.

⁵Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 227.

⁶Cook, *The Regenerators*, 231.

even emphasized the valuable assets of the foreigner in enriching Canadian life, if only immigrants allowed themselves to be remade in the Baptist image. And perhaps deep down Baptists resented immigrants or what they understood as immigrant efforts to preserve a distinct cultural heritage because it highlighted their own sense of group self-betrayal. Baptists who craved for acceptance by the larger Anglo-Protestant society, who wanted to shift from an older version of Baptists as outsiders and dissenters, may well have felt guilt at abandoning uniqueness for conformity. Once committed to the path of self-assimilation, could Canadian Baptists have felt resentment that others, namely immigrants, would cling to their heritage and remain outside? Perhaps no body is so much a partisan of the mainstream as those most recently converted to it.

To prove they belonged there and upset that others would turn their backs on the chance to join the mainstream, Baptists became missionaries not just for God's Kingdom, but for mainstream Anglo-Saxon values. Thus Baptists became progenitors of a monolithic culture – something which historically they had resisted. But there was also a residue of the earlier Baptist tradition of dissent. When some Baptists spoke of the virtues, rights and freedoms of the immigrant this was more in keeping with their historic association as Dissenters. Their defence of pluralism in these years was largely relegated to the area of rhetoric. Increasingly, the majority of Baptists saw the incoming horde of foreigners as a debasing influence bent on destroying God's intentions for a Protestant, ethnically homogeneous Canada.

"It is never too late to give up our prejudices," wrote one commentator in the *Canadian Baptist*.⁷ It was not until the 1930s, however, that negative attitudes towards immigrants began to change and the whole program of Canadianization began to be questioned. In Baptist circles, Watson Kirkconnell played a leading role in making both the church and mainstream Canadians aware of the cultural contributions that immigrants had and would continue to make for Canada.

But few Canadian Protestants of the day were able to accept the new more pluralist vision. Many Conservative Evangelicals continue to propagate notions of "His Dominion," including the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada. Leslie K. Tarr's authorized history of the denomination, founded in 1953, is entitled, *This Dominion His Dominion: The Shape of Evangelical Baptist Endeavors in Canada* (1963). In adopting such an image, this denomination has learned little from the failures of their Baptists brethren in Canada. Nevertheless, its continued use "is a clear indication of its power to reflect a certain type of Protestant self-understanding."⁸ However, this was a vision increasingly out of touch with the growing diversity and pluralism of Canadian society. Those hostile to pluralism proved out of touch as the church moved to abandon its "tribal theology" of the past and search for new images and symbols that will more accurately reflect the new dynamics and self-understanding of a Christian community within an ethnically and now racially diverse Canadian society.

⁷*Canadian Baptist*, March 1, 1923, 5.

⁸Clifford, "A Vision in Crisis," 36.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Baptists, like their Protestant counterparts, feared the changes brought about by industrialization, urbanization, and immigration. These phenomena threatened not only their traditions, but also their dream of making Canada into "His Dominion." In response to this challenge, Canadian Protestants, including Baptists, "tended to affirm the possibilities of diversity for themselves, but to deny it for those who did not share their standards, values, and traditions. The nature and scope of these rapid social changes, which they correctly identified, would not, however, permit the maintenance of such an ambivalent solution. Therefore, the Protestant vision of Canada as "His Dominion," in the terms in which they had defined it, collapsed."⁹ The neo-orthodox critique of Protestantism's identification with the idea of progress, middle class culture and nationalistic pretensions, during the 1930s, gradually began to erode the theological framework that had supported this vision of Canada. Furthermore, Baptists, like many other Protestants, were never able to articulate an ideology of Canadianism that was inclusive beyond their own Anglo-Saxon heritage. "The pluralistic nature of the political, social, and religious dimensions of Canadian society were such that the millennial dreams of any particular group were an inadequate basis for the elaboration of an ideology which would be acceptable to all."¹⁰

At the turn of the century, the majority of the immigrants to Canada were Europeans. Thus, while cultural and linguistic diversity existed, there was, nevertheless, a degree of homogeneity amongst the population in certain areas of group settlement. Of

⁹Clifford, "A Vision in Crisis," 34-35.

¹⁰Clifford, "A Vision in Crisis," 35.

specific interest to churches, in this regard, was the issue of religion. While denominationalism was certainly present, immigrants to Canada during this period while still largely from the United Kingdom and the United States, were also arriving in greater numbers from eastern and southern Europe many of whom were adherents to the Catholic faith.¹¹ Yet, in spite of Baptist anti-Catholicism, there were shared symbols and religious narratives. Today, the church is facing a radically different situation. Recently released computations by Statistics Canada show that while the percentage of immigrants coming to Canada, since the Second World War, has remained relatively constant, there has been a dramatic shift in the origins of these people. According to the 1991 census, Canada was home to approximately 4.3 million persons classified as recently-arrived immigrants. Proportionally immigrants continue to represent approximately 16.1 percent of the Canadian population, a figure which has remained virtually the same since the 1940s.¹² In 1961, 90 percent of these immigrants came from European countries. However, that figure has today plunged to about 25 percent, thus signifying a dramatic shift in the origins of

¹¹As historian Brian Clark notes non-English-speaking immigrants comprised approximately one-quarter of the new arrivals in Canada, with most of them from predominately Roman Catholic or Orthodox countries of southern and eastern Europe. By 1931, Catholics of European background were as numerous as those of Irish and British background. Their presence Clark maintains "meant that the Catholic Church was becoming increasingly diverse, especially in Ontario and the West, where the bulk of the newcomers settled." For the Protestant churches "it was bad enough that the new arrivals from Southern and Eastern Europe were unfamiliar with the English language and customs; worse their culture was morally debased, and their religion, whether Catholic or Orthodox, little more than superstition." According to the 1931 Census of Canada (Table 45) on the ethnic origins of Canadian Catholics French Canadians constituted 66.5%; the British and Irish 16.0%; Ukrainian 3.6%; Poles 2.9%; German 2.5%; Italian 2.1%. See Brian Clark, "English-Speaking Canada from 1854," *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996), 330-331, 349.

¹²Alanna Mitchell, "Immigrant origins increasingly diverse," *The Globe and Mail*. December 9, 1992, A1, A9.

Canada's population.¹³ Figures released by Statistics Canada further show that Asia is now the major source of immigrants for Canada, with "almost one-half of all immigrants who came to Canada between 1981-91," venturing from this part of the globe.¹⁴ Not only are they not Baptists, most are not white and many are not even Christian. Consequently, within the last decade Canada has become an increasingly diversified society, especially within its major urban centers, where the bulk of these immigrants have chosen to settle.¹⁵ Furthermore, while there is much debate over the intent of Canada's multicultural policy it has created an environment within Canada in which diversity is not only celebrated but a times publicly supported.

The church within Canada is thus at a major crossroads in its history. It faces a formidable task of trying to make itself culturally relevant within an increasingly secular, ethnically and racially diverse society. As Alan R. Tippett has remarked:

The greatest methodological issue faced by Christian mission [today] is how to carry out the Great Commission in a multicultural [society], with a gospel that is both truly Christian in content and culturally significant in form.¹⁶

¹³Mitchell, "Immigrant origins increasingly diverse," A9.

¹⁴Mitchell, "Immigrant origins increasingly diverse," A9. The greatest portion of these immigrants are from Hong Kong (10.2%) and India (6.9%); See also E. Carey, "1 in 10 Canadians a Minority: StatsCan," *The Toronto Star*, February 18, 1998, A1, A25; John Samuel, "Defining Canadians By Racial Origin," *The Toronto Star*, February 19, 1998, A22; Paul Watson, "China Now Tops Canada's Visa List," *The Toronto Star*, May 4, 1998, A12.

¹⁵Approximately 40 percent of Toronto's population is immigrant, Vancouver 30 percent, Calgary 21 percent, Edmonton 19 percent, Winnipeg 17 percent and Montreal 16 percent – see Mitchell, "Immigrant origins increasingly diverse," A9.

¹⁶A.R. Tippett, as cited in J.O. Bushwell III, "Contextualization: Is it only a new word for indigenization?," *EMQ*, Vol. 14, no. 3, January 1978, 13.

Yet, in many respects Baptists, like other Christian churches in Canada, have failed to grasp the implications of this situation. While generally acknowledging that there are profound demographic changes occurring within Canada, most Baptists have continued to largely identify themselves with the cultural, political and economic establishment. Too often, they have also committed themselves to the view that a monolithic culture is a necessary prerequisite to social stability, as well as political and theological integrity. Consequently, the theology of Baptists, especially among Fellowship Baptists, continues to remain too ethnocentric. This spirit of self-centered nationalism has remained one of the major reasons why the Baptists (particularly Fellowship Baptists) have been so inept in addressing the issue of ethnic diversity in Canada.

Thoughtful Baptists are recognizing that in order to be relevant in today's Canada Baptist Churches are in need of a radical reorientation in vision and strategy, especially in the area of ethnic ministry. In this context, Baptists must re-capture a sense of their own history. Historically, Baptists were considered radicals, having emerged out of the Radical Reformation. Baptist theology, as such, tended to be very person-oriented, stressing the freedom of the individual and individual conscience. The extension of this premise meant that historically Baptists were anti-monolithic not only religiously, but also socially and politically as well. Thus, traditional Baptist theology is compatible with the concept of pluralism and highly "skeptical of uniform utopian schemes whether of the left or the

right."¹⁷ Churches, as such, must "reassert the uniqueness and infinite value of the individual against new forms of historical, psychological and social determinism."¹⁸

Canada's present cultural mosaic confronts Canadian Baptists with a glowing opportunity for ministry and growth. As Professor Vern Middleton asserts:

Cross-cultural evangelism is a most important form of outreach for a local church or for that matter for the future growth of our denomination. Reaching recent immigrants must become a priority for every local church within our Fellowship. This is not merely an option, but a God given mandate and opportunity.¹⁹

In other words, if Baptist churches are to remain culturally relevant and viable they must do away with the ethnic stereotyping that characterized so much of their evangelization programs of the past. Cross cultural evangelism cannot emulate the approach adopted by the denomination at the dawn of the twentieth century, that sought to root out immigrants' own cultural heritage. This approach proved highly ineffective and largely ended in failure.

In order for Baptists to seize hold of this opportunity, they must garner a new sense of identity and mission in Canada, one predicated on their historic roots within the Radical Reformation. Canadian Baptists of all religious stripes "if they remain true to their historical heritage, must . . . be committed 'champions of the oppressed.'"²⁰ In so doing, Baptists will defend a more open immigration policy and promote Canada as a haven for

¹⁷Samuel J. Mikolaski, "Identity and Mission," *Baptists in Canada* (Toronto: G.R. Welch Co., 1980), 8.

¹⁸Mikolaski, "Identity and Mission," 8.

¹⁹V.J. Middleton, "Cross-cultural Concerns in the Evangelistic Mandate of the Local Church," unpublished chapter of a forthcoming book, 119.

²⁰George Rawlyk, "The Champions of the Oppressed? Canadian Baptists and Social, Political and Economic Realities," *Church and Canadian Culture* (Lanham: University Press of America Inc., 1991), 123.

refugees. Clearly, Fellowship churches can no longer simply embody a narrow, white Anglo-centric cultural expression, but must profess a faith and practice a lifestyle that transcends cultural barriers. Only in this context will the Gospel be able to infuse and transform culture. Thus, the church is required to hold two truths in equal tension and it cannot express one to the neglect of the other. As eminent missiologist Donald McGavran notes: "Unity must be the goal; so must ethnicity. Christ did not come to destroy *panta te ethne*, but to disciple them. Revelation tells us that before the throne will be people from all ethnic [groups] and languages of planet earth with their language and their ethnic distinctions intact."²¹

The recent arrival of a handful of Asian migrants on Canada's West Coast once again aroused the fears of Canada's traditional opponents to immigration: the Canadian Alliance Party, right-wing fringe groups and the like. Sadly, the old half truths, exaggerations and wild allegations of the past are once more being propagated. Perhaps the churches of Canada would be wise to consider the recent views of an editorial, "Would Jesus qualify for Canada?" There the author writes,

[i]magine . . . the similar arrival of a man called Jesus of Nazareth . . . Imagine him standing at the immigration counter. Take a good look: His hair and beard are long and black, probably unshorn. His tan a dark and shiny bronze. He'll probably be barefoot, with a pair of roughly hewn sandals hanging over his shoulders. He wears a turban. His accent is Mid-Eastern. He doesn't speak either of Canada's official languages. Aramaic is his tongue, and a smattering of Arabic and Hebrew. His religion: He'll say "Jew." The word "Christian he will not recognize. Alarm bells will sound in the mind of the bureaucrat. Imagine how much luck Jesus would have in the face of a system that

²¹D. McGavran, "The priority of ethnicity," *EMQ*, January 1983, 17.

automatically brands those who turn up at the door seeking succour, if they are different and/or disadvantaged, as being potential threats to society²²

One wonders that had Jesus arrived on the shores of Canada at the turn of this century would the churches of the land have turned him away as just another pushy Jew. Armed with their program of Canadianization/Christianization, Baptists would certainly have tried to assimilate him. One wonders whether they would have even recognized him.

Nevertheless, in spite of all their fears that the collapse of their vision of Canada as "His Dominion" would result in inevitable national demise, the cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity of the nation has only served to make Canada into a more richer nation, for some the greatest nation in the world in which to reside, and fostered a willingness to welcome whatever religious and cultural traditions that can contribute to national life. The challenge facing Baptist today is to carry on the tradition of engaging culture, while avoiding the imperialistic/nativistic overtones of their forbearers. Only in this manner will they seek and work towards a genuine pluralism, as envisaged by Watson Kirkconnell, in which Christians have an important voice, but by no means the exclusive voice their Baptist predecessors sought.

²²T. Sher Singh, "Would Jesus qualify for Canada?" *The Toronto Star*, September 6, 1999, A9.

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