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**IN THE PRESENCE OF MINE ENEMIES:
ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE ALBERTA SOCIAL CREDIT PARTY**

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October, 1993

A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

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SHORT TITLE

ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE
ALBERTA SOCIAL CREDIT PARTY

Janine Stingel

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines anti-Semitism in the Alberta Social Credit Party under the Aberhart and Manning regimes. It is based on various archival sources from the Glenbow Archives-Institute in Calgary, Alberta, the Premiers' Papers at the Provincial Archives of Alberta in Edmonton, contemporary press reports, and the Social Credit Party's national organ, the *Canadian Social Crediter*. It argues that anti-Semitism in the Alberta Social Credit Party was not the purview of a marginal, extreme wing of the Party, but that it was an integral element of Social Credit ideology. This ideology was espoused by most Social Crediters, including premiers Aberhart and Manning. When Ernest Manning purged the Movement of its anti-Semites in 1947-1948, he was attempting, unsuccessfully, to eradicate the very essence of Social Credit ideology. The consequence of thirty-six years of Social Credit rule is the persistence of an Albertan political culture which breeds provincialism and intolerance.

RESUME

Le présent mémoire a pour objet l'antisémitisme au sein du parti du Crédit social de l'Alberta sous les gouvernements de messieurs Aberhart et Manning. Ce mémoire s'appuie sur différents documents provenant du Glenbow Archives-Institute à Calgary, en Alberta, sur les Premiers' Papers des archives de l'Alberta, à Edmonton, sur des articles de journaux de l'époque ainsi que sur l'organe national du parti, le *Canadian Social Crediter*. Le mémoire soutient que l'antisémitisme à l'intérieur du parti créditiste de l'Alberta n'était pas l'apanage exclusif d'une aile extrémiste du parti mais faisait partie intégrante de son idéologie. Celle-ci était adoptée par la plupart des créditistes, dont les premiers ministres Aberhart et Manning. Au moment où Ernest Manning a expulsé du parti les membres antisémites en 1947-1948, il a tenté, mais en vain, de supprimer l'essence même de l'idéologie du Crédit social de l'Alberta. En conséquence des trente-six années de règne du parti créditiste, il persiste, en Alberta, une culture politique qui engendre le provincialisme et l'intolérance.

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**IN THE PRESENCE OF MINE ENEMIES:
ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE ALBERTA SOCIAL CREDIT PARTY**

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INTRODUCTION

You have seen the light so shed it
You have learned the truth so spread it
Raise your voice for Social Credit
While Alberta marches on

Work for Social Credit morning,
noon and night
Truth is truth eternally and
right is always right
And fight for Social Credit--
It's a great and glorious fight,
While Alberta marches on.

(From the Alberta Social Credit Women's Association,
to be sung to the tune of "Battle Hymn of the Republic.")¹

In 1935, William Aberhart's Social Credit Movement swept the Alberta provincial election, winning 56 out of a total of 63 seats. Thus began 36 years of Social Credit rule, first under William Aberhart's premiership, and after Aberhart's death in 1943, under the premiership of his protégé, Ernest Manning. Based on the monetary theories of Major C. H. Douglas, a Scottish engineer, Social Credit was a melange of ideas. It included an economic programme by which the evils of capitalism would be eradicated while retaining the capitalist framework; it included a political programme by which control of the general will of the people would be returned to the people; and it included a conspiratorial philosophy in which the economic and political devastation of the 1930s could be blamed on an identifiable enemy--the international Jewish financier.

It is Social Credit's conspiratorial philosophy which provides the basis for this thesis. Several monographs referring to the Alberta Social Credit Movement have omitted a discussion of anti-Semitism within the Movement. Other works have addressed this

anti-Semitic component, but in such a way that anti-Semitism in Social Credit is seen as an unfortunate historical footnote, the result of an extreme, ideologically fanatical wing of the Party. The result is an historical marginalization of those persons who most wholly embraced Social Credit ideology, and the relegation of anti-Semitism in Social Credit to a kind of ideological side-show.

John Irving's *The Social Credit Movement in Alberta* is perhaps the classic work on Alberta Social Credit. Analysing the Movement through a socio-psychological paradigm, Irving concludes that Aberhart's religious crusade transformed into a political crusade by means of a mass social movement. With the help of informative oral sources, Irving emphasizes the conspiratorial philosophy inherent in Social Credit, and notes that Social Credit's ideological enemy was the "unscrupulous financier" centred in Montreal and New York.² However, in his 369 page treatise, not once does Irving allude to the anti-Semitism which pervaded this anti-financier sentiment. The words "Jew," "Semite," or "anti-Semitic," do not appear in Irving's text. The result is that Irving ascribes Social Credit's ideological enemy to the Eastern bankers, the financiers, and the "Fifty Big Shots,"³ but he omits any reference to the racial-religious characteristics generally attributed to this "enemy."

C. B. Macpherson's *Democracy in Alberta* is a brilliantly-written class analysis of the Social Credit Movement. Although his interpretation of Social Crediters as "independent commodity producers"⁴ has been revised in recent years, for the purpose of this discussion, Macpherson's assessment of the association between Douglas's economic and political theories and the concomitant anti-Semitism in the Social Credit Movement is extremely valuable. However, Macpherson argues that Douglas's world plot theories were embraced by Social Crediters only **after** all efforts to introduce social credit measures proved fruitless.⁵ Macpherson implies that anti-Semitism was the result of an embitterment with the government's inability to implement Social Credit theories, rather than an integral part of Social Credit ideology. Further, Macpherson claims that although

Aberhart espoused Douglas's world plot theories, "Aberhart took only what he needed; neither he nor Manning believed in or would propagate the Douglas theory of a Jewish world plot."⁶

Macpherson's statement on the nature of Social Credit anti-Semitism has proven to be extremely tenacious. Howard Palmer, in *Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta*, and in several articles, has examined anti-Semitism in the Alberta Social Credit Party. His work on Social Credit anti-Semitism is one of the two most valuable bodies of research on this subject. The other is David Elliott's articles on William Aberhart and Alberta Social Credit⁷ and the biography, *Bible Bill: A Biography of William Aberhart*. Yet these two scholars also underemphasize the ideological continuities between Douglas's anti-Semitic, conspiratorial world view, and those views held by Aberhart and Manning. Both Palmer and Elliott concede that Aberhart expressed ambivalent sentiments toward Jews, but that Manning unequivocally opposed anti-Semitism, as evidenced in his purge of the anti-Semites, or Douglasites, from the Party in 1948. Neither Palmer nor Elliott, however, views Premiers Aberhart or Manning as proponents of anti-Semitism in the same way as the overtly anti-Semitic Douglasites. Alvin Finkel, in *The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta*, similarly argues that "[n]either Aberhart nor Manning appears to have subscribed to Douglas's notion that the conspiracy had an ethnic character, but both accepted the view that there was an international conspiracy..."⁸ These interpretations concede that Aberhart and Manning embraced a conspiratorial world view, but they assert that Aberhart and Manning cannot be connected to that ideologically-pure wing of Social Credit which espoused overt anti-Semitism.

Finkel's study on the Alberta Social Credit Movement is important for additional reasons. Providing a critical reappraisal of the political character of the Social Credit Movement, Finkel argues that Social Credit shifted from a broadly-based, secular reform party to a "narrowly based party of rural religious fundamentalists."⁹ Finkel claims that pronounced right-wing views accompanied Manning's accession to power, and that

Manning initiated the political process which transformed Social Credit from its left-wing radical base to a cadre of "right wing paranoids."¹⁰ Hoping to counter the political challenge posed by the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (C.C.F.), Manning embarked on a political course which aligned his lower middle-class government with the business interests of Alberta.¹¹ By the end of 1944, the Social Credit administration had become a staunch opponent of many forms of government intervention once favoured by Aberhart, and violent opposition to socialism began to replace the Movement's opposition to bankers and profiteers.¹² Finkel argues that this turn to the right in the 1940s cannot be dismissed as a mere change in rhetoric.¹³ He claims that the meaning of Social Credit had changed: unable to implement Social Credit economic policies, Manning made a deliberate political decision to pay off the province's debts and abandon Douglas's economic theories.¹⁴

This thesis diverges from Finkel's argument at crucial points. Finkel states that "[t]he importance of bankers to Social Credit demonology declined somewhat after the war as the province paid off its debts..."¹⁵ This point is not disputed. However, Finkel also argues that by 1950, with secular radicals (that is, social reformers) **and** the Douglasites out of the Party, evangelical Christians became more prominent in the Movement overall.¹⁶ The consequence, argues Finkel, is that the Social Credit Party, deprived of its original left-wing, social-democratic, labour-oriented purpose, became weak and divided, and "collapsed bit by bit until right-wing extremists claimed it for their own in the 1980s and thereby sealed its doom."¹⁷ Finkel's argument requires close scrutiny. He asserts that Douglas's monetary theories provided the impetus for a left-wing, secular, political movement; he then claims that Christian fundamentalists usurped this left-wing political movement after Aberhart's passing. In other words, the emergence of "right-wing paranoids" upon Manning's accession to power is attributed to a right-ward shift in the Movement's religious ideology and a concurrent abandonment of Douglas's theories.

This thesis argues that Douglas's monetary and political theories provided an ideological framework in which anti-Semitism flourished. Whether Douglas's theories created a left-wing or a right-wing political movement in Alberta is a debatable point, and for the purposes of this discussion, not the most pertinent one. As Finkel himself concedes, Douglas's social credit theories appealed to people with diverse political leanings: from the fascistic Ezra Pound to the communist C. M. Grieve.¹⁸ Further, this thesis argues that, in contradistinction to W. E. Mann's thesis,¹⁹ Christian fundamentalists did not provide the backbone of Social Credit support, and that any attempt to relegate the anti-Semitism evidenced in Social Credit to Christian fundamentalists is highly misguided.

This thesis, then, concurs with Finkel's argument that economic and political radicalism were eradicated after Manning's accession to power, and that this had much to do with the economic fortunes the province experienced in the post-war period. However, Finkel's claim that right-wing, evangelical Christians played a large role in executing this shift to economic and political conservatism is wholly disputed. Finkel overlooks a crucial element in Social Credit ideology: its tendency toward intolerant, proto-fascistic attitudes, due to its economic, political and religious doctrines. This tendency was part of Social Credit ideology from its inception, and it was embraced by Douglas, Aberhart, and Manning. Whether this fascistic tendency was left-wing or right-wing is really a moot point; the consequence was that Social Credit ideology fomented intolerance. When Finkel refers to the "kooks and fascists"²⁰ which took over the Party in the 1980s, he is arguing the existence of a right-ward shift, or transformation, in Social Credit ideology. When this thesis discusses the "resurrection of Douglas's disciples" in the 1980s, it is emphasizing the ideological continuities in Social Credit's economic, political, and religious doctrines.

It is not the purpose of this thesis to argue that Premiers Aberhart and Manning were rabid anti-Semites, or to claim that the entire Social Credit Movement was filled with

virulent Jew-haters. This thesis does argue, however, that anti-Semitism was an integral part of Social Credit ideology, and that this ideology was embraced, in varying degrees, by leading Social Crediters, including Premiers Aberhart and Manning. The result was the creation of a political culture which defined its identity in terms of opposition to an ideologically identifiable enemy.

Chapter One examines the ideological links between nineteenth-century American Populism and the Alberta Social Credit Movement, and it shows how both movements' ideologies embraced anti-Semitism in their economic and political doctrines. Chapter One also examines the religious component of Social Credit ideology, and how Social Credit's emphasis on Christianity was counterpoised to Judaism, which also contributed to an ideology which embraced anti-Semitism. Chapter Two shows how Social Credit's ideology reflected and shaped the political culture in which it developed. Specifically, an examination of Aberhart's mass religious-political movement reveals economic, political, and religious values among everyday Albertans which were reflected in Social Credit's economic, political, and religious doctrines. Together, Chapters One and Two provide the contextual framework to show how ideology and implementation interacted to create a socio-political movement which embodied anti-Semitism.

Chapter Three, which is based primarily on archival documents from the Glenbow Archives-Institute in Calgary, Alberta, and the Premiers' Papers at the Provincial Archives of Alberta in Edmonton, examines the history of the Douglasites within the Social Credit Movement, and closely follows the events behind Manning's purge of the Douglasites in 1948. It argues that Manning's purge was more than a provincial cabinet shuffle; rather, it marked a deliberate attempt by Manning to dissociate the Social Credit Movement from its anti-Semitic ideology. The reasons for Manning's purge are examined; it is concluded that Manning executed the purge not out of a sense of ideological opposition to the Douglasites, but for much more concrete reasons--reasons relating to the political and

economic fortunes of the province and his government. However, the result of Manning's purge was a severe schism within the Movement, not a quiet shift in ideological focus.

Chapter Four examines the continuities of Social Credit ideology within the political culture of post-war Alberta, and it argues that the resurgence of anti-Semitism within the Party in the 1980s was not the result of a marginalized, crank faction, but a consequence of the ideological continuity of Social Credit rule. As a kind of epilogue, Chapter Four also discusses briefly the Reform Party of Canada under Ernest Manning's son, Preston Manning. This final segment argues that Social Credit ideology, with its inherent predisposition toward intolerance, has created an Albertan political culture which breeds provincialism and intolerance, as evidenced by the Reform Party's platform. The connection between the two movements is more than a filial one; it is the resurgence of an ideology which labels threats to its political, economic, and social values in terms of the "enemy." When Social Crediters sang about the righteousness of their crusade in the 1930s, they were expressing a strong statement about their political identity, and how this identity was defined by an anti-"enemy" bias. In the 1990s, Reform Party supporters, with their several anti-"enemy" planks, are singing a similar refrain.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

¹Bob Hesketh, "From Crusaders to Missionaries to Wives: Alberta Social Credit Women, 1932-1955," Prairie Forum 18(1) (Spring 1993), 59.

²John A. Irving, The Social Credit Movement in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), 327.

³*Ibid.*, 234-236.

⁴C. B. Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta: Social Credit and the Party System (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 60.

⁵*Ibid.*, 193.

⁶*Ibid.*, 203.

⁷See specifically David Elliott's two articles, "Antithetical Elements in William Aberhart's Theology and Political Ideology," Canadian Historical Review 59(1) (1978): 38-58, and "Anti-Semitism and the Social Credit Movement: The Intellectual Roots of the Keegstra Affair," Canadian Ethnic Studies 17(1) (1985): 78-89.

⁸Alvin Finkel, The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 82-83.

⁹*Ibid.*, xii.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 98.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 212.

¹²*Ibid.*, 73.

¹³*Ibid.*, 210.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 102.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 136.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, xii.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁹See W. E. Mann, Sect, Cult, and Church in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955). Mann examines the nature of those religious conditions in Alberta out of which the Social Credit movement grew. He argues that rural and urban lower classes provided the bulk of support for the evangelical Protestant sects, and Aberhart's political movement is a direct outgrowth of his religious movement. Other scholars have taken up this argument to claim that the vast proportion of Social Credit supporters were evangelical, fundamentalist Christians. Later statistical studies of Social Credit electoral

support contradict this interpretation. See, for example, J. Paul Grayson and Linda Grayson, "The Social Bases of Interwar Political Unrest in Urban Alberta," Canadian Journal of Political Science 7(2) (June 1974): 289-313; Edward Bell, "The Petite Bourgeoisie and Social Credit: A Reconsideration," Canadian Journal of Sociology 14(1) (Winter 1989): 45-65; H. L. Malliah, "A Socio-Historical Study of the Legislators of Alberta, 1905-1967," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1970); and Owen Anderson, "The Alberta Social Credit Party: An Empirical Analysis of Membership, Characteristics, Participation and Opinion," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1972).

²⁰Finkel, The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta, 200.

CHAPTER ONE

ANTI-SEMITISM AS IDEOLOGY: ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS DOCTRINES OF SOCIAL CREDIT

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the nature of Alberta Social Credit ideology. As an ideology, Social Credit can be divided into three components: economic, political, and religious. These three doctrines, or "sub-ideologies," are integral to understanding the nature of anti-Semitism within the Alberta Social Credit movement. By comparing Alberta Social Credit with the nineteenth-century American Populist movement, Social Credit's economic and political doctrines will become clear. The Populist comparison will also show how the economic and political doctrines of both movements provided a forum for anti-Semitism. A discussion of Social Credit's religious component will show that it too contributed to an ideology which embraced anti-Semitism. These three doctrines--economic, political, and religious--were integral to Social Credit ideology. In order to understand how anti-Semitism became a viable concept within the Social Credit Movement, it is necessary to examine the economic, political, and religious doctrines which informed its ideology.

The first segment of this chapter, then, will show how the Alberta Social Credit Movement, sharing many of the economic and political characteristics of the American Populist Movement, encompassed an ideology of anti-Semitism similar to that evidenced in American Populism. Such a comparison poses many challenges, for both Populism and Social Credit were complex movements, and Populism, at least, has an historiography of its own which still engages intense debate. Further, anti-Semitism is a complicated matter, and any attempt to discern the nature of such intangibles as sentiments, attitudes, or prejudice, is fraught with difficulties. Yet, examining Alberta Social Credit as a Populist

movement is fruitful, for it reveals several similarities in economic and political thought which provided a forum for anti-Semitism.

Before examining the links between Alberta Social Credit and American Populism to show that anti-Semitism was an inherent facet of both movements' economic and political ideologies, it is important to note that Populist historiography has not been one of consensus. Not every historian of American Populism has agreed that anti-Semitism was an inevitable outcome of the Movement, just as not everyone will agree initially that anti-Semitism was a consequence of Social Credit ideology. Historians of American Populism are divided on several issues: whether Populism was forward-looking or backward-looking; whether it was solely an agrarian revolt or a people's movement composed of different classes; whether Populism was a left-wing or a right-wing movement; and, most importantly for this paper, whether Populism encompassed an anti-Semitic ideology. These issues are inter-related, and it is usually the charge of anti-Semitism which brings the other issues to the fore. The issues are often reduced to the question whether Populism was reformist or reactionary. Peter Argersinger provides a concise overview of American Populist historiography:

For most of the first half of the twentieth century, scholars regarded Populism with an approving eye and pen; as Walter T. K. Nugent has phrased it, the Populist was a Saint George in American historiography and his opposition was a dragon. Historians took their cues from such sympathetic students as Solon Buck and John D. Hicks and viewed Populism as a movement of economic and political protest in the rural areas of the West and South during the 1890s, and Populists as an injured, democratic citizenry possessing foresight concerning important issues of the time. By the mid-1950s, however, a new generation of scholars...sharply reversed the images, and the resultant populist dragon was a scaly one indeed: anti-Semitic, nativistic, irrational, reacting to nonexistent economic difficulties, and even protofascistic...Clearly, Populists seemed to torment many historians in the 1950s and 1960s...¹

Richard Hofstadter headed this Populist revisionism in America. In his widely-read (and widely-criticized) The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R., Hofstadter

effected the interpretive transfer from reform to reaction in his assessment of American Populism. Building on arguments earlier made by Oscar Handlin, Hofstadter outlined five central characteristics of Populism, prefacing his discussion with a caveat that such structuralism accorded Populist ideology more coherence and formality than it actually had. Hofstadter's five characteristics of Populism were the idea of a golden age, which appealed to popular nostalgia; the concept of natural harmonies--that harmony would reign among the producers once the exploiters had been removed; the dualistic version of social struggles; a conspiracy theory of history; and lastly, the doctrine of the primacy of money.² According to Hofstadter, the utopian element in American Populism was centred on the belief that "the health of the state was proportionate to the degree to which it was dominated by the agricultural class, and this assumption...pointed to the superiority of an earlier age."³ American Populists, like the nineteenth-century Romantics, yearned for an earlier, more pastoral age, and as a movement, Populism deplored the rise of commercialism and the industrialization of the American economy. Big bankers, monopolies, and commercialism were destroying the natural harmony created by agriculture. Similarly, changes which resulted from industrialization and commercialism caused social conflict: "The people versus the interests, the public versus the plutocrats, the toiling multitude versus the money power."⁴ Hofstadter explained that the Populist solution for these social ills laid in battling the powerholders, the controllers of money. Conspiracy theories were created to explain why farmers and miners were struggling economically while big bankers and businessmen prospered. William Jennings Bryan's political campaigns and the free-silver issue were examples of the Populist perception that wealthy investors and government officials were conspiring to manipulate the currency and put silver miners out of business.⁵

With all its limitations, Hofstadter's interpretive framework provided a critique of Populism which revealed its "scalier" side. What is often overlooked in Hofstadter's critique, however, is his appreciation of the complexity of American Populism, and his

desire to show both the strengths and limitations of its ideology. In The Age of Reform, he writes:

To discuss the broad ideology of the Populists does them some injustice, for it was in their concrete programs that they added most constructively to our political life, and in their more general picture of the world that they were most credulous and vulnerable. Moreover, any account of the fallibility of Populist thinking that does not acknowledge the stress and suffering out of which that thinking emerged will be seriously remiss. But anyone who enlarges our portrait of the Populist tradition is likely to bring out some unseen blemishes. In the books that have been written about the Populist movement, only passing mention has been made of its significant provincialism; little has been said of its relations with nativism and nationalism; nothing has been said of its tincture of anti-Semitism.⁶

Thus began an intense debate on the nature of Populist ideology. Studying such figures from Ignatius Donnelly, "Coin" Harvey, Tom Watson, Huey Long, Father Coughlin, to Joe McCarthy, historians have struggled with the nature of American Populism and its implications for America's political and broader culture. Many criticisms of Hofstadter's work were well-taken, and they often included an appreciation of the subtlety of ideology within socio-political movements. Norman Pollack argued that Hofstadter resigned the Populists to a group of reactionary retrogrades. In The Populist Mind, Pollack writes:

Mr. Hofstadter wrote that the movement was unable to confront the facts of industrialism but sought instead to turn its back on social change in favor of the restoration of a golden age in the past. This retrogressive view of history insured the irrationality of Populist solutions...For Mr. Hofstadter, Populism was indeed the source of American anti-Semitism...[that] the agrarians may well have exaggerated their grievances, that perhaps times were not nearly so hard as they imagined, and hence that their protest was all the more irrational, being a response to non-existent problems and to an American society which was beneficent and functioning smoothly. Under these circumstances it is difficult to take their protests seriously. Populists, like other Americans, were not really radical. Instead they were capitalists-on-the-make who wanted a larger share of the pie, but did not quite know how to express themselves.⁷

Pollack might have had his own ideological agenda, but his criticism of the "capitalists-on-the-make" interpretation engaged many other scholars regarding the class

nature of American Populism. What is at issue here, however, is whether these differing interpretations could defend or refute the claim that anti-Semitism was an inherent facet of Populist thought. As Argersinger astutely notes, "The implicit methodological approach seemed to be one of making broad generalizations based on scattered observations of a very few Populists. Though the critics proudly claimed to have 'detected and described' the 'dark side of Populism' that earlier students had missed, they made no systematic inquiry into the subject that would have resulted in a real understanding of Populism..."⁸ Argersinger emphasizes that Populism included many people with many divergent attitudes and ideas and had different factions dominant at different times. "In short," he writes, "today's scholar can find some support for nearly any claim he may care to make."⁹ Argersinger's comments point to a central question regarding the nature of anti-Semitism within American Populism: what effect did anti-Semitism have on the Movement's general ideology and on the Movement as a whole?

C. Vann Woodward provides insight into this question in his assessment of the new revisionism in Populist historiography. He acknowledges that much of American Populist thought was provincial, that the Populists took refuge in the agrarian myth, that they denied the commercial character of agricultural enterprise, and that at times they dreamed of a golden age. He also agrees with Hofstadter's argument that Populists overemphasized the importance of money, divided the world into "producers" and "nonproducers," and were fascinated with the notion of conspiracy. "To do justice to the new critique of Populism," Woodward writes, "it should be acknowledged that much of its bill of indictment is justified...To place these characteristics in perspective, however, one should enquire how many of them are peculiar to the Populists and how many are shared by the classes, or groups, or regions, or by the period to which the Populists belong."¹⁰ In posing this question, Woodward confronts a central issue in American Populist historiography. He wants the Populists placed in their historical context, and scholars to provide hard evidence of the nature of Populism, its composition, and the

extent to which Populist ideology was shared by those outside the Populist fold. In short, Woodward is questioning the very essence of American Populist ideology. It is this question which has engaged other scholars. As George McKenna writes:

When all is said and done...populism remains more a mood than a doctrine. Trust in the simple people; faith in America; scorn for the privileged. All of this is fine, but, we finally ask, who are the plain people and who are the privileged, whose America are we to honor, and how are we to honor it? Populism seems to leave everyone free to fill the blanks with their favorite heroes, villains, and solutions. The same doctrinal fluidity which enables populism to appeal to such a broad spectrum of opinion also contains the fatal seeds of factionalism and reductionism.¹¹

As McKenna states, Populism is a fluid concept. What John Richards and Larry Pratt have called "indiscriminate labelling" of the word "Populism" to a wide range of agrarian protest movements,¹² is not a great hindrance to understanding the nature of Populism. What is necessary is an appreciation of the complexity of Populism, and an ability to discern the subtleties within Populist ideology. An analysis which includes this kind of careful deliberation will include both the strengths and weaknesses of the ideology. In this way, anti-Semitism within Populism can become a defensible argument, without invoking the polarized debate of Populists as reformists or reactionaries. As Duncan Webster has noted, in accordance with Lenin's comment on Populism, it is helpful to see Populism as "The Modern Janus:" "The populist, in matters of theory is...a Janus, looking with one face to the past and the other to the future."¹³

It is this fluidity in Populist ideology which allows for a comparison between American Populist ideology and Social Credit ideology. There has been relatively little analysis of Western Canadian political movements as "Populist movements." The similarities between the farm revolts in Canada and the United States have been examined, particularly the democratic thrust of both movements, and the similarity of their proposals for economic and political reform.¹⁴ Howard Palmer provides the clearest analysis of the similarities between American Populism and Alberta Social Credit, and he specifically

notes the tendency of both movements to share three dominant themes--an assumption of the harmony of interests among productive classes, a dualistic theory of social struggles, and a conspiracy theory of history. As well, he notes the parallels in the doctrine of the primacy of money.¹⁵

Palmer further argues that given the large influx of American farmers from the mid-western states at the turn of the century, it is not surprising that Populism had a significant impact on rural Alberta. In 1914, Canadian officials estimated that 925,000 Americans had moved, chiefly within the last sixteen years, across the border to Alberta and Saskatchewan.¹⁶ In 1922, 22 per cent of the Alberta population was American-born.¹⁷ In both ideology and organization, both the United Farmers of Alberta, which had been heavily influenced by the American Non-Partisan League, and the Social Credit movement shared many of the characteristics of American Populism.¹⁸ Palmer notes that while many American farmers brought populist ideas with them to Alberta, similar notions were brought by many immigrants from Ontario and Great Britain. Walter Young also comments on the influence immigrants had on Canadian populist thought:

...many of the men who homesteaded in the west came from Britain or the United States. Many were familiar with the ideas of the British socialists, or the American agrarian radicals. Many of the ideas of the [Canadian] Progressives came from below the border...The CCF reflected the ideas of British socialism. And social credit was...the product of Major C. H. Douglas' fertile imagination, although in this case the British seed was sown in ground already tilled by the ideas of American progressivism and populism.¹⁹

Albertan Populism thus was shaped by both British and American political thought. As Young notes, however, it was the English monetary theorist, C. H. Douglas, who brought the actual ideology of Social Credit to Canada. Howard Palmer additionally notes that it was Douglas, rather than American Populists, who provided the direct link between Social Credit and anti-Semitism.²⁰

Yet the impact of American Populism on Alberta Social Credit cannot be dismissed. Palmer himself argues that American Populism's conspiratorial view of history, its emphasis on egalitarianism, and its opposition to the "money powers" were characteristics shared by Social Credit ideology. He also states that Hofstadter's characterization of American Populism has striking parallels with the principles of Social Credit.²¹ Richards and Pratt also note the parallels between Canadian and American Populism:

Prairie farmers dealt in markets which initially guaranteed the bulk of economic rents would accrue to financial and corporate interests--to banks via high interest rates for mortgages and other credit, to railroads via monopoly freight rates, to Eastern manufacturing trusts selling farm equipment. The farmers' political response, in the United States as in Canada...was populism, a complex radical movement that gave birth to a multitude of organizations from the cotton exchange, launched by the Texas Alliance in the late 1880s, to wheat pools in the Canadian prairies during the 1920s...The family farmer--from Alberta homesteader to Texas sharecropper--has provided one of the important bases of support, along with urban labour, for North American reform politics.²²

Richards and Pratt acknowledge the "serious blemishes" to the Populist record, from the racism of Georgia's Populist leader Tom Watson to the anti-Semitism of Social Credit financial conspiracy theories, but they do not see these flaws as peculiar to the Populist movements.²³

Richards' and Pratt's assessment of the "blemishes" of North American Populism requires refinement. As Seymour Martin Lipset argues, various populist movements such as the Progressives in Canada, the Non-Partisan League in both the United States and Canada, Father Coughlin's Union Party, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, and Social Credit, all interpreted economic hardship and depression as being caused by eastern "capitalism," "vested interests," or "financiers."²⁴ This was a common thread running through North American Populist ideology, and although nativism and anti-Semitism could be located in groups outside the Populists, it was the focus of the Populists' grievances which provided the context in which anti-Semitism could thrive. At the base of

the Populist revolt was a dissatisfaction with the economic system, and an attempt to explain the economic hardships confronting them. Many North Americans were anxious about the changes wrought by modern industrial life; many perceived an erosion of community and personal autonomy. But it was the Populists who "turned their gaze away from cultural issues and focused instead on economic realities."²⁵ This is not to say that questions of religion, ethnicity, race, or personal morality were not raised by Populists; however, it was the issues of privilege, wealth, centralized power, and the failure of political institutions to deal with them²⁶ that provided the impetus for Populist revolt.

It is within this context that the Social Credit movement fits, and it is within this climate of economic and political grievance that anti-Semitism flourished as an ideology. What requires explanation is the process by which economic and political grievances evolved to create an ideology which included anti-Jewish sentiment. By specifically looking at Alberta Social Credit, as a Canadian equivalent of American Populism, it will become clear how anti-Semitism was a direct consequence of its Populist ideology. Thus, the question is this: to what extent did economic and political grievances shape Social Credit ideology, and did this ideology lead inevitably to anti-Jewish attitudes? In answering this question, it is necessary to look first at the impact the Depression had on Albertans' sense of who possessed power and who did not.

The Great Depression wrought great economic hardship throughout the world, but few places suffered so sharp a decline in income or required so much government assistance in order to survive as the Canadian prairie provinces. From 1928 to 1932 Canada's agricultural economy declined 68 per cent, while the Prairies' agricultural income declined 92 per cent. In Alberta, the average per capita income in 1928-1929 was \$548.00; in 1933 its average per capita income was \$212.00, a decrease of 61 per cent. The Canadian average per capita decrease during the same period was 48 per cent.²⁷

But economic indices do not tell the story of chaos and bewilderment which the Depression wreaked in Alberta. Farmers could not understand an economic system in

which they received nothing for their crops, while shops in towns and cities were filled with goods that no one could purchase.²⁸ As W. L. Morton eloquently describes:

The great depression and drought of the 1930's are not, in their disastrous effects, easily to be imagined or pictured. When farm prices ceased to possess economic relevance; when organized society could no longer be maintained out of local resources; when once independent men were reduced in their distress to accepting relief from government; when the sun itself was blinded by the driving sand as the nomadic calvary of drought, the bone-grey tumbling mustard and Russian thistle, charged endlessly across the wind-scoured fields, as endlessly as in the distant and dustless offices of St. James and Bay streets the interest charges mounted...²⁹

That granaries were full and farmers were getting nothing for their labour eluded logic. But during the Depression, it has been said, nothing seemed logical.³⁰ Semi-starvation was not uncommon, and it was often reported that in some areas of Alberta the need for food forced people to pickle gophers.³¹ In 1935, Social Credit Premier Aberhart spoke of Albertans who had nothing to eat for days, and that in the dry belt the people were living on gopher stew. He stated: "There are children in Alberta who have not tasted butter or milk in the last three years although they live on farms. Their fathers have to sell all the milk the cows produce to live...Children are crying for food out in Alberta tonight. The boys and girls are hungry..."³² Sociologist Jean Burnet, studying depression conditions in Hanna, Alberta in the 1940s, reported that Aberhart's statements produced great indignation, but she emphasized that "at most [Aberhart] exaggerated conditions which needed no exaggeration to be shocking. A diet of potatoes and milk has become legendary in the Hanna area...Probably the effects of malnutrition in the thirties will be evident for many years."³³

The lack of money received for farmers' production led to overwhelming farm debts. Even in good economic times, the farmers' need for credit was great. The equipment required for mechanized farming by the 1930s was expensive; the year's income not only fluctuated violently but was almost always received at the same time of year; and agriculture was a specialized cash crop business, rendering subsistence agriculture nearly

impossible.³⁴ During periods of economic prosperity the Alberta farmer was urged to expand his use of bank credit, but during the Depression suddenly he found himself caught in an economic vise.³⁵ The debt burden became crushing; to pay taxes or to pay the interest on old debts was nearly impossible. As Burnet states, "interest was called 'the crop that never fails.'"³⁶ She notes that foreclosure became a terrifying possibility for farmers many of whom lost their machines, their crops, their land. "There sprang up a host of stories of people working all night to harvest a crop and get it into town before it could be seized, taking advantage of errors in foreclosure papers, and outwitting or intimidating process-servers."³⁷

It was in times of economic depression that the farmer was in even more need of credit. What historian John Hicks states of American farmers can be equally applied to Albertan farmers:

Beset on every hand by demands for funds--funds with which to meet his obligations to the bankers, the loan companies, or the tax collectors and funds with which to maintain his credit with the merchants so that he might not lack the all-essential seed to plant another crop or the few necessities of life that he and his family could not...produce for themselves...--the farmer naturally enough raised the battle cry of "more money." He came to believe that...his chief grievance was against the system of money and banking, which now virtually denied him credit and which in the past had only plunged him deeper and deeper into debt.³⁸

The economic system became the farmers' focus of criticism; specifically, they blamed those persons seen to be in control of the economic system--bankers and financiers. The farmers were correct in pointing to the economic system to explain the Depression; there was indeed an insufficient distribution of purchasing power among the populace, compounded by an economy which could not provide markets for the immense agricultural production.³⁹ However, these were intangible factors relating to the production and distribution of wealth in an expanding industrial and financial capitalist system.⁴⁰ For most Albertans suffering from economic privation, the tangible representation of these factors was money, and its alarming scarcity was most easily

explained by admitting that "[t]he people...have lost their control over the monetary system; their sovereign authority has been usurped by bankers who have set up a financial dictatorship, and who use their control of credit to render [the people] ineffectual..."⁴¹ As Howard Palmer states: "only a conspiracy could explain why democracy and the capitalist economic system had failed and why individuals were faced with 'poverty in the midst of plenty.'"⁴²

In these harsh economic and political circumstances, C. H. Douglas's Social Credit doctrines became highly appealing. They offered a ready explanation for Albertans' material woes, and an ideological enemy against whom to wage war. As solely an economic doctrine, Douglas's Social Credit theory provided an explanation of "the inner workings of capitalism" and offered a "remedy for its unsatisfactory functioning in periods of international depression."⁴³ Howard Palmer writes:

According to C. H. Douglas, the paradox of "poverty in the midst of plenty" could be ended by printing and distributing "social dividends." This would keep purchasing power and productive capacity in balance. Since commerce was carried on by means of credit, he believed that the power to issue or withhold credit entailed control over the commerce of the world. This power was currently in the hands of a small band of bankers and international financiers, and therefore had to be recaptured by "the people"...Douglas did not advocate the overthrow of capitalism, but its reformation. This enabled him (and Aberhart) to uphold the principles of private ownership and enterprise, while denouncing those aspects of the system (such as concentration of economic power) that were widely disliked by farmers, as well as the urban middle and working classes.⁴⁴

This brief description of Douglas's economic theory does not reveal, however, its intrinsic anti-Semitism. As an ideology, Social Credit theory offered much more than an economic explanation for existing deprivations. As Alan Davies notes, Major Douglas was an "arch-antisemite, convinced of the existence of a Jewish-instigated conspiracy linked with international finance and bent on achieving world domination."⁴⁵ Wrote Douglas: "While all international Financiers are not Jews, many are, and the observable

policy of these Jews and of Freemasonry is that of the Talmud."⁴⁶ A. E. Carlsen provides further evidence of Douglas's views:

...the Douglas system maintains that the bankers are consciously linked up in an occult plot to gain control of society through its financial institutions. In this plot, credit is the instrument used to achieve ultimate domination. "The control by the bankers over industry," in Douglas' words, "will be absolute if not checked." "If civilization is not to disappear altogether there will, within a comparatively short period of time, arise a situation in which bankers will disappear."⁴⁷

Douglas repeated many of the economic and anti-Semitic ideas expressed in the spurious "Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion," a document forged by an agent of the Czarist secret police living in Paris in the late 1890s, and purporting to be made up of conversations, instructions and dialogues of the secret leaders of the world Jewish conspiracy.⁴⁸ As Carlsen notes,

[t]his document which has been fairly well demonstrated to be spurious does unfold an alleged plot conceived by international Jewry, by which finance would be the instrument for subjugating the goya. Although Douglas himself did not advance the idea that the document was authentic, he did declare that the Protocols represented what was actually happening in the world of finance and economics.⁴⁹

As Douglas himself stated: "The authenticity of this document is a matter of little importance; what is interesting about it, is the fidelity with which the methods by which such enslavements might be brought about, can be reflected in the facts of everyday experience."⁵⁰

Douglas's belief in the international Jewish financial conspiracy reached such paranoiac proportions that in his last years, he was diagnosed as certifiably insane.⁵¹

David Elliott comments on Douglas's increasing paranoia:

Douglas was extremely anti-Judaic in the tradition of Houston Stewart Chamberlain. His conspiracy ideas became more pronouncedly paranoid as time progressed and there developed a great similarity between Douglas's and Hitler's analysis of economics and banking...He further claimed that no politician could

"hope to attain office except by permission of Finance," finance being a common epithet in Anti-Semitic literature, referring to international Jewish bankers, whose power was more imagined than real.⁵²

Thomas Flanagan and Martha Lee also note Douglas's paranoiac progression:

With the passing years, Douglas became more paranoid and anti-Semitic. [sic] He saw the Jewish financial power everywhere, conspiring to erect a totalitarian world slave state. World War II and the ostensible persecution of the Jews were merely a diversion. "I am convinced," he wrote, "that the Jewish High command desires the ultimate victory of Germany, and will fight tooth-and-nail, not to end the war, but to see that Germany is not defeated in the peace."⁵³

Douglas's economic theories thus were inextricably linked with his anti-Semitism. As Elliott succinctly notes, "What seems obvious...is that Douglas's economic views were built upon a platform of anti-Semitism and could not really be separated from it."⁵⁴ This point cannot be overemphasized in explaining the anti-Semitism inherent in Social Credit ideology.

Yet to declare that Social Credit ideology, in all its economic and anti-Semitic manifestations, was wholeheartedly accepted by all Albertans, and that each Albertan became a raving anti-Semite, is rash as well as incredible. What was necessary was the acceptance of the idea of a financial conspiracy. Only if the idea of a group of conspirators was accepted could there be a naming or labelling of such "enemies." It is necessary, then, first to show Albertans' acceptance of Social Credit solely as an economic ideology.

For Albertans, Social Credit's economic ideology made much sense. It seemed plausible that there was a financial conspiracy, in which those who lent money increased its scarcity in order to gain the highest premium for their commodity. These financiers' policies caused the Depression, and such a catastrophe offered opportunities for them to engross their wealth through business consolidations and foreclosures. Hence the "interests" actually relished and encouraged hard times.⁵⁵

Further, Albertans saw the unbridled concentration of power and wealth⁵⁶ in the hands of bankers and financiers as the cause of underconsumption and consequent underproduction, since the bankers had an interest in restricting output and money or credit to maximize profits.⁵⁷ For Albertans it became, in the words of Richard Hofstadter, "[t]he people versus the interests, the public versus the plutocrats, the toiling multitude versus the money power...the victory over injustice, the solution for all social ills, was concentrated in the crusade against a single relatively small but immensely strong interest, the money power."⁵⁸ Premier Aberhart fed this perception by attacking the bankers, in somewhat dramatic terms:

Do you not realize that unless we make definite plans for dealing with this slimy octopus which is wrapping its clammy blood-sucking tentacles around every man, woman and child in this Canada of ours, we shall find ourselves bound in abject slavery to the lords of finance who, by this iniquitous swindle have gained such power that they are virtually super-dictators to whom democratically elected governments have to go cringingly, cap-in-hand, to obtain permission to carry on?⁵⁹

Social Credit as an economic ideology therefore was accepted as a reasonable and convincing interpretation of Albertans' economic circumstances. Yet connected to this economic ideology was a political component. As Aberhart's description indicates, the idea of a financial conspiracy included more than what Hofstadter calls "the common feeling that farmers and workers were not simply oppressed but oppressed deliberately, consciously, continuously, and with wanton malice by 'the interests.'"⁶⁰ The financial conspiracy also included the concept of a political conspiracy, which reflected Albertans' political concerns, such as long-standing grievances toward the urban East and specifically, the federal government in Ottawa.

These political grievances can be explained in part by the realities of Canadian geography. Alberta was not only physically distanced from the centres of power and decision-making in Canada, but it was distanced also politically and economically.⁶¹ From

the time of the alienation of the province's land and its resources in 1905, in which provincial resources remained in the hands of the Crown, Albertans saw this economic subordination as inseparable from their political subordination. As Richards and Pratt note, "...Westerners of all classes came to perceive Ottawa as an imperial government, a complex of institutions organized by central Canadian elites for the purpose of dominating and plundering the hinterlands...The 'quasi-colonial' status of the prairie provinces was not only economic but political..."⁶² Whether Alberta and the other western provinces benefited as much from Confederation as any other province is not the issue, argues Walter Young. "What matters in politics...is not reality as much as perceptions of reality. To the western Canadian the view of central Canada as taking and seldom giving has been the dominant perception of reality for some decades."⁶³ To the westerner, it seemed that Canada was the Ottawa-Montreal-Toronto triangle that lived off the hinterland, and Ottawa appeared remarkably insensitive to western interests and western influence.⁶⁴ Thus, there evolved the conviction that the economic subordination from which Albertans were suffering was an inherent part of eastern financial domination and the party system.⁶⁵ In Aberhart's "Back to the Bible" radio programme he played heavily on the idea of western alienation by denouncing the so-called "Fifty Big Shots" of central Canada, and the "high mucky mucks."⁶⁶

Consequently, financiers became associated with the "distant power centres" and the "plutocrats"⁶⁷ which caused economic and political powerlessness. In this way, financiers were seen as the puppeteers of government, shamelessly manipulating western agrarians with their business-oriented urban interests.⁶⁸ It is important to note that capitalism itself did not come under scrutiny. As Macpherson states, the Douglas doctrine argued that,

[t]he root cause of the malaise was an error in the accounting system of industry, an error which had become entrenched in the pricing mechanism and had made it impossible for people as consumers to buy back the goods they had created as

producers. On this foundation finance had built its control, first of industry and then of governments. From the policies of finance flowed all the evils of restricted production, unemployment, the suppression of freedom and individuality, the perversion of labour values, and war. None of these was inherent in capitalism; they were results of the perversion of capitalist enterprise by finance; indeed, capitalism...had been replaced by "creditism." The enemy was not capitalism, it was finance, that is, the control of credit by an irresponsible oligarchy.⁶⁹

Accordingly, the essence of Douglas's doctrine was the belief that the capitalist enterprise had been reduced to a fiction by the rise to power of the financiers, that a power outside the productive community⁷⁰ had conspired against the common people. In the same vein as "Coin" Harvey, Father Coughlin, and Huey Long, Douglas portrayed a sinister entente between a centralizing federal government and a parasitic, exploitive financial sector.⁷¹

Economic powerlessness thus was equated with political powerlessness, and in Alberta, this lack of power arose from a tradition of political alienation and an anti-"old parties" bias. The Liberal party had been in power from the province's inception in 1905 until 1921. Although an "old party" itself, it had continued the territorial tradition of keeping provincial and federal politics separate, and had proven itself adaptable to the agrarian interests of Alberta. However, distrust of politicians had been established early because of the provincial Liberals' scandalous contractual dealings in the construction of the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway, the exposure of which nearly defeated the government.⁷² Yet even before the replacement of the Liberal Party with a United Farmers of Alberta government in 1921, Albertans appreciated the nature of their isolation and political insignificance, and they believed that neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives could meet their economic or political needs. As Walter Young states:

The two old parties were based in the east, financed by the east and controlled by the east. For the people in the west this meant frustration and unrest: they had neither the arm nor the ear of the ruling parties...Their economic situation also placed them in the position of vassals to the eastern potentates of the CPR, Massey-Harris, and other large firms that set prices, held mortgages and, to a large extent, influenced governments. This factor gave further impetus to the development of indigenous parties and movements in the west.⁷³

The old parties were controlled by the same financial interests in the east that controlled the companies with whom the farmers had to deal. To the Albertan farmer, it made little difference which party was in power. Both parties were the same; the real centres of power were in the east and eastern economic and political interests had a vested interest in keeping the western farmer in a condition of feudal dependence.⁷⁴

The success of the U.F.A. government in 1921 thus began a long history of Albertan political revolt which did not wane until the post-World War II era. The U.F.A. experience instilled in Albertans a near-instinctual repugnance to the party system and party machines. As David Laycock states, "Albertans 'knew' by 1935 that the old-line parties served the will of 'the interests.'"⁷⁵ As the U.F.A. government became increasingly orthodox and unable to deal with the vagaries of Depression, the political environment was well-prepared for Social Credit discourse which presented a severe critique of party politics.⁷⁶ It combined political alienation and economic powerlessness with the rhetoric of financial conspiracy, a heady brew for Albertans struggling under the burdens of the Depression. It was Major Douglas who told of "a small number of very opulent gentry...who were not elected, and represented no one but themselves, [who] did in fact sway the whole deliberations of the elected assembly."⁷⁷ To Douglas the government was an apparatus of coercive power at the disposal of the real holders of power. No matter how democratic the constitution, the ostensible government was merely a tool in the hands of the financiers, who had as their willing or unconscious helpers politicians of all parties.⁷⁸

The question which remains, however, is how did these economic and political grievances translate into anti-Jewish sentiment? It is not enough to say that Douglas labelled the international financial conspirators as Jews, and therefore to accept Social Credit economic and political ideology Social Crediters likewise were obliged to label the conspirators as Jews. Rather, it is necessary to examine what Hofstadter has called a "curiously persistent linkage between anti-Semitism and money and credit obsessions."⁷⁹

Opposition to eastern bankers had been translated earlier into opposition to Jewish financial interests⁸⁰ by nineteenth-century American Populists. This element in Populist thought was based on the idea that Jews were responsible for the tyranny of the gold standard, and that Jews were in control of international finance.⁸¹ It must be emphasized that the pejorative image of Jewish "internationalism"⁸² did not originate with the Populists; rather, it was a continuation of a centuries-old stereotype which equated Jews with money and usury.⁸³ It is not, therefore, difficult to find an explanation for the strain of anti-Semitism in American Populism. As Frederic Jaher argues:

The Jew was alien to everything that the farmer held most dear...[he] became a man of mystery, part of a secret coterie aiming to steal the hard-earned property of the farmer...The Hebrew was foreign and unassimilable, as well as greedy. His refusal to be integrated into other cultures branded him an incurable alien. Surviving all assimilation schemes indicated superior powers--since he could resist change himself, the Jew had the power to change others...These superior powers, the means by which he conquers other societies, were associated with wealth, the East, the city, and business. Semitic strength was the power of the mind, or so thought the agrarians. Superior cunning was used to victimize the sturdy but simple yeoman. It mocked his upright virtues while using them against him. The farmer felt that he was being destroyed by such chicanery, and the Jew became the symbol of this duplicity.⁸⁴

Whether one accepts the idea of the Populist as a "hardy yeoman," there existed a tradition among many farmers in western North America of connecting a dislike for banks with Jews.⁸⁵ As Hofstadter notes, "[t]o Populists the Jew was a non-producer, a mere manipulator of money, a parasite and at the same time representative of the sinister and forbidding power of international finance."⁸⁶ The myth of the powerful Jewish financier was thus a powerful one, manifesting itself in an excessive dwelling on the power of "Shylock," and the idea that Jews were leagued together in a vast conspiracy to gain control of the money supply and wreck the financial system. At its base was the idea of the Jew as subversive, flowing from his unwillingness or inability to abide by the existing

economic morality.⁸⁷ As Howard Palmer notes, this "moralistic" anti-Semitism was shared by both Populists and Social Crediters:

Social Credit was in many ways a descendant of the populist farmers' movement in the midwestern United States with their joint emphasis on the essential goodness of the common man and their belief in a dualistic theory of social struggle, a conspiracy theory of history, and the doctrine of the primacy of money. There was undoubtedly a strain of anti-Semitism within populism, and this emerged in the Social Credit movement...[p]artly under the influence of populist assumptions, and partly because of the ideas of Major Douglas anti-Semitism emerged among some Alberta Social Crediters.⁸⁸

Building on traditional stereotypes, then, Populist and Social Credit anti-Semitism provided a "cast of clearly identifiable villains."⁸⁹ As Alan Brinkley notes, with reference to Huey Long and Charles Coughlin, but equally applicable to the Populists and Social Crediters, "[t]here was nothing surprising about whom and what they chose. If centralized wealth and power were the problems, then it was those in possession of that wealth and power who were to blame."⁹⁰ The havoc wreaked by Depression had created within Albertans a great sense of social insecurity and dislocation--"a feeling," Palmer argues, "which for some could be eased by finding a simple explanation for complex events both near at hand and in the larger world, an explanation which included a ready scapegoat."⁹¹ In this way, anti-Semitism became directly tied to the economic concerns of the 1930s and the perceptions of economic and political powerlessness in the face of these hardships.

Therefore, it is apparent that Social Credit ideology, as a derivative of American Populism, provided a climate in which anti-Semitism could thrive. It has been shown how economic and political grievances translated into a conspiracy theory which linked Jews with power holding; and it was Social Crediters' lack of power, both economic and political, which was at the centre of their revolt. What is not as apparent is the extent to which anti-Semitism pervaded Social Credit ideology. If anti-Semitism was only a tiny strand in the larger ideological web of Social Credit, then accusations such as those waged

against Hofstadter's interpretation of American Populism would be valid. As Hofstadter himself states:

It would be easy to misstate the character of Populist anti-Semitism or to exaggerate its intensity. For Populist anti-Semitism was entirely verbal. It was a mode of expression, a rhetorical style, not a tactic or a program. It did not lead to exclusion laws, much less to riots or pogroms. There were, after all, relatively few Jews in the United States in the late 1880's and early 1890's, most of them remote from the areas of Populist strength.⁹²

The same can be said of Social Credit anti-Semitism. Howard Palmer writes: "clearly the anti-Semitism in rural Alberta was ideological rather than personal. Since only a handful of the 4,000 Jews in Alberta at this time lived in rural areas, the Jewish presence there was primarily figurative. For most people the Jew was a character from the Bible and from folklore, not a real person."⁹³

The low numbers of Jews in Alberta counterpoised to the presence of anti-Semitism in Social Credit ideology is an extremely important phenomenon. From 1911 to 1941, the number of Jews hovered around one-half per cent of the Albertan population.⁹⁴ In 1901 there were 17 Jews in the territory that was to become Alberta; by 1931 there were 3,722 Jews, or 0.51 per cent of the population of Alberta.⁹⁵ Occupationally, Alberta's Jews were primarily urban small-businessmen. As Howard Palmer notes:

Prevented from being farmers, most of the Jews in Eastern Europe had been craftsmen, teachers, or peddlers; consequently, very few had any farming experience. While a few attempts were made, with the help of Jewish philanthropic organizations, to establish Jewish farming settlements in the province, they were unsuccessful. But the Jews did make a highly successful economic adjustment to urban life, predominantly in small business. In Calgary and Edmonton, where roughly two-thirds of the 3,200 Jews in the province lived in 1921, they developed a wide variety of religious, cultural, and educational institutions.⁹⁶

Morton Weinfeld similarly notes the lack of farming experience held by most European Jews, and their subsequent difficulties with agrarian life. "Under such circumstances," writes Weinfeld,

it is not surprising that some Jewish homesteaders left the land to follow the familiar pursuit of peddling, though many Gentiles and even some of their fellow-Jews considered such an occupation to be base. (Indeed in April 1895 the "Jew pedlars" of Calgary were the subject of an abusive debate in the House of Commons.) In the pioneer decades of the 1880s and 1890s, the itinerant peddler probably did little better than the homesteader waiting for his crop or the trapper counting on his catch, but at least the hope for improvement was there. And soon the peddler who achieved a degree of success moved up to become a storekeeper. In this way Jews became an important part of the rural population; by the 1920s, they were living in over 200 rural communities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.⁹⁷

Alberta's Jews were predominantly small rural businessmen or urban-dwellers. As Howard Palmer notes, urban Jews in Alberta were mostly small entrepreneurs who did not belong to elite social groupings, and rural Jews were mostly small-town merchants who lived in predominantly German, Ukrainian and Scandinavian towns in northern and central Alberta.⁹⁸

The early Albertan Jewish experience is remarkable for its relative absence of overt anti-Semitism. Palmer writes: "[t]hose Jews who settled in Alberta encountered relatively little overt prejudice, despite being non-Christians in a society that defined itself as Christian; in the large influx of thousands of settlers of many different nationalities, they were simply ignored."⁹⁹ Weinfeld has a more positive description of the Western Canadian Jewish experience. Describing a typical Jewish country storekeeper, Weinfeld writes:

He often opened a store before the railway actually reached the community and freighted his supplies by wagon team from the railhead. His store was usually the community meeting place in the early days of settlement. He sold groceries, shoes, clothing, yard goods, fur coats, household remedies, harness and hardware. He bought butter and eggs, hides and raw furs from farmers, and knew the name of each article in several languages. He was not only the merchant, but also letter writer, translator, advisor and friend to his customers.¹⁰⁰

The record of Jews' experience in Alberta shows that they were not targets of overt prejudice. As Howard Palmer states, "[w]hile anti-semitism existed in the province,

it was relatively weak, lacking in ideology, organization and public expression."¹⁰¹ Even with the establishment of Ku Klux Klan organizations in Alberta in the late 1920s, Albertan Jews were not singled out as targets of vigilante activity. As Palmer argues, Klan members were concerned less with white supremacy and anti-Semitism than they were about "patriotism, moralism, and appeals to law and order."¹⁰² He states:

These precepts [of the Ku Klux Klan] provided security against the rapid social change that characterized the post-[World War I] period. In the climate of social and moral uncertainty being created by urbanization and secularization throughout North America, many Albertans felt that traditional assumptions were under attack. Modernism was making its impact on traditional Protestantism. The apparent decline in public morality as evidenced, for example, in the repeal of prohibition in 1923 heightened traditionalist anxiety.¹⁰³

Palmer further argues that Klan membership can be explained not only by social and political conditions in Alberta, but by the organization's appeal to social companionship and traditional fraternity:

Fraternal orders had been a part of Alberta society from the beginnings of settlement and were a respectable social outlet for businessmen and farmers alike. The Klan, with its special costumes, insignia, secret ritual, and terminology, had all the attractive mystique of the "Lodge." The Klan provided a little excitement in small, quiet towns where boredom continually threatened.¹⁰⁴

Anti-Semitism in Social Credit ideology thus cannot be explained by a concomitant sentiment among everyday Albertans. In fact, Palmer argues that it was the virtual absence of "real" Jews which contributed to anti-Semitism within Social Credit ideology.¹⁰⁵ John Higham concurs with this interpretation:

...ideological anti-Semitism seems to have made its primary appeal to native Americans in areas of low Jewish density, where the supposed enemy was a remote and shadowy figure rather than a daily reality. This may be one reason why the agitation has never really amounted to much...In fact, the rural dwellers' suspicions of Jewish power seldom attached to the few Jews who actually belonged to the local community...Studies of small towns characteristically reveal complete acceptance of local Jews alongside negative stereotypes of "The Jew."¹⁰⁶

The explanation for this, Higham writes, is the disparity between "projective fantasy" and "social reality." "If a nation [or region] can have its enemies, it does so in terms of its own scheme of values..."¹⁰⁷ In terms relating to Social Crediters, the enemy was unseen; he was in the East; an urbanite, financier, holder of political and economic power. "The Jew" was not a known entity; rather, he was a dehumanized enemy.

The nature of Social Credit anti-Semitism, then, must be explained in terms of ideology, disconnected to any first-hand experience with Albertan Jews. This is not to say that anti-Semitism based on direct contacts with Jews did not exist; rather, the basis for anti-Semitism in Social Credit ideology was the result of economic and political doctrines which were antipathetic to Jews and Judaism. As indicated previously, the extent of economic and political isolation and alienation is integral to explaining the nature of Social Credit ideology and its consequent anti-Semitism.

Yet if anti-Semitism was simply ideological, rhetorical, lacking in overt manifestations, what benefit can be reaped by its examination? For, as Higham writes, "what counts in the long run in human affairs is not the latent potential of an underlying predisposition, but rather the visible impact of actual events."¹⁰⁸ Kenneth Minogue further cautions against a single-minded dissection of Populist thought:

...if we are not historically aware, the moral and political assertions of populists will allow us to draw any conclusions we like--for the assertions of men in a movement are commonly no more than convenient justifications snatched out of the air. They cannot be generalized at all. To avoid this mistake, we must distinguish carefully between the *rhetoric* used by members of a movement--which may be randomly plagiarized from anywhere according to the needs of the moment, and the *ideology* which expresses the deeper currents of the movement.¹⁰⁹

To discern the ideology of any movement is a complicated matter. American Populists and Alberta Social Crediters presented a diffuse ideology, and anti-Semitism was only one facet of their movements' ideology. However, what is important is the broader set of symbols, images and values they invoked¹¹⁰--intangible, not easily quantifiable

phenomena--which were at the heart of their appeal. Whether or not anti-Semitism in American Populism or Alberta Social Credit reached violent proportions should not be the measuring stick of anti-Semitism's effect on the movements' ideology; it is this same mentalité which did not appreciate the nature of Nazi anti-Semitism until six million Jews had perished. As Hofstadter writes, "[i]t is one thing...to say that [Populist] prejudice did not go beyond a certain symbolic usage, quite another to say that a people's choice of symbols is of no significance."¹¹¹ It was the symbols, images, and values of Social Credit ideology which provided its mass appeal, and it was these same images which provided a panacea for Albertans seeking explanations for their economic and political dislocation. By invoking values important to Alberta, Social Credit ideology not only promised relief from Albertans' existing plight, but provided an ideological enemy toward which Albertans could vent their grievances.

To say that Social Credit economic and political ideology was conducive to anti-Semitism, however, does not answer the question of how pervasive anti-Semitism was within the Movement itself. This is a difficult question, for just as rhetoric is not easily measurable, neither are attitudes or prejudice. Yet it is necessary to first show the process by which anti-Semitism became a viable concept within Social Credit ideology. By examining Social Credit's religious ideology, it will become apparent how Social Credit's Christian emphasis and its reliance on historical and theological antipathies to Judaism, also contributed to an ideology which embodied anti-Semitism.

Extensive theological and historical debates occur over the polarity of Judaism and Christianity, and whether Christianity is itself inherently anti-Judaic. The latter section of this chapter will not become mired in a complicated analysis of the issue of Christian anti-Semitism. It will, however, briefly outline the contours of this subject and place Social Credit ideology within the context of Christianity and anti-Semitism. By examining the religious component of Social Credit ideology, it will become clear how its religious facet created a context for anti-Semitism.

The two persons most responsible for fashioning this religious ideology were Major Douglas and William Aberhart. Both men saw Social Credit and Christianity as virtually synonymous. In equating Social Credit with Christianity, Douglas and Aberhart also posited Judaism in direct opposition to both phenomena. Consequently, Social Credit ideology viewed Jews not only as financiers and usurpers of economic and political power, but Judaism as the antipathy to Christianity, and hence, Social Credit.

In order to understand how Social Credit ideology linked Jews with, in effect, the anti-Christ, a brief overview of the issue of Christian anti-Semitism is necessary. Horace Kallen, writing on the subject, states:

Anti-Semitism is a chronic aspect of Christian history. It becomes acute during social crises and subsides in prosperity. The course it runs beings usually at some point of social disturbance where the cause is hidden and the distressful emotion is strong. The Jews are then declared to be the hidden cause, and the emotion is enchanneled by and projected upon this symbol.¹¹²

The reason for Christianity's "chronic" anti-Semitism, Kallen explains, can be understood in the thesis of the "Drama or Epic of Salvation." He argues that Christian teaching assigns to the Jews the role of Christ-killers, or "Chosen People" ran amuck. Briefly, Christianity tells of the first perfect and sinless creations, Adam and Eve, who were intended to dwell forever in the bucolic bliss of Eden. But because of the first sin and subsequent fall from Eden, it was preordained that a certain group of people should be chosen under covenant, for special communion with God, and that among this group's descendants God would send his only begotten son to be born, live humbly, die ignominiously upon the cross, and act as vicarious atonement for Adam's original sin. The third day after being buried, God's son would rise again and take his place in heaven at the right hand of God. Those who believed and accepted this atonement would be saved from the consequences of Adam's original sin and consequently, eternal death. All those who did not believe and refused the atonement would be damned. Through this dichotomy, the

world became divided into a congregation of the saved and a congregation of the damned.¹¹³

According to this interpretation, the group set out for special communion with God were the Jews. They were the original Chosen People, and their history was marked by manifestation of divine favour. Christ, as one of them, was the vehicle through which God's justice was tempered by his equally powerful mercy. However, (and this is the crux of the matter), the Jews, instead of believing in the concept of Christ as Saviour, repudiated it. Instead of accepting the atonement, they rejected it and became the instruments of Christ's death. Thereafter, God's justice manifested itself anew. The old covenant (or, in effect, the Old Testament of the Christian Bible) was superseded by a new covenant, the New Testament. Divine favour was withdrawn from the Jews: the Chosen People became the Rejected People, and from the time of the crucifixion until the second Coming of Christ, Jews were doomed to live outside the fellowship of the saved, and to be branded as outcasts and outlaws.¹¹⁴ Accordingly, argues Kallen, "in the Christian system...the Jews are assigned a central and dramatic status. They are the villains of the Drama of Salvation."¹¹⁵

The consequences of this Christian teaching, argues Kallen, is to create automatic anti-Semitism within the tenets of Christianity. The response of Christians to Jews, then, is automatically a negative one. Kallen states:

The word "Jew" was full of evil meaning. This meaning derived from no concrete experience with Jews. It was simply an emotional reaction to their name in the tale--a reaction that might vary from discomfort, repulsion, or malaise to flaming hatred...The word "Jew" became a stimulus which touched off this emotion. It was aroused by every object and person to which the word was applied. It was a word to curse with...The pattern of the generic Christian response to the word "Jew" is in its essentials the same that it ever was. Anti-Semitism is an organic part of it.¹¹⁶

Yet it is not simply religious dogma which provides an explanation for Christian anti-Semitism. As Ruth Benedict argues, the history of Jewish persecution is firmly rooted

in the history of Christianity as well. Benedict makes a distinction between religious and racial anti-Semitism, and she argues that anti-Semitism evolved from discrimination against Jews based on religion to discrimination against Jews based on race. During the Middle Ages, argues Benedict, persecution of the Jews, like all medieval persecutions, were religious rather than racial. Intermarriage between Jews and Gentiles was condemned not as a racist measure, but in the same manner as marriages between Catholics and heretics were condemned. The pogroms of the Jews at the time of the Crusades, Benedict states, were conducted by "stay-at-home mobs" imitating the Crusaders in avenging the death of Christ; the mobs killed Jews while the crusaders fought the Arabs and Turks. The link between Jews and Turks was not racial; in the time of the crusades the two were equated because the Jews purportedly had killed Christ and the Turks possessed his tomb. Importantly, persecution of Jews was not directed toward eliminating a race, for apostate Jews purchased safety. Similarly, those Popes and rulers favourable to the Jews promulgated laws directing that "they should not be baptized by force, constrained to observe Christian festivals nor to wear badges."¹¹⁷

Norman Cohn similarly argues that religious anti-Semitism existed,

[f]rom the time of the first crusade onwards [when] Jews were presented as children of the Devil, agents employed by Satan for the express purpose of combating Christianity and harming Christians. It was in the twelfth century that [Jews] were first accused of murdering Christian children, of torturing the consecrated wafer, and of poisoning the wells.¹¹⁸

These attitudes, states Cohn, have their origins in "the second to the fourth centuries after Christ, when the Church and the Synagogue were competing for converts in the Hellenistic world, and when moreover each was still struggling to win adherents from the other."¹¹⁹

During the nineteenth century, however, religious anti-Semitism transformed into racial anti-Semitism, when racist persecutions replaced religious persecutions in Europe.¹²⁰ David Hughes argues that during and after the Crusades, when the Jewish

people suffered persecution on religiously-defined grounds, the prevailing classification of Jews was as a distinct religious group. It was not until the nineteenth-century when the racist ideology of anti-Semitism took root in Europe, that the Jewish people were classified as a distinct and inferior race.¹²¹ It was then, states Hughes, that Germans classified themselves as the elite of the supreme Aryan or Nordic race, and singled out the Jews as an "inferior," "vile," and "depraved" "Semitic race." Their very presence in Germany was considered to present a threat of contamination and degeneration to German civilization. Accordingly, this "racial" anti-Semitism could be used to justify continued persecution of the Jews in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹²²

Changing socio-economic structures in Europe in the nineteenth century also account for the transformation from religious to racial anti-Semitism. In the nineteenth century, when aristocratic and clerical resentment toward the bourgeoisie in Europe was mounting, Jews became objects of hatred not only because they were not Christians, but because they seemed to be preponderantly bourgeoisie. As a result of their history of city ghetto segregation, restrictions from many kinds of work, and restrictions against land-holding, many Jews did enter the bourgeoisie. Accordingly, new persecution was added onto the old tradition of religious animosity against the Jews. What was at the base of this "racial" discrimination was a resentment toward a group which appeared to embody all the evils of modernity, including increased economic power.

As Norman Cohn explains, this "new political form of antisemitism"¹²³ was a consequence of modern anxieties and resentments superseding traditional, religious fears. This new racist anti-Semitism manifested itself in the form of the myth of the Jewish world conspiracy. Cohn writes: "[t]he myth of the Jewish world-conspiracy is in fact a particularly degraded and distorted expression of the new social tensions which arose when, with the French Revolution and the coming of the nineteenth century, Europe entered on a period of exceptionally rapid and deep-going change."¹²⁴ This new form of anti-Semitism "flourished among those who were most thoroughly disconcerted by the

civilization of the nineteenth century. It was above all the landed aristocracy and the clergy who saw in 'the Jews' a symbol of all that most threatened their world..."¹²⁵

Thus, a transformation occurred during the nineteenth century from religious to racial anti-Semitism. From stories of Jewish demonology to myths about an international Jewish financial and economic conspiracy, Jews remained the villains. Accordingly, "by about 1870 it was possible to see in 'the Jews' the supreme incarnation of modernity, even while continuing to see them as uncanny, semi-demonic beings."¹²⁶

This discussion in no way fully explains the history of Jewish persecution or racial or religious anti-Semitism. However, for the purposes of this paper, the dichotomy between religious and racial anti-Semitism is useful. With respect to Social Credit ideology, the nature of its anti-Semitism can be divided into two kinds: racial--as defined by perceived economic and political power of Jews, and religious--as defined by antipathy between Christianity and Judaism. In assessing Social Credit anti-Semitism, it has already been shown how a sense of economic and political powerlessness provided a context for anti-Semitism. It will now be shown how the religious component of Social Credit ideology also contributed to anti-Semitism.

"One of the finest and greatest exponents of Social Credit was Jesus Christ Himself. His one mission in life was to feed and clothe His people..." stated an editorial in the Social Credit Party's early paper.¹²⁷ The connection between Christianity and Social Credit was an important one in the Movement's ideology. As John Irving, one of the leading historians of Alberta Social Credit argues, everyone involved in Social Credit was assumed to be a Christian.¹²⁸ Stated one of Irving's interviewees: "Mr. Aberhart showed me that Social Credit and the Christian religion are the same thing."¹²⁹ Another social Crediter stated simply: "Social Credit is right, it's Christian."¹³⁰

The religious dimension of Social Credit ideology was propounded first by Douglas and then elaborated upon by Aberhart. Douglas insisted that the theory of a Jewish world plot was integral to Social Credit.¹³¹ The plot was crafted by the leaders of

world Jewry, and, according to Douglas, it involved a relentless Judaic conspiracy against Christian civilization. "Both Judaism and Social Credit are rooted in philosophies," wrote Douglas. "Social Credit is Christian...Judaism is implacably anti-Christian...both philosophies have a policy and these policies cannot live together."¹³² Judaism was concerned with a world plot to overthrow Christianity, in Douglas's view, and the mission of Social Credit was to save Christianity from Judaic world power.

Aberhart's contribution to Social Credit religious ideology was more ambiguous. Whereas Douglas's stance was unquestionably anti-Semitic (in 1933 he referred to the Old Testament as "a repulsive tribal rag-bag"),¹³³ Aberhart's view of Judaism as it pertained to Social Credit and Christianity was much less clear. This has led one historian to comment that "Aberhart's beliefs about Jews were so ambivalent and complex that they are difficult to characterize; one might even argue that his attitudes were not simply ambivalent but were on this question as in many other cases, simply a bundle of contradictions."¹³⁴

With respect to the Social Credit movement, Aberhart stated that Social Credit not only opposed anti-Semitism, but condemned it in the strongest possible terms.¹³⁵ David Elliott argues that "[w]hile he was Premier, Aberhart was perceived by the Jewish community in Alberta and western Canada as a friend. The Jewish press frequently solicited his greetings to the Jewish people at the time of their celebrations and Aberhart freely gave them."¹³⁶

In addition, when Aberhart became aware of the real plight of Jews in Europe during World War II, he perceived it as his duty to defend them.¹³⁷ In August 1939, the western division of the Canadian Jewish Congress met in Calgary, and it invited Aberhart to speak. He expressed sympathy with respect to the Jewish plight in Europe, stating, "[t]here will never be more than a temporary solution to the problems facing the Jewish race until you find a place to seek your destiny in freedom."¹³⁸

However, Aberhart expressed contradictory sentiments. In a lecture given at the Calgary Prophetic Bible Conference in 1922, he took a more negative stance on the issue of Zionism:

Thus I say, that although the Zionist Movement is on the solid foundation of God's promises, they have broken away from the faith of Abraham when they attempt to secure the land by diplomatic means. For this reason they will ultimately fail. the [sic] JEWISH RACE must yet acknowledge that the CHRIST who was crucified to the CROSS of Calvary was the SON of GOD, their MESSIAH. Until they will acknowledge that they must expect the curses of the world and can not expect the Blessings of GOD.¹³⁹

Aberhart thus believed that Christianity had superseded Judaism and that the evangelization of Jews was therefore necessary.¹⁴⁰ Aberhart stated: "The Christian should be interested in the Jewish race. Our Saviour was a Jew. The Jews have been the chosen people...let us pray that the Word of God may bring conviction to many Jewish hearts."¹⁴¹

In other sermons, Aberhart's statements were anti-Semitic in tone. He spoke on the Jewish nation, and how that nation had been judged because of its sinfulness--the sins of selfishness, hypocrisy, usury, violence, injustice, and discontent with wages.¹⁴²

Aberhart viewed Christianity in terms of a war against the anti-Christ,¹⁴³ and he suggested that most Jews would be duped by the Antichrist, believing him to be their Messiah.¹⁴⁴

Aberhart provided little reasoning for his views on Jews, but it must be noted that Aberhart's eschatology was very complicated, and the degree to which his religious convictions moulded Social Credit ideology cannot be clearly measured. Yet it is important to note Aberhart's great influence as both a political and religious leader. If not all Social Credit followers accepted his religious doctrines, they were certainly committed to Social Credit's political and economic doctrines. All three sets of doctrines were dominated by the idea of war against world plotters, and in each doctrine these world plotters were Jews. As David Elliott states:

...there was a strange connection between Aberhart's theology and his political ideology; both were dominated by conspiracy theories. The devil and the fascist machinations of the Antichrist played inordinately important roles in Aberhart's theology. It was not too difficult for him to move from these fantasies to fantasies about the "international Jewish conspiracy" as taught by Major Douglas.¹⁴⁵

Social Credit religious ideology closely paralleled its economic and political doctrines: the idea of a conspiracy of Jewish world plotters intending to enslave the Christian world. Whether Aberhart was indeed anti-Semitic is not the most important issue. What matters is that Social Credit ideology encompassed three doctrinal threads--religious, political, and economic--and each provided a context in which anti-Semitism became a viable concept. The next question to address is how this ideology was employed to create a mass socio-political movement, and what role anti-Semitism played in creating support for this movement. Upon examination of Aberhart's "movement culture," it will become clear that Social Credit ideology tapped into Albertans' economic, political, and religious values in order to explain existing anxieties, frustrations, and deprivations. By combining religious doctrines with political and economic grievances, Social Credit ideology helped shape a political culture conducive to anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism became a dominant theme in the Movement's ideology, but it was only a manifestation of the deeper economic, political and religious values which shaped Albertans' response to their circumstances.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

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- ¹²⁴*Ibid.*, 23.
- ¹²⁵*Ibid.*, 24.
- ¹²⁶*Ibid.*
- ¹²⁷Elliott, Bible Bill, 167.
- ¹²⁸Irving, The Social Credit Movement in Alberta, 224.
- ¹²⁹*Ibid.*, 261.
- ¹³⁰*Ibid.*, 199.
- ¹³¹Macpherson, 184.
- ¹³²*Ibid.*
- ¹³³Elliott, Bible Bill, 116.
- ¹³⁴Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, 155.
- ¹³⁵Elliott, Bible Bill, 301.
- ¹³⁶Elliott, "Anti-Semitism and the Social Credit Movement," 83.

¹³⁷Elliott, Bible Bill, 301-302.

¹³⁸Howard Palmer, "Politics, Religion and Antisemitism in Alberta, 1880-1950," in Davies, 175.

¹³⁹Elliott, "Anti-Semitism and the Social Credit Movement," 83.

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*

¹⁴²Elliott, Bible Bill, 117.

¹⁴³*Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁴⁴Elliott, "Anti-Semitism and the Social Credit Movement," 82.

¹⁴⁵Elliott, Bible Bill, 319.

CHAPTER TWO

ABERHART'S MOVEMENT CULTURE: ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS VALUES OF SOCIAL CREDIT

It was shown in Chapter One how Social Credit's economic, political, and religious doctrines created an ideological forum for anti-Semitism. Yet anti-Semitism in the Social Credit Movement was not a result of explicit hatred toward Jews; rather, it was a result of the nature of Social Credit's ideology, whose economic, political, and religious doctrines embodied anti-Semitism. Accordingly, what gave Social Credit doctrines their viability was not the existence of overt anti-Semitism among Social Creditors, but the fact that these doctrines gave expression to Albertans' economic, political, and religious values. The purpose of this chapter is to examine these values; that is, to show how Social Credit became a "people's movement" which, in the face of threats to these values, identified its opposition in terms of a ideologically acceptable enemy. Examining Aberhart's "movement culture" will also raise the issues of demagoguery, fascism, and the juxtaposition of authoritarianism within a populist movement. These issues are integral to understanding the relationship between the Social Credit Movement and other mass socio-political movements.

The first segment of this chapter, then, will examine the economic, political, and religious values embraced by Albertans, and how these values were reflected and shaped by Social Credit's economic, political, and religious ideology.

Social Credit, as an economic doctrine, was promoted initially by C. H. Douglas and involved the famous $A + B$ theorem which purported to show how increased purchasing power could be achieved by distributing money in the form of dividends, or "social credit." As one writer of Social Credit has stated:

Social Credit was based on the idea that sufficient purchasing power for all would come from a "monetization" of the "real credit" accumulated over generations of economic and technological development. Social Credit planners would tap the unexploited reserve of credit and purchasing power previously suppressed by a flawed system of accountancy, a conspiracy of financiers and their willing political puppets. This new credit was simply there for the taking, given the right combination of political will and scientific policy.¹

The idea of free credit was not a new promise: North American agrarian organizations had advocated it since the nineteenth century.² But counterpoised to the United Farmers of Alberta government, which had been in power since 1921 and had proved incapable of ameliorating the consequences of Depression, the monetary reforms of Social Credit offered hope to Alberta's desperate farmers and businessmen, who were attracted to Social Credit's policy of increasing purchasing power by distributing money.³ Specifically, Aberhart's promise of a \$25.00 dividend per adult per month was an enticing carrot. As John Barr, writing on the Social Credit era, comments:

The social effects of a political offer of this kind in a time of acute unemployment and low wages can be vividly imagined. At a time when eggs sold for a nickel a dozen and good roasts for seventy-five cents, good dwellings rented for nine dollars a month, and the standard, made-to-measure suit in the catalogue of Tip-Top Tailors sold for \$24.50 (vest included), the prospect of a second income of at least twenty-five dollars a month was irresistible.⁴

It has been speculated that much of Social Credit's 1935 electoral success was due to Albertans' hope of receiving their monthly \$25.00. An oft-quoted statement, which seems near to entering Social Credit popular mythology, is that during the 1935 provincial election, in areas with substantive new immigrant populations, a frequent question was asked: "Vich vun twenty-five dollar man?"⁵

Unfortunately for many hopeful Albertans, the \$25.00 dividend never occurred. Much has been written about Douglas's economic theories and Aberhart's failure to implement them properly; even more has been written about the illogic of Douglas's theories and the impossibility of their implementation. Perhaps Aberhart's most enlightening statement regarding Social Credit is that spoken to John Hargrave, leader of

the British Social Credit Party, in December 1937: "If I issue a dividend, how do I get the money back?"⁶

The importance of Social Credit as an economic doctrine, however, is less important for its failure than for the values and images which it invoked. As Seymour Martin Lipset notes,

Social Credit...represented an attack by western farmers on the economic power of eastern big business and sought to preserve their economic and social status by preventing the foreclosures of farm mortgages. The movement...offered the farmers a scapegoat, in the form of external economic constraints, on which to blame their difficulties, and at the same time presented a solution that was "logical" in terms of the historical experiences of the organized farmers' movement...⁷

What was at stake was a desire for economic control over their own situation, and increasing the money supply to help them ease their debts was a logical solution for many Albertans. Social Credit economic doctrine viewed the financial system's centralized character as a defining aspect of its evil.⁸ Banks exploited consumers because they were not subject to community control. Local control, however, would allow sufficient credit for citizens to purchase goods equal to the value of those they could produce. In the absence of community control over money and credit, underconsumption and underproduction were inevitable, since bankers had an interest in restricting output and money, or credit, to maximize profits.⁹

Accordingly, decentralization of control over credit was necessary to achieve economic emancipation. This sense of desire for community control was revealed in Aberhart's attack on the centralized financial power, after the Supreme Court of Canada rejected Social Credit legislation regarding credit regulation in 1937: "No power known to man can force on 750,000 people operating within their own clearly defined borders, laws which they have made up their minds they will not endure--and that is the position I have to deal with here."¹⁰ As a "sovereign province" with "complete control over its own

affairs within its own boundaries," Alberta was a political entity which desired to control its own credit system.¹¹

Accordingly, the "enemy" was the centralized financial system, and by combining religious fervour with economic radicalism,¹² Aberhart clearly identified the financial system as a personification of evil.¹³ In speaking of those who managed the nation's finances, Aberhart stated: "They haven't got a soul at all! The Lord Jesus Christ was crucified by the money changers..."¹⁴ On a separate occasion, he declared: "Unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury...The interest racket must cease!"¹⁵

The purpose of Social Credit was to liberate the people "from the yoke of the present financial system" as well as to foster "the universally recognized principles of Christianity in human relationships."¹⁶ Consequently, Aberhart's admixture of economics and religion was in complete harmony with the tenets of Social Credit. Because the financiers were seen to be in league with the old-line political parties, Aberhart viewed them as linked and often as one and the same enemy of God:

The principles of the old-line politicians and their henchmen are like those of the man who betrayed the Christ. Gold was his god and millions have suffered because of it. The moneychangers upheld his right and crucified the Christ and they have been crucifying everyone since who follows in the steps of the Saviour..."¹⁷

In assessing Social Credit economic doctrine and its accompanying rhetoric, again it is helpful to compare it with nineteenth-century American Populism. Bruce Palmer, writing on Southern Populism, argues that in equating America's financial system with that concocted by the Devil, Southern Populists' use of the metaphor lost its "evaluative function;" the existing financial system was not just bad but the engine of evil itself.¹⁸ This melding of morality and economics had definite consequences, argues Palmer:

The fusion of the moral and religious metaphor with what it was intended to describe or explain brought a logic of its own to Populist thought, for it changed the terms of discussion. When Populism, for instance, became a religion, reform

success became salvation and politics sometimes assumed a transcendent role in human society.¹⁹

Social Credit's creation of a Manichean model to explain Albertans' economic powerlessness also resulted in a movement which transcended conventional economic and political discourse. A sense of cohesion and community solidarity emerged from Albertans' common struggle against eastern financial interests.²⁰ Combined with religious imagery, the enemy became a personification of Satan. What has been said of American Populists can be equally applied to Social Crediters: both found themselves engaged in a religious and moral, as much as a political and social, battle. A victory for the money power was a victory for Satan.²¹

The implications of Social Credit economic doctrine on anti-Semitism within the Movement are both obvious and subtle. The "logic" of equating economic interpretations with a Jewish conspiracy has already been explained, but it must be emphasized that it was not a preoccupation with hatred of Jews which created within the movement a climate conducive to anti-Semitism. Rather, it was a preponderant sense of economic powerlessness and a desire for community control over its own economic situation which governed Social Credit economic doctrine. Social Credit named the enemy in economic as well as religious terms, and in doing so, it invoked historical links with anti-Judaic sentiment. Yet at the core of Social Credit's grievance was a sense of threat, from powers outside its borders, powers which seemed to possess inordinate economic and political power. An examination of the actual politicization of Social Credit will reveal similar political values and anxieties.

Scholars of Social Credit in Alberta have explained in great detail Aberhart's organizational campaign to transform Social Credit into a political movement. A teacher, preacher, and excellent organizer, Aberhart organized several hundred "study groups" between 1933 and 1935 to educate Albertans on the doctrines of Social Credit. As David Elliott notes, sixty-three study groups were organized in Calgary alone. In addition, states

Elliott, "[o]ne of the largest was organized at the CPR's Ogden shops; this demonstrated the strong urban working class support that Aberhart attracted. Country districts were just as active, and eventually 1600 study groups dotted the province."²²

Modelling Social Credit study groups on existing U.F.A. locals, Aberhart also conducted Social Credit lectures by invitation at U.F.A. locals throughout Southern Alberta.²³ In 1933, U.F.A. Premier Brownlee agreed to an inquiry on Social Credit because of such widespread interest in it as an economic solution. He invited both Major Douglas and William Aberhart to speak in the legislature, more in the hope that both Aberhart and Douglas would be discredited and pressure would be taken off the government.²⁴ But the result was an increase in support for Social Credit, and Aberhart used his exceptional organizational talents to form study groups, "monster" rallies, and Sunday picnics that, in the words of one scholar, "made even early U.F.A. equivalents pale by comparison."²⁵ In this manner, notes C. B. Macpherson, "The U.F.A. locals were extensively infiltrated, for social credit was not yet a political rival but a doctrine and a method available to any political organization which would take it up."²⁶

It was through the existing U.F.A. organization, then, that Social Credit became a powerful politico-social movement. Building on a political infrastructure already in place, Social Credit easily fit in with the U.F.A. style of popular-democratic government. As Walter Young states:

The United Farmers had conditioned the people of Alberta to a political system that was subject to direct influence from the people more than other governments in Canada. This influence was brought to bear through the UFA annual conventions. As a result, Albertans had come to consider that the government was their government--that it should work for them. Direct involvement in politics as a matter-of-fact, day-to-day affair was accepted. When times were bad the people were at once more demanding and more critical of their government. Albertans found much in Social Credit policy that struck a sympathetic chord in the light of their UFA experience.²⁷

When the U.F.A. government no longer appeared to be looking after the farmers' interests and appeared unable to do anything about the Depression,²⁸ Albertans sought a new political deal to end to their destitution and poverty. Social Credit posed an inviting alternative, because it appeared to be a return to popular democracy, led by a man who was not a politician but a preacher.²⁹ As W. E. Mann comments, "They considered Aberhart a great religious teacher and leader, uncorrupted by politics or professional clericalism, who was morally unimpeachable, highly gifted in speaking and organizing, and whose interests were identified with those of the masses."³⁰

The consequence was a transferring of hope to a new movement, one which was more than just a political movement, but an economic and social movement. As one Social Crediter said, "We were not politicians. We were crusaders in a people's movement. The election campaign [of 1935] was a people's campaign. We were unbeatable."³¹ Noting the electoral consequences of this shift in support, Jean Burnet states: "The most spectacular result of the weakening of the U.F.A. was the withdrawal of support from it as a political party. Many farmers deserted in favour of Social Credit. As Aberhart, heading up the Social Credit crusade, moved into politics, he enlisted all the members of many rural communities in his audience."³²

Aberhart's educational campaign was transformed into a political movement through a process which Lawrence Goodwyn elsewhere has called a "movement culture." By forming educational study groups, recruiting a mass base of popular support for the economic doctrines of Social Credit, and politicizing the people through involvement in his organizational campaign, Aberhart created, in Goodwyn's terms, an "insurgent democratic movement."³³ Social Credit as a "movement culture," like the American Populist movement in Goodwyn's study, imparted a sense of self-worth to individuals and provided them with the instruments of self-education about their existing circumstances. Through education, the people became politicized and thus committed specific political acts of self-determination.³⁴ As David Elliott states:

William Aberhart fits into a long tradition of political unrest in Western Canada...Aberhart's movement was effective at least partly because he was able to lift people out of their emotional doldrums during the Great Depression by giving them hope that they could bring in a new social order by their collective effort for Social Credit.³⁵

Combining strong leadership with a mass base of support, Social Credit became a political movement in the guise of an economic-social-religious movement. Given the history of Albertans' response to traditional parties, it was very important that Social Credit was not perceived as a political party. By making Social Credit a "non-political" crusade³⁶ not only did the Movement evade political scrutiny or attack until it had achieved an 80 per cent permeation of Alberta,³⁷ but it offered Albertans a message of hope and political empowerment. As Elliott points out: "Besides worthwhile work and long-term goals Aberhart offered his followers the temporary comfort of companionship and the exhilaration of working for a cause that already brought them echoes of happier days past and a glow of hope for the future."³⁸

In examining how Social Credit tapped into existing political values, it is helpful to compare it with movements headed by Huey Long and Father Coughlin in America during the same period. Alan Brinkley's observations on Long and Coughlin can be equally applied to Aberhart and his movement:

By connecting their messages so clearly with the residual appeal of the populist tradition, Long and Coughlin were providing one of the essential qualities of any effective political ideology: familiarity. Mass audiences are not easily swayed by entirely new ideas; they respond best to themes of which they are already at least partially aware. Whether Americans of the 1930s fully realized it or not, they were gravitating to the Long and Coughlin movements not only because those movements seemed to explain present conditions, but because they evoked older political impulses as well, themes so deeply imbedded in the political culture that they remained capable, generation after generation, of producing a powerful response.³⁹

Aberhart's "movement culture" reinforced political values which Albertans had embraced for decades: that as a separate political entity, Alberta must denounce the

traditional party system as an autocratic mechanism through which the moneyed interests divided and ruled the people,⁴⁰ and that the people, not the plutocrats, must control the government.⁴¹ In the same manner as Long and Coughlin, Aberhart affirmed threatened values and institutions, and offered a vision of a properly-structured society in which those values and institutions could thrive.⁴² Further, by connecting financiers with holders of political power, Social Credit political doctrine provided an explanation of the obstacles to this vision: an identifiable villain or scapegoat on whom it was possible to blame existing problems.⁴³

Albertans thus were mobilized as a community to effect political change. As Young indicates, Aberhart relied upon hundreds of dedicated and willing workers to carry the message of his movement throughout the province.⁴⁴ Because U.F.A. was no longer effective, because Aberhart was not a politician but a preacher, and because Social Credit ideology tapped into existing economic and political values, Social Credit as socio-economic-political movement was extremely effective. As Professor Sharp comments:

Aberhart's denunciation of St. James Street, his unmeasured attacks on the older parties, and his constant emphasis upon the inadequate and unjust return to the West fell upon receptive ears. Alberta farmers had earlier learned these lessons on the Nonpartisan League and the U.F.A. Added to these old and familiar themes, moreover, was the new and irresistible promise of a monthly dividend of twenty-five dollars for every adult in the province. In the fever pitch of the Social Credit crusade the aging U.F.A. government was doomed.⁴⁵

In short, Social Credit became a political crusade "on behalf of the little people against the financial giants,"⁴⁶ giants who also held the reins of political power. A closer examination of the religious aspect of the Movement will reveal just how much this socio-economic-political "movement culture" embraced characteristics of a religious crusade, and how Social Credit's religious component reflected existing religious values.

Any examination of the religious component of Social Credit ideology must include a discussion of the importance of radio and Aberhart's manipulation of this

medium. As the leading historian of Social Credit has noted, one could conceivably study Aberhart's rule as a career in media manipulation.⁴⁷ Aberhart was able to take control of this medium, however, only because of the importance of radio in Albertans' lives. As W. E. Mann notes, by the end of the 1920s, popular interest in radio was high, and most homes by that time boasted a radio set. He points out the importance of radio to Albertan farmers and townspeople:

The wheat farmer, deprived of frequent social intercourse by his large acreage, and also the isolated frontier settler and cattle raiser, found in this new device an antidote to loneliness or scarcity of entertainment, particularly in the long winter months. The novelty of radio entertainment also made it popular in town and city...⁴⁸

Among radio personalities, radio evangelists were extremely popular, having seized the best allotments of air time and gained a wide and steady listening audience.⁴⁹ Moreover, because of their medium's immediacy and accessibility, radio evangelists helped ameliorate the isolated nature of rural settlement in Alberta, with its numerous "frontier" communities.⁵⁰ As Jean Burnet notes, these radio evangelists "could be heard in the home, and listening in cost less than driving to services. Further, while few rural districts had regular services, radio sermons could be heard every Sunday and even on week-days, and they were usually ably delivered..."⁵¹

The nature of the radio sermons were another reason for their appeal. They were simple, informal, presented in a homespun manner,⁵² and were similar in character to successful secular broadcasts such as soap opera drama, mystery stories, cowboy and jazz music.⁵³ Although his interpretation of Social Credit's fundamentalist base is subject to debate (and will be debated later in this chapter), Mann's observations on radio broadcasting are informative:

Fundamentalist broadcasting succeeded because it was suited to the medium and to Alberta's predominantly rural population. Radio required that programmes be simple and entertaining, and, to a large extent, focused upon one strong

personality; it favoured programmes giving pat answers and expressing stereotyped opinions. Sect programmes met all these requirements inasmuch as they were simple, naturally folksy, lively, and usually built around one personality. In fact, radio provided precisely the kind of rostrum that most appealed to fundamentalist leaders for it gave them vast scope for publicity and exhibitionism.⁵⁴

It should be noted that radio evangelists as a group, and not solely Christian fundamentalist radio evangelists, fit Mann's characterization. Although difficult to test, it is conceivable that it was the medium of the radio sermons, more than their eschatological bent, which was their selling point. By making religion exciting and informative, radio evangelists offered Albertans both entertainment and spiritual fodder.

The religious master of radio was, of course, William Aberhart. As founder of the Calgary Prophetic Bible Institute in 1923, Aberhart also established a Radio Sunday School in 1926. In 1929, the Institute listed 700 urban and 1085 rural supporters, and its Radio Sunday School included 1200 supporters.⁵⁵ As Mann notes: "At its peak in 1935, Aberhart's religious radio audience was computed at 300,000, the Bible Institute listed 1275 supporters, [Aberhart's] Calgary church had over 500 adult members, [and] the radio Sunday school with its printed lesson material reached 8,000 families..."⁵⁶

That Aberhart's radio evangelism exerted a tremendous influence in the province⁵⁷ can hardly be overemphasized. Leaders of the Bible Institute asserted that by 1935, Aberhart's broadcasts had become a provincial institution, as popular as radio and an intrinsic part of it.⁵⁸ As Mann states, "[t]his was no idle boast but a statement supported by observers of every creed and political persuasion."⁵⁹

Jean Burnet also notes the popular appeal Aberhart wielded through his radio evangelism: "...the most eminent and successful of the radio evangelists, William Aberhart of the Calgary Prophetic Bible Institute, was highly skilled as a speaker. The response to the radio services was extraordinary. Dried-out farmers went hungry so that they might send in contributions."⁶⁰

The reasons behind Aberhart's success as a radio evangelist have as much to do with the medium as they did with his message. Brinkley's comments on Charles Coughlin's radio evangelism are relevant to Aberhart's:

It was not Coughlin's message alone that accounted for his popularity. Other public figures were espousing the same sort of vague radicalism during this period without evoking a comparable response. What made Coughlin different was his medium. Commercial radio was less than six years old when Coughlin began broadcasting in 1926...Coughlin was exploiting a system of communication whose potential conventional politicians had not yet begun to appreciate. And he was exploiting it at a time when the radio was becoming central to the lives of American families. His success, therefore [sic], was in part simply a result of luck. He was a man in the right place at the right time.⁶¹

Brinkley, emphasizing the McLuhan thesis that the medium is the message, somewhat underestimates the skill required to manipulate that medium. Although it can be argued that Aberhart too was simply "in the right place at the right time," the fact that he was so successful in manipulating the radio medium accounted for much of his success. As Mann states:

The secret of Aberhart's widespread popularity as a radio orator lay not only in unquestioned rhetorical gifts, but in a special flair for making religious instruction simple and entertaining...This admixture of religion and entertainment enabled him to build up, during years of broadcasting that coincided with the nascent popularity of radio itself, an enormous listening audience composed of people of every religious and social leaning.⁶²

Nor, like Long or Coughlin, did Aberhart "make the relatively passive process of listening to the radio the dominant activity of [his] followers."⁶³ By combining his radio work with a provincial network of speakers and study groups, Aberhart "maximized ego-involvement and conversion by his movement's participants."⁶⁴ In Elliott's words, "Aberhart's broadcast[s] recalled old-fashioned barn-raising socials, the atmosphere of neighbours working together and entertaining each other."⁶⁵ Elliott also astutely comments on the political implications of Aberhart's Radio Sunday School: "The many

children whom Aberhart influenced from 1926 to 1935 would later be important in his political career. He was influencing a new generation of voters."⁶⁶

How Aberhart used his position as Alberta's leading radio evangelist to create a political movement has been extensively discussed by other scholars of Social Credit. By incorporating Social Credit doctrines into his radio sermons, Aberhart was able to combine support from his religious followers with support for Social Credit economic and political doctrines. What is of importance here, however, is that the politico-economic-religious values of Social Credit supporters melded in such a way that Social Credit became synonymous with Christianity. Hence, anyone who did not adhere to or support Social Credit doctrines was viewed as being anti-Christian.

U.F.A. and other political opposition groups did not take well to Aberhart's monopoly of the moral high ground. In one of its own radio broadcasts, a U.F.A. spokesman stated: "an attempt is being made to use God as a rubber stamp for the political ideas of one man...The inference has gone abroad that a person must be a Social Crediter to be a Christian, and furthermore, not just a Social Crediter, but an Aberhartite."⁶⁷ Referring to the American Populists, but equally applicable to Alberta Social Credit, Bruce Palmer writes: "Religion and politics became two sides of the same coin. If true Christianity involved preaching the politics of the Populists, then Populism meant the spreading of true Christianity."⁶⁸ Put another way, Social Credit's politico-religious crusade reflected that of the Populists: "...the Southern Populists perceived the mission of their party as analogous to the task of religious salvation. Many believed...that 'the People's Party is the political Savior of this country...'"⁶⁹

Social Credit, then, wholly encompassed Christianity, and Christianity involved taking on the Social Credit faith. Accordingly, it made it very difficult to refute Aberhart without appearing to be anti-Christian. Aberhart contributed to this dilemma by calling other politicians "Judases," and stating that they were like the men who betrayed Christ.⁷⁰ By attacking his political opponents "from the pulpit,"⁷¹ Aberhart refused to follow the

same political rules of etiquette as the old-line politicians. Through his "denial of a community of basic political values,"⁷² Aberhart was able to engage in personal attacks against the old-line parties, including the U.F.A., and continue to remain on the side of right; that is, on the side of Christ. Because of his long-established career as a preacher and radio evangelist, there existed public faith in Aberhart as a moral, religious man. He was a preacher, not a politician.⁷³ Accordingly, Aberhart could engage in personal attacks and inappropriate political behaviour because Social Credit was morally right, and opposition to Social Credit was morally wrong. Followers of Social Credit could also engage in polemical rhetoric against their opponents without contradicting their own moral stance. As Victor Ferkiss notes:

...If the existing parties are controlled by a gigantic conspiracy and the nation is at the mercy of an "international gold trust" then the trust's opponents cannot be expected to treat these conspirators in quite the fashion one would treat honest dissenters. The rhetoric...bespeaks an unwillingness to compromise, a crusading zeal, and an inability to conceive of a sincerely motivated opposition that ill befits any group participating in a parliamentary democracy.⁷⁴

Consequently, although Aberhart stated that Social Credit was applied Christianity, and that implementation of Social Credit would produce charity and brotherhood,⁷⁵ the results were quite contradictory. Because Social Credit became inextricably linked with Christianity, many followers perceived opposition to Social Credit as an affront to Christian tenets and values. What many opponents of Social Credit called "fanatical religious emotionalism"⁷⁶ or "hysterical enthusiasm"⁷⁷ was in fact a defense of threatened religious values. Social Credit followers became very defensive and antagonistic to their critics, with consequences which bordered on vigilantism and a "mob spirit."⁷⁸ For example, during the pre-election campaigning in 1935, U.F.A. Premier Brownlee spoke at a meeting in Waterglen that quickly deteriorated when he broached the subject of Social Credit. Brownlee stated:

So I began to tell them in all sincerity what I thought of Social Credit. A group of big fellows near the door then left the hall, slamming the door violently as they went out. Some of them then got into cars and started to blow horns. Others got logs and began pounding the walls and doors of the building from outside, while they hooted and yelled. Some of my supporters went outside and the rough stuff stopped. But the meeting inside was in a tumultuous uproar.⁷⁹

Another U.F.A. leader reported a similar experience:

...just as soon as it became apparent that I was going to discuss Aberhart's theories in a critical way, down went the people's heads. The men would scowl fiercely at me. They didn't want to hear Aberhart criticized. If the Apostle Paul had been loose in Alberta for six months, he couldn't have stopped Social Credit.⁸⁰

David Lewis, national secretary of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, faced a similar reaction when he spoke at a meeting in a village in Southern Alberta in 1938. Stated Lewis:

The meeting, held in a rather dingy hall with wooden benches and little light, attracted no more than twenty-five or thirty people, but we considered it a success in view of the size of the village. I thought I was being careful in my words about social credit so as not to offend anyone, but at one point I made a sharp reference to Aberhart and, to my astonishment, more than half of the audience rose as one and walked out. My mouth dropped as I stared at the retreating figures. When we left the hall, my companion, Bill [William] Irvine, said "Do you now see what we're up against?" I looked my sympathy, for there was nothing I could say.⁸¹

A Conservative party speaker, in a radio broadcast during the 1935 election campaign, made the following comments: "Aberhart used the pulpit to spread his incendiarism of hate, to set class against class, to foment the fires of revolution, to stir up fountains of bigotry and intolerance amongst a suffering people and to crucify them upon his political ambitions."⁸² The speaker later claimed that within a day of his broadcast he was anonymously threatened with shooting and beating, and with a telephone call telling him "gangs would gang up on you and make you crawl and plug you full of holes."⁸³

Jean Burnet, studying the rural community of Hanna in 1946, also noted the tense community division:

Informal social activities reflected the cleavage. U.F.A. and Social Credit partisanship was so strong that people of different allegiance, even if on adjacent farms in the sparsely settled countryside, stopped speaking to one another and "neighbouring." A farmer told of a man living near by who until 1935 had telephoned him several times a week and visited him frequently, but in eleven years after the rise of Social Credit telephoned only once, that time on urgent business. The split speeded the decline of the rural community so much that residents frequently use 1935 to mark the collapse of social organization...the replacement of the U.F.A. by Social Credit cannot be termed a successful adjustment.⁸⁴

Other examples of community division include incidents in which Social Credit supporters would sit on one side of the church while Social Credit opponents sat on the other side; if Social Credit opponents had a car breakdown, Social Crediters would not stop to help; Social Credit opponents' car tires would be slashed, and sand and sugar put in their gas tanks.⁸⁵

These seemingly irrational, or at least emotional, reactions have not been adequately addressed by scholars of Social Credit. For example, Howard Palmer argues that communities in the 1930s divided not along religious or ethnic lines, but along political lines--Social Credit versus anti-Social Credit.⁸⁶ But at the base of this apparent political division was in fact a religious division, a perception that those who opposed Social Credit also opposed Christian values and morals. As Bruce Palmer notes, "When public issues turned into questions of personal morality the solutions to them tended to become those of personal and private morality, not those of social, economic, and political change."⁸⁷ Consequently, the solution to Albertans' political and economic powerlessness lay in the tenets of Social Credit, which were simultaneously the tenets of Christianity. Serious economic and political problems were met with a religious and moral solution.⁸⁸ Aberhart as religious leader, provided an economic-political solution which upheld traditional Christian values. Thus, the issue of morality could not be divorced from Alberta's economic and political problems.⁸⁹

The implications of Social Credit as a religious crusade as it relates to anti-Semitism are again, both apparent and subtle. Because of the equation of Social Credit

with Christianity, opponents were those who were against Social Credit and/or who were against Christianity. Jews, because of their alleged conspiratorial plot to gain world financial and political control and to overthrow the Christian world, were guilty on both counts. But this logical culmination of Social Credit ideology is not as visible within the actual Movement. Social Credit as a religious crusade was not concerned with Jews as non-Christians; rather it was concerned with protecting Christian values, values which Social Credit ideology encompassed. In the face of threats to these religious values, all opponents of Social Credit became anti-Christian.

The foregoing comments are integral to understanding the nature of Social Credit's religious ideology. As earlier stated, W. E. Mann argues that Christian fundamentalists⁹⁰ provided the bulk of Social Credit support. He states:

...as a body, fundamentalists were characteristically uninterested and unskilled in political activities and therefore easily swayed by strong hopes and emotions. Distrusting the established parties on moral grounds, they sought a new political deal and an end to destitution and poverty...Aberhart could appeal easily to members of fundamentalist groups, while his radio broadcasting and political activity served to strengthen the evangelical cause throughout Alberta and indirectly helped to weld many of its diverse elements into something of a unified movement.⁹¹

This interpretation of the Movement's religious support has been shown to be in contradiction to the historical record; yet there continues to be a very tenacious perception that evangelical, fundamentalist Christians provided the backbone of support for the Social Credit Movement. David Elliott, among several other scholars, has emphasized that "contrary to Irving and Mann, Aberhart's political support came largely from the membership of the established churches and from those with marginal religious commitment, rather than from the members of sectarian groups."⁹² The evidence corroborates Elliott's interpretation. Studies based on party membership data and Social Credit legislators show that the average Social Credit M.L.A. was a member of the United Church of Canada,⁹³ and that almost 30 per cent of the party membership belonged to

either the Anglican or United Churches. Members of fundamentalist sects made up only 11 per cent of Social Credit party membership.⁹⁴

Edward Bell, synthesizing the quantitative work on Social Credit done by J. Paul and Linda Grayson, notes that regression analysis done on the 1935 provincial election results shows that the "Fundamentalist variable" explained only a very small percentage of the rural-urban variance. Bell writes:

In their findings, [Grayson and Grayson] first note that there does not appear to have been a rural-urban cleavage in support for the provincial Social Credit party in 1935. It received 32.8 percent of its total support from urban areas, which made up 31.1 percent of the province's population. The correlation coefficient [sic] they calculate for town size and the provincial Social Credit vote, contrary to popular expectation, is positive at .10; its beta weight is .02. From the regression analysis reported, this variable explains 0 percent of the variance...The authors' ethnic variables together explain 9 percent of the variance, the religious variables 8 percent. Surprisingly, the percent Fundamentalist variable by itself explained only 2 percent of the variance. The percentage of unemployed males variable had the largest impact of those considered, explaining 35 percent of the variance. Grayson and Grayson conclude that economic factors are more important than religious ones in accounting for Social Credit support in urban areas.⁹⁵

Another indicator that fundamentalists composed only a small proportion of Social Credit support is the widespread denominational backing of Aberhart. As H. J. Schultz notes, "[f]requently the largest churches in the province held [Aberhart's] conventions and numerous leaders of the United Church and Mormon communities publicly endorsed Social Credit, even running as candidates, while in Roman Catholic St. Paul [in northern Alberta] he ran just as strongly as in Protestant areas."⁹⁶

With respect to Aberhart's own religious leanings, David Elliott notes that although Aberhart was a fundamentalist Christian,

[his] preaching after mid-1933 became so watered-down that it had little resemblance to his earlier fundamentalism and dispensationalism. Rather, his preaching had become a kind of social gospel with emphasis upon the 'brotherhood of man,' a theme which was repugnant to many fundamentalists. Instead of projecting fundamentalism, Aberhart's political pamphlets were surprisingly

secular. It was because he had changed his preaching so radically that he was able to win the support of many members of the established churches and of those with marginal religious commitment.⁹⁷

Elliott further argues that studies which have portrayed the fundamentalist Prairie Bible Institute in Three Hills, Alberta, as a typical fundamentalist sect which supported the Social Credit cause, contradict historical evidence. Writes Elliott: "The leaders of Prairie Bible Institute were strongly opposed to Aberhart's movement."⁹⁸

Aberhart's personal statements bolster the argument that his supporters came from many denominations. After receiving a letter in April 1935 from a Roman Catholic supporter who praised his work and suggested that Aberhart was following in the footsteps of the Pope and Father Coughlin,⁹⁹ Aberhart stated in a radio broadcast:

I was rather glad to read that. You know I think it's touching on the right chord, the chord that must be struck today. That chord consists of many varied notes but harmonizing together in one thing--the love of fellow man. It's helping to blot out the bias and blind prejudice that has separated us for so long. Why cannot [sic] we not see that after all we are all sojourners here below. We might as well make it more pleasant for one another.¹⁰⁰

In another broadcast a few months later, Aberhart similarly stated:

Ladies and gentlemen, let us be at once assured that the God of Heaven is behind the great crusade that we see manifesting itself in our province...I am persuaded myself that it is only by the grace and power of God that our people shall be delivered from the awful conditions that threaten us. This is a time when all Christian people, whatever creed or church should join hands in friendship and comradeship [sic] to help one another to help himself.¹⁰¹

It is clear that Social Credit religious support exceeded far beyond the fundamentalist Christian sects. This is a crucial point in understanding the nature of Social Credit religious doctrine and its relationship to anti-Semitism. As stated earlier, Social Credit as a socio-political movement supported traditional Christian values, values which all Christian denominations upheld; hence, its religious support was vast and encompassing. Social Credit and Christianity were mutually interchangeable terms, and Judaism had no positive place in Social Credit ideology.

It has been shown how Aberhart's "movement culture" advocated economic-political-religious doctrines which reflected existing economic, political, and religious values. A further aspect of the Movement requires examination, however: the issue of Aberhart as religious "demagogue" and how the Social Credit Movement could be both populist and authoritarian. In addressing this issue, it is necessary to examine the nature of fascism as it relates to mass socio-political movements, and to determine where the Alberta Social Credit Movement fits in the larger political spectrum.

At the height of the provincial campaign in 1935, U.F.A. leaders were concerned about the demagogic character of Aberhart. They believed he was stirring up Albertans through emotional appeals so that he could achieve power. As one U.F.A. leader stated:

Aberhart has become wild and abusive. Temporarily he has stirred up some communities to a pitch of hysteria and intolerance and created an ugly spirit. I can understand more fully now how Hitler made himself a power. Aberhart may damage us, but I don't think he can realize his ambition.¹⁰²

In assessing whether Aberhart was indeed a demagogue, a working definition of demagoguery as it relates to social movements is necessary. Michael Federici's comments on this question are informative:

In its more radical manifestations right-wing populism can take the shape of demagoguery. By demagoguery is meant the catering to the passions and prejudices of the masses for the sake of personal or political gain. Needless to say, not all politicians who are popular are demagogues, nor are all demagogues always popular. The point is that when right-wing populism tends toward demagoguery, it is less interested in creating an organized political movement that systematically works for institutional reforms than it is in achieving de facto control of government by applying popular pressure to the existing political institutions.¹⁰³

If this definition is applied to Aberhart and his movement, then Aberhart was no demagogue. Aberhart, even despite his rhetoric, was very much intent on creating an organized political movement which would effect economic and political reforms.

Whether or not he "catered to the passions and prejudices of the masses for the sake of

personal or political gain" is a more difficult question. Aberhart's motives, like anyone's, are not easily discernible. However, if demagoguery is taken to be a kind of leadership which embraces a strong emotive element and taps into values which go beyond conventional stands on politics or the economy, then it can be argued that strains of demagoguery were very visible in Aberhart's rhetoric. Commenting on Aberhart's "demagogic and revivalist rhetoric," W. L. Morton states:

That propagandist genius compounded out of fundamentalism, enthusiasm, and a gloss of economic literacy, a gospel of evangelistic materialism which carried over the air the promise of secular salvation. He completed that trend of religious materialism which had marked the agrarian movement from the beginning.¹⁰⁴

Specifically, Aberhart's rhetoric bespoke a religious communion with God, and included an implication that Social Credit followers were also followers of God. In a speech denouncing his political opponents, Aberhart analogized himself alternately with Moses and Christ, and his opponents with Satan: "They so [sic] I won't cooperate. No Sir, I will not cooperate with the Devil. I am going to fight the Devil...People will not be bull-dozed, buffaloes...by the people who want to graft. God will open the Red Sea."¹⁰⁵ When the election results of Aberhart's 1935 landslide victory became known, Aberhart gave a radio broadcast in which he appeared to be at one with Christ: "Fear not, for I am with thee..."¹⁰⁶ spoke Aberhart. The phrase Aberhart used was quoted from Christ, but the "I" was ambiguous--Christ's words, but Aberhart was speaking them.

This reassurance to the people of Alberta had as much to do with their fears and deprivations as it did with Aberhart's own insecurity as to how to implement Social Credit. As John Barr notes:

Aberhart tried to conceal his inner doubts and confusions by contending that the details of Social Credit were beyond the understanding of ordinary people, himself included; in asking for the vote of the people on such a basis he was asking, in effect, for a popular act of faith. The election of 1935 showed conclusively that the people of Alberta wanted to believe that Aberhart was right and that his critics

were wrong. And in the face of an overwhelming will to believe, intellectual counter-arguments and criticisms were foredoomed.¹⁰⁷

Whether employment of religious rhetoric and an appeal to faith on the part of the people are adequate evidence to label Aberhart a religious demagogue is questionable. Any assessment of Aberhart's leadership must be balanced against the role of the people in the Movement. As Walter Young states, "Leadership...is largely situational. That is, one cannot lead unless the conditions are such that people are ready to follow that kind of leadership."¹⁰⁸ Aberhart's message reflected and reinforced Albertans' economic, political, and religious values, and Social Credit was, in the words of Howard Palmer, "a new and dynamic movement that offered both an economic panacea for the depression and a leader whose charismatic qualities matched the needs of a people hungry for authoritative guidance."¹⁰⁹

The intricate relationship between leader and led in the Social Credit Movement has also been noted by C. B. Macpherson: "The relation of government and followers, or of the leaders of the movement and the rank and file, was not, as in the U.F.A., rational and utilitarian but messianic."¹¹⁰ In using the term "messianic," Macpherson implies a religious component in the Movement which exceeded conventional political will of the people. It is this component which lends credence to the interpretation of Aberhart as a demagogue.

A related phenomenon to demagoguery is that of populist movements--that is, mass-based social movements--which evolve into, or at least exhibit characteristics of authoritarian movements. Whether Aberhart was in fact a demagogue cannot be adequately assessed without examining his authoritarianism within the Movement.

Aberhart's authoritarianism in the Social Credit Movement was preceded by similar impulses in his activities at the Westbourne Church in Calgary and the Prophetic Bible Institute. David Elliott, in his comprehensive biography of Aberhart, describes how Aberhart possessed ultimate authority over both organizations and exercised it ruthlessly.

A "spy system" and "tattle system" were enforced against any executive members who was in any way disloyal to the organization or creed. Further, writes Elliott, "Aberhart had a suspicious nature and frequently imagined slights where they were never intended."¹¹¹ At church board meetings in which heated debates would occur over Aberhart's sermons being so devoted to Social Credit, Aberhart ordered several pages of the minutes removed.¹¹²

More serious attempts to violate democratic freedoms occurred during the politicization of the Movement. In the spring of 1935, unfavourable news coverage of Social Credit by the *Calgary Herald* caused Aberhart to announce to his supporters that they should boycott newspapers that were unfavourable to Social Credit: "I don't think you will miss it if you don't have it. I think you can get the news in another way. Some of the citizens of this province cannot distinguish falsity from truth. I'm cancelling my subscription tomorrow. What about yours?"¹¹³ The *Calgary Herald* responded in its editorial with a strong condemnation of Aberhart's authoritarian tactics: "Is everyone opposed to the political opinions and plans of Mr. Aberhart to be boycotted? He has invoked a most dangerous precedent and has given the people of this province a foretaste of the Hitlerism which will prevail if he ever secures control of the provincial administration."¹¹⁴ It is interesting to note that Aberhart, after becoming premier, continued to attempt to legislate and censor the press. The result was unsuccessful, and as Elliott notes, "[f]or their efforts at opposing the Alberta government the *Edmonton Journal*, the *Calgary Herald*, the *Albertan*, the *Edmonton Bulletin*, the *Lethbridge Herald*, the *Medicine Hat News*, and ninety other weekly newspapers in Alberta were awarded the 1938 Pulitzer Prize."¹¹⁵

Other evidence corroborates the view that Aberhart employed authoritarian tactics. In June 1935, Aberhart issued a Social Credit manual called the "Blue Manual" (because of the colour of its cover) which stated that dividends would be given for loyalty to the state; if a person refused to work, or refused to join the Social Credit Movement, he

would not receive dividends. Further, if he abused his privileges under the new economic system, the "Credit House Inspector" could withdraw his dividends and put him on an "Indian List."¹¹⁶ Although the expression "Indian List" was not defined,¹¹⁷ it invokes images of marginalization or ostracization. That Native Canadians were not to be included in Alberta's new economic-political system is painfully obvious.

Aberhart also engaged in a complicated selection process for Social Credit candidates in the 1935 provincial election by hand-picking candidates from a pool chosen by the people; Social Credit candidates were instructed by Aberhart to refuse to listen, read, or answer opposing arguments; and efforts were made to break up meetings of opposing political parties.¹¹⁸ In addition, Aberhart did not speak in the legislative chamber until 1939. Anything he wished to relay to Albertans he told them over the radio, and he communicated with his Social Credit members in caucus.¹¹⁹ Elliott interprets Aberhart's actions as authoritarian: "Aberhart seemed to be afraid of having to defend his position in the Legislature; he was not a man who would accept open challenges to his authority."¹²⁰

Describing the Social Credit Movement as an example of the "limitations of popular democracy," John Irving notes the *Calgary Herald's* response to Aberhart's authoritarianism. It claimed that Aberhart's authoritarianism resulted in "the development of credulity on a scale that is unbelievable in this era of a supposedly informed electorate."¹²¹ By cultivating faith among the people in himself as a leader, as opposed to informed, reasoned support, argued the *Herald*, Aberhart created "a policy that bre[d] fanaticism, intolerance, and prejudice."¹²²

Other interpretations of Aberhart's authoritarian techniques are less polemical than that of the *Herald*. W. E. Mann places Aberhart's Movement in broad historical perspective, and he argues that the success of Social Credit was due in part to its ability to assume control and address Albertans' economic and political powerlessness in an authoritative way:

The continuous social unsettlement that characterized Alberta's history from 1906 to 1946, especially during the two World Wars and the Great Depression...implied a crisis situation favourable to conservative, traditionalist, religious teachings which upheld the recognized symbols of authority, and promised security and stability.¹²³

Aberhart's authoritarianism also stemmed from his political perspective on the nature of the popular will. Like Douglas, Aberhart viewed the people's political life as essentially passive. In repeating Douglas's interpretation of freedom, Aberhart stated: "Freedom is the right to choose or refuse any proposition which is placed before you, without interfering with the same right of everybody else."¹²⁴ Accordingly, the people were to feel politically fulfilled if they were enabled to vote in plebiscites drawn up and interpreted by leaders and experts.¹²⁵ The result was what has been called "plebiscitarian democracy," a political doctrine which C. B. Macpherson believes had negative implications for the Social Credit Movement:

To get popular support for a doctrine an essential part of which was the insistence that the people are not competent to discuss it, the only way was to promise everything and discuss nothing, to assert that you had all the answers and demand to be taken on trust. Thus the nature of the doctrine determined the autocratic form of the movement, and foreshadowed the subsequent social credit theory of a plebiscitarian state.¹²⁶

Therefore it can be argued that by relying on the doctrine of plebiscitarian democracy, the Movement embodied the province, the Party became the State, and Aberhart embraced the role of autocratic leader offering predetermined choices to the Volk. The analogy becomes even more tantalizing when the issue of anti-Semitism is included.

Yet the comparison of Social Credit with European fascism is one fraught with dangers of oversimplification and reductionism. On the surface, Aberhart's rhetoric was strikingly similar to that of European fascist leaders. As Brinkley notes:

The rhetoric of fascism was laden with appeals to the idea of the traditional, rooted community and the special virtues of the common people. It reflected a deep

ambivalence about the effects of industrial growth and technological progress. It warned constantly of the dangers posed by distant, hidden forces. It emphasized with special urgency the issue of money--of unstable or scarce currency, of tyrannical bankers, of usurious interest. And fascist rhetoric resounded, too, with hostility toward "internationalism" in politics and economics.¹²⁷

These elements were certainly present in Aberhart's rhetoric. In addition, Aberhart's movement was a product of similar social and economic crises and drew from similar political traditions as that of European fascism.¹²⁸ Fascist leaders appealed, like Aberhart, to the "common people" experiencing a sense of powerlessness in their economic and political lives. As Brinkley notes, with reference to Long and Coughlin, but again, equally applicable to Aberhart:

...followers of fascism, no less than supporters of Long and Coughlin, were reviving the still potent tradition of late-nineteenth-century populism...Hitler and Mussolini themselves had grown to maturity in an environment laden with resentments of "financial parasites" and usurious moneylenders. The European anti-Semitic tradition, of which Hitler made such effective and terrible use, drew much of its strength from the general association of Jews in the 1890s with despised institutions of finance and thus with canny manipulation of the currency. There may have been few direct links between European and American populism; but there were many indirect connections, both in the conditions from which they emerged and in the ideas and images they employed. And it was perhaps unsurprising, therefore, that in the twentieth century, European fascists and American dissidents, drawing from similar political traditions, should revive many of the same sentiments.¹²⁹

It can be argued convincingly that Alberta Social Credit fit within a long tradition of populist revolt in Europe and America. The Social Credit movement also embraced clear elements of fascism: a charismatic leader, an effective use of propaganda through the medium of radio; an authoritarian theory of the state; a blurred distinction of the role of party and government; use of repressive legislation and boycotts against the press and dissenters; and the promotion of financial conspiracy theories which were laden with anti-Semitism.¹³⁰

However, the question to be addressed is this: are these characteristics adequate to label the Social Credit Movement fascist? Although the Movement embraced much of

the same rhetoric as fascism, and drew from the same political, economic, and social impulses, whether Social Credit was deserving of the fascist label comes down to a question of degree. In short, Social Credit was not of the same extremity as European fascism. As Brinkley notes:

...to say that these movements--Long's Coughlin's, Hitler's, Mussolini's, and others--drew from many of the same political traditions and resonated with many of the same images is far from declaring that they represented identical or even fundamentally similar impulses. What defines a political movement is not just the intellectual currents it vaguely absorbs, but how it translates those currents into a message of immediate importance to its constituency.¹³¹

The use of what scholars have called a "fascist minimum" is helpful in determining where Social Credit fits within the political spectrum. Brinkley states that this "minimum" is a set of general characteristics common to all phenomena deserving of the label. Specifically, it requires examination of two broad categories: behaviour and ideology. "If the term 'fascism' is to have any meaning," writes Brinkley, "it must define a particular kind of relationship between a leader and his followers. Or it must suggest a particular set of ideas and programs, a vision of society distinct from that of other political philosophies."¹³² If Social Credit is viewed in terms of this "fascist minimum," then it cannot be deemed fascist. The Movement was concerned most with economic and political empowerment and the retention of traditional, religious values. Aberhart, like Long and Coughlin, envisioned a far different and more limited role for the government than that proposed by European fascists.¹³³ The Movement's purpose was not to subordinate individual economic interests to the central goals of the state, but to "liberate individuals from the tyranny of the plutocrats, restore a small-scale, decentralized capitalism that would increase, not restrict, economic independence."¹³⁴ Further, Social Credit lacked a central ingredient in its ideology: a cult of violence. It encouraged animosity toward an identifiable villain, but anti-Semitism within the Movement was ideological, not personal; there was no deliberate programme to eliminate the

"international Jewish financial conspiracy." As Peter Wiles points out, although there are similarities between populism and fascism, populism draws short of fascism at certain junctures:

The main things that differentiate [fascism] from true populism are elitism, the cult of violence, the rejection of religion and the demand for obedience to the leader. Contemporaneously with the Iron Guard, fascist elements appeared in North American populism. William Aberhart was a thoroughly authoritarian personality, but too deeply steeped in parliamentarism, non-violence and above all religion to be called even proto-fascist.¹³⁵

Aberhart and his Movement, although accused of being totalitarian and fascistic, were not in the same "league" as their European contemporaries. But this does not preclude a comparison among these movements and the impulses which they generated. Aberhart and his Movement may not have been fascist but, as Brinkley states of Long and Coughlin, he may have displayed fascist sympathies unwittingly.¹³⁶ "That, in fact, has been the most frequent charge leveled against them," writes Brinkley, "that, whether they realized it or not, they were creating movements that closely resembled European fascism."¹³⁷

Aberhart's "movement culture" embraced economic, political, and religious values which tapped deeply into the Albertan experience. It has been shown that anti-Semitism was not a deliberate programme within the Movement, but a consequence of an ideology which encompassed economic, political, and religious doctrines antipathetic to Jews and Judaism. Whether Social Crediters became anti-Semitic depended much on the extent to which they made the inductive ideological leaps which transformed their values into a clearly definable prejudice. The following chapter is a study of such a group of Social Crediters: the "Douglasites," or purists of Social Credit ideology. From this group came many of Social Credit's most notorious anti-Semites, and they serve as examples of the limits inherent in Social Credit ideology. The Douglasites' effect on the Social Credit

Movement, and specifically, Premier Manning's purge of them in 1948, will be examined in the following pages.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

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¹⁸Bruce Palmer, Man Over Money: The Southern Populist Critique of American Capitalism (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 134.

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⁸⁶Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, 145.

⁸⁷Bruce Palmer, 136-137.

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¹³⁵Peter Wiles, "A Syndrome, Not a Doctrine: Some Elementary Theses on Populism," chap. in Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics, eds. Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969), 176.

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CHAPTER THREE

CLEANSING THE IDEOLOGY: MANNING'S PURGE OF THE DOUGLASITES, 1947-1948

The focus of this chapter is on Manning's "purge" of the Douglasites, or Social Credit ideologues, in February 1948. The purge itself involved the firing of two leading Social Credit government members: Education Minister Earl Ansley, and Social Credit Technical Advisor L. D. Byrne. However, the repercussions of the purge were much greater than what would be expected from a provincial cabinet shuffle. Many leading Social Crediters left the Party because of the schism created by Manning's firings. The Social Credit Movement, as a result of Manning's actions, experienced an ideological shake-down, and Social Credit ideology was held up to severe scrutiny. The "Purge of '48" is worth examining because it involved more than the dismissal of two civil servants; it marked a deliberate attempt by Manning to dissociate the Social Credit Movement from its traditional ideology.

As noted in Chapters One and Two, Social Credit ideology was comprised of three doctrines--economic, political, and religious--all of which embodied anti-Semitism. In attempting to dissociate the Social Credit Movement from its traditional ideology, Manning was, in effect, attempting to purge anti-Semitism from the Movement. Therefore, in ousting those Social Credit members who strictly adhered to the Movement's ideology, Manning did, *prima facie*, purge the Movement of anti-Semitism. Accordingly, Manning has been viewed historically as the "honourable purger" of anti-Semitism from the Social Credit Movement. From the events described, it will appear that Manning's purge successfully shifted the Movement's ideology away from anti-Semitism. Whether or not he was ultimately successful in his attempts will be discussed in the final chapter.

The reasons for Manning's purge will also be examined in the following pages, and it will be shown that motives for the purge corresponded to the Movement's three doctrines; that is, economic, political, and religious motives, in varying degrees, were the impetuses for Manning's ideological cleansing of the Movement. An examination of these three motives will conclude that Manning's actions were determined more by political and economic expediency than by ethical considerations regarding racial and religious tolerance. Manning may have conducted a purge of anti-Semites from the Social Credit Movement, but his reasons for doing so went far beyond a sense of moral repugnance toward anti-Semitism.

The "Purge of '48" is not an isolated event. Several events preceding Manning's actions of February 1948 can be viewed as preliminary to the ideological cleansing of the Movement. Specifically, public condemnation of the Social Credit Board's 1946 Report, the somewhat forced resignation of the editor of the Movement's national organ, the *Canadian Social Crediter*, and the provincial cabinet's negative reaction to Social Credit technical advisor L. D. Byrne's Report of January 1948, all precipitated Manning's purge of February 1948. Yet it must be noted that opposition to Social Credit ideologues did not originate with Manning's confrontation with the Douglasites. Purists of Social Credit ideology had haunted the Movement from its beginnings. Thus, in order to understand fully the implications of Manning's actions, the Douglasites must be placed in their historical context.

Although the origins of Social Credit in Alberta are commonly associated with Aberhart's movement of the early 1930s, before Aberhart there were Albertans already familiar with Douglas's economic theories, who regarded themselves as superior and accredited students of Douglas.¹ They included such men as Herbert Boyd of Egerton, A. J. Logan and Larkham Collins of Calgary,² Norman Jaques of Mirror, George Whicher of Vulcan, and Sidney Cliffe of Edson.³ As John Barr notes, "all the Douglasites, as they came to be called, were fervent students of economics who could quote chapter and verse

on virtually everything Douglas ever wrote. All were intensely proud of their mastery of Douglas's theories."⁴

When Aberhart formed his new Social Credit movement in 1933, the Douglasites became part of Aberhart's organization, but not without voicing their opposition to Aberhart's interpretation of Douglas's theories. Even before the new movement had sunk roots across Alberta, a vicious dogfight developed over organizational control of the Movement and the issue of ideological purity.⁵ As Barr states: "The Douglasites made no great effort to conceal their belief that Aberhart was a disorganized thinker who was muddying the waters and distorting some of the clarity in Douglas's thoughts. They were probably right. But Aberhart did not take well to their suggestions."⁶ As a result, the "Douglasites launched a frank and undisguised attack on Aberhart's ideological reliability."⁷ In the summer of 1933, the Douglasites set up the New Age Club in Calgary, with Charles G. Palmer, formerly the vice-president of the Central Council of Aberhart's Douglas Social Credit League, as its secretary.⁸ The New Age Club separated itself from Aberhart's Douglas Social Credit League and affiliated with C. H. Douglas's Secretariat in London, England.

From then on the New Age Club became predominantly a "Douglas" rather than an "Aberhart" organization.⁹ Barr states:

[T]he New Age Club carried on a second Social Credit crusade, as it were, independent of Aberhart's efforts, with its own finances, organization, interpretation of the Douglas doctrine, and view of the constitutional application of Social Credit policy. People representing the club refused to submit in any way to Aberhart's control or direction, and openly criticized his version of doctrine.¹⁰

Aberhart responded by promptly ejecting from his Social Credit League all New Age Club members and changing the name of his organization from the Douglas Social Credit League to the Alberta Social Credit League. As David Elliott argues, Aberhart's alienation from the Simon-pure Douglasites was represented by this change in the League's title:

"This change of name not only signified the Central Council's emphasis on the provincial

application of Social Credit but also subtly declared that their brand of Social Credit was different from Douglas's."¹¹

Friction between the Alberta Social Credit League and the New Age Club came to a head in February 1934, when Douglas's London Secretariat intervened directly in the controversy and sided with the Douglasites.¹² The London Secretariat informed Aberhart that Douglas could not officially endorse the Alberta Social Credit Movement and that Aberhart should remove Douglas's name from a pamphlet Aberhart had written, entitled "The Douglas System of Economics" (the cover which Douglas had previously autographed and which Aberhart had taken as an endorsement of the pamphlet's contents.) Aberhart then announced to Albertans that on February 27, 1934 he would give "his last address" on the Douglas System, at the Prophetic Bible Institute in Calgary. In a moving address, states Barr, "Aberhart had the audience on the verge of tears. He recounted his 'persecution' at the hands of the New Agers, and announced his resignation."¹³

Aberhart's resignation did not last long. The Douglasites had succeeded in toppling Aberhart from his leadership position, and the League's Central Council elected Gilbert McGregor as president, and Charles Palmer as vice-president. However, by April 1934 the dominant opinion throughout the Movement was one against the "disloyal" Douglasites, and in favour of Aberhart's return.¹⁴ In May 1934 McGregor resigned and Aberhart resumed his position as president of the Central Council of the Alberta Social Credit League. A purge ensued: Aberhart fired Palmer and Logan as vice-president and secretary of the Central Council, and instructed all Social Credit study groups to isolate the Douglasites.¹⁵ As Barr states, "Aberhart cleaned out all elements disloyal to him, and surrounded himself with personal followers, most of them people that he had brought into the movement himself."¹⁶ Aberhart was effectively back in power, and he continued to preach his own brand of Social Credit in his religious radio broadcasts.

This first round of dissension within the Movement between Aberhart and the Douglasites was followed by a second debacle in 1937. By then the Social Credit

Movement had become the Alberta Social Credit government, and it was becoming increasingly obvious that the Douglas system of economics was neither feasible nor able to be implemented. The twenty-five dollar dividend had not materialized; the division of powers as set out in Sections 91 and 92 of the B.N.A. act precluded any kind of provincial intervention in the money system.

In addition, although the New Agers had been purged from the Alberta Social Credit League in 1934, there still existed within the Movement Social Credit ideologues who were unimpressed with Aberhart's ineffective implementation of Douglas's economic theories. The new insurgents numbered between twenty and twenty-five backbenchers, and included A. V. Bourcier, Earl Ansley, W. E. Cain, A. L. Blue, Joe Unwin,¹⁷ Alf Hooke, and G. L. MacLachlan.¹⁸ These men adhered strictly to Douglas's conception of Social Credit, and Ansley especially was "deeply disappointed in the collapse of relations between Aberhart and Douglas, and was inclined to place the blame on Aberhart."¹⁹ Aberhart, in turn, was "greatly disturbed" at Ansley's "heresies" and he made several rather unsuccessful attempts to correct Ansley's "misinterpretation" of Social Credit.²⁰ What transpired was a split in the government caucus into "loyalist" and "insurgent" camps; as Barr notes, "both [groups] met behind closed doors and locked transoms."²¹ What David Elliott has called an "imminent Party revolt"²² ended in compromise; the Douglasites were appeased by the creation of the Social Credit Board, of which MacLachlan was the chairman. The Social Credit Board's mandate was to consult with Major Douglas and to bring back either Douglas or one of his top trusted aides to serve as a policy advisor and technical expert to the Alberta Social Credit Movement.²³ The goal was to mend the rift within the government and to start work on a Social Credit plan that would finally implement Douglas's economic policies. MacLachlan sailed to England to try to get Douglas to come; Douglas declined, but proposed two of his lieutenants, G. F. Powell and L. D. Byrne, who arrived in Alberta in June 1937. As C. B. Macpherson notes:

Although the insurgency had been weakened and held in check by the creation of the Social Credit Board, no settlement could be expected until the board found experts and the experts produced, if not results, at least the appearance of working towards results...The initial prestige of the Douglas emissaries was considerable, for their presence was a token of the speedy action which had long been awaited.²⁴

As Barr notes, the lasting consequences of the 1937 insurgency are hard to measure.²⁵ After 1937, there was never again any serious threat to Aberhart's power,²⁶ and the Social Credit Board functioned until Manning's purge in 1948. The functions of the Social Credit Board are important, for it was within this government agency that Social Credit economic and political doctrines were kept alive; hence the Board played a large role in perpetuating an ideology which Manning would eventually attempt to eradicate. The Board itself was, in Barr's words, a "queer hybrid":

[I]t was fully responsible for the implementation of Social Credit, yet it was still under the cabinet. If it failed, the cabinet could absolve itself of any blame. Moreover, the board, which was headed by G. L. MacLachlan, and which included Bourcier and Hooke, was staffed primarily by insurgents. If the board failed, the insurgents could be pinned with the blame.²⁷

Elliott also comments on the insurgent nature of the Social Credit Board and the role which Powell and Byrne played as advisors:

Powell and Byrne held daily classes in the Legislative Building teaching the principles of Social Credit to the Socred MLAs. They wished, no doubt, to expunge from their minds any loose and inaccurate ideas they may have acquired from Aberhart's "unsound" interpretations. Instead, they now absorbed Douglas's "true" concepts of Social Credit and the international plots of its "real enemies."²⁸

The Social Credit Board, then, had an ambiguous place in the government, although its duties were clearly defined: to implement Social Credit, as had been promised upon Aberhart's election victory in 1935. But by 1938 and 1939, all attempted Social Credit legislation had been quashed by the courts and the federal government; hence, the Board's *raison d'être* had become useless. Yet, as Barr notes, the onset of World War II put the Social Credit movement into a "patriotically self-imposed suspended animation"²⁹ and the Social Credit Board's function became that of a government-financed propaganda

machine. As Barr states: "[The Board's] members travelled around the province giving lectures on Social Credit theory and the board became a clearing-house for official doctrinal literature. In 1939 alone it sent 272,900 pieces of literature around the country..."³⁰

The Social Credit Board thus kept busy, first in its role as the vehicle through which Social Credit would be implemented, and after 1939 as a government propaganda tool. But it is the Board's less obvious role which is most important to this discussion: the Board also promoted Social Credit political and economic doctrines, with their accompanying declarations about an international financial Jewish conspiracy. Historians of Social Credit have offered similar reasons to explain the Board's "other" function. C. B. Macpherson states that the Board had been established with only one purpose: to produce Social Credit in Alberta by taking away control of the people's credit from the financiers and returning it to the people. "Confronted with failure," writes Macpherson,

[the Board] had, unlike the government, no natural alternative employment. Unable to disavow their responsibility or to cover it over with other functions, they had to resort to more and more extreme theoretical positions to explain their failure. Since their failure was as complete as Douglas's in England, they were more drawn to his later theories than was the government, which was not in as great need of them. Only the world plot in its extreme form served to justify the board's failure, and the preaching of it gave them a full-time occupation.³¹

Emulating Macpherson's argument, John Barr states that after 1939 the Social Credit Board "was left with less and less to do"; consequently, "[p]artly in an attempt to explain why it had failed to produce a workable plan for reform, partly because it had too much time on its hands, the board began to delve into some of the more bizarre world-plot theories Major Douglas had hatched in the old country."³²

John Richards and Larry Pratt offer a similar explanation for the anti-Semitic turn within the Board:

The remnants of the true believers loyal to Douglas' ideas continued to control the Canadian Social Crediter, official organ of the party, and the Social Credit board, which had no administrative functions after abandonment of attempts to legislate social credit. As prospects for implementation of his scheme waned, Douglas' writings became increasingly cranky, anti-democratic, anti-socialist, and anti-semitic. He alleged that a Jewish conspiracy was in control of both high finance and the international communist movement.³³

Walter Young also argues that although there was never any open disavowal by the Party of Social Credit theory, after 1939, nothing further was done to introduce Social Credit measures. Both Aberhart and Manning blamed this failure to implement Social Credit on a "small group of international money monopolists" who controlled the Ottawa government.³⁴ With respect to the Douglasites specifically, Young states:

For the more rabid social crediters, those who had followed the evolution of Douglas' thought, these monopolists represented an international conspiracy of Jews to control the world economy. Until the Alberta party split in 1949 [sic], these people, who kept their belief in social credit alight with the fuel of anti-semitism, remained in the Social Credit party.³⁵

Young's reference to "the evolution of Douglas' thought" merits examination, as all these interpretations view Douglas's evolving ideology as pivotal to the anti-Semitic turn within the Social Credit Board and among the Douglasites. Barr argues that because Social Credit as an economic doctrine proved to be as much a failure in England as it was in Alberta, Douglas became embittered and rationalized that there was a malignant world conspiracy against his theories. Barr states:

This "conspiracy" came to embrace more and more participants until finally it included international banking interests, communists, socialists, freemasons, Pan-Germans, Pan-Americans...and Jews. The more Douglas thought about it the more he came to see behind his troubles the hand of Jewish bankers and Zionist politicians. In 1939, just before the opening of the war, Douglas wrote a letter to Adolf Hitler in which he accused the "Jewish financial system" of causing misunderstanding between the democratic powers and the totalitarian group.³⁶

Macpherson offers a similar (and more sophisticated) interpretation. In reference to the Douglasites and the world plot thesis, Macpherson writes:

the extension of the Douglas political theory after 1937 comprised...an overwhelming concern, mounting to an obsession, with the supposed world plot...That the social crediters should devote their energy to its elaboration and exposure in the late thirties and the forties was...a logical consequence of their failure to win the mass support they had expected.³⁷

With reference to Barr's interpretation, his comment that "the more Douglas thought about it" the more paranoid he became about a Jewish world conspiracy, is rather glib. Whether Douglas "thought about it" or not is irrelevant; the blueprint for an international Jewish conspiracy theory had been laid when Douglas promulgated his Social Credit theory. It is fully plausible that failure to implement his Social Credit theory caused Douglas to emphasize the conspiracy element, as it is well known that failure and scapegoatism make good bedfellows. Yet the arguments proposed by Barr, Macpherson, Young, and Richards and Pratt all reinforce the same idea: that it was an evolution in Douglas's thought, brought about by the failure to implement Social Credit theories, which caused anti-Semitism to come to the fore.

It is imperative that these interpretations be reappraised. They are valid insofar as they explain how Douglas's failure to implement Social Credit theories extended to the Douglasites. It is feasible that frustration in their inability to implement Social Credit as a viable economic system caused both Douglas and the Douglasites to place blame elsewhere. What is of prime importance, however, is the choice of scapegoat and the manner in which this scapegoat was manipulated. Whether the Social Credit Board began expounding the Jewish world plot theory in 1937 or later is not the most important issue. It was not external circumstances which caused the Board to expound the Jewish world plot theory; rather, it was a result of economic and political doctrines inherent in Social Credit ideology which provided the Board an identifiable scapegoat. When it became necessary to place blame for any failure, the Douglasites had at their disposal an ideologically acceptable enemy.

The Social Credit Board, with its Douglas purists, thus held the seed for the growth of anti-Semitism. As Howard Palmer states:

The view of world history promulgated by the Social Credit board...was based on classic formulations of ideological anti-semitism; it amalgamated all the major foes of Social Credit--international finance, socialism and internationalism--and identified them all as either predominantly or exclusively Jewish...Although the Social Credit board did include the names of some non-Jews in its list of conspirators...[it] selectively overplayed the Jewish role in both socialism and international finance.³⁸

Yet the Social Credit Board was not the only forum for anti-Semitism in the Movement. As C. B. Macpherson notes, other Social Credit organs and Social Crediters themselves propounded anti-Semitism. He writes:

[i]n this propaganda the Board was vociferously supported by the "Canadian Social Crediter," by a few other members of the Alberta legislature, and by several of the social credit members of parliament at Ottawa. They followed the full Douglas line, even to the explicitly Jewish world plot...³⁹

It is valuable to examine more closely the anti-Semitic mentalité which pervaded Social Credit circles. Douglas's Social Credit ideology included, among other things, a conspiracy theory alleging that German-American-Jewish financiers were plotting to enslave the industrial world.⁴⁰ More specifically, World War II was a sham, stated Douglas: Jews, Nazis, communists, socialists, and financiers (notably Jewish financiers) were part of an integrated conspiracy to enslave mankind.⁴¹

The Douglasites built on their mentor's theories, and constructed an interwoven conspiracy theory which linked many perceived evils: communism was associated with fascism, fascism with Zionism, Zionism with Judaism, Judaism with international finance, international finance with world domination, world domination with anti-Christianity, and anti-Christianity with Satanism. These connections were inter-changeable, and it was flexible enough to allow the Douglasites to launch attacks not only against Jews, but

Zionists, supporters of Jewish immigration to Palestine, socialists, communists, and, more locally, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation.

Norman Jaques, M.P. for Wetaskiwin, is perhaps the most notorious anti-Semite in Social Credit history. *Hansard* records many of Jaques's anti-Semitic diatribes; the *Canadian Social Crediter*, to which Jaques was a frequent contributor, is a second source of evidence of Jaques's views. Some examples of Jaques's statements will reveal the degree of his anti-Semitism.

In the House of Commons, Jaques often vented his paranoia about Jews while simultaneously defending himself against charges of anti-Semitism. In July 1943, Jaques stated:

The idea which is prevalent...that the Jews are above criticism, or that to criticize a Jew is to lay oneself open to the charge of Jew baiting is preposterous...I am not afraid of any man whether he has a hooked nose or a forked tail...Immediately the Jew is criticized, somebody takes the attitude that nobody has any right to do it, and if he does it, he is indulging in sacrilege...it is a warning...of what might happen were this minority to achieve the control...that they hope to acquire throughout the world.⁴²

It is important to note Jaques's connection between Jews and Satan. Regularly Jaques would end his speeches with a quote from Scripture: "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free."⁴³ It is apparent that Jaques believed he had revealed the Jewish conspiracy and that such revelation was on the side of God and right. The truth, then, was there for others to see. If they did not accept his argument, Jaques concluded that they had been duped by anti-Christian, Jewish conspirators.

The following excerpt from the *Canadian Social Crediter* is also typical of Jaques's views:

True Social Credit is an economic-political expression of Christianity, making possible the Christian way of life, while Socialism is a political-economic expression of Judaism. It is this fundamental difference between the two philosophies which brings them in opposition, and which causes Socialists to call true Social Crediters anti-Semitic when, in fact, they are anti-Socialist.⁴⁴

A more polemical statement by Jaques is the following, which was also printed in the *Canadian Social Crediter*:

...democracy, world freedom, Christianity itself, are threatened by the pagan forces of Shylock and Marx--"gold" and totalitarianism. There is only one power greater than the evils which threaten our world. And that power is the power of the Christian Cross...Each one of us must hold up the Cross and...overcome the evil forces which are planning to enslave the...world.⁴⁵

Other Social Credit politicians were more circumscribed in their views. M.P. John Blackmore believed that Jews were connected to a world financial conspiracy, and later, a world communist conspiracy.⁴⁶ Yet, as Alan Davies notes, Blackmore denied that he was anti-Semitic. As a Mormon, Blackmore defended his views along religious lines:

I am not anti-semitic, neither is any Social Crediter...I and all Latter Day Saints believe that the Jews are to go back to Palestine--that is far from being anti-Jewish. Many passages in the Bible clearly promise that the Jews are to go back to Palestine, the Promised Land; certainly I will not be entertaining any beliefs contrary to the Scriptures.⁴⁷

National leader Solon Low also entertained the idea that there was a close relationship between international communism, international finance, and international political Zionism.⁴⁸ He often defended Jaques in the House of Commons, yet he too asserted: "We very definitely are not anti-Semitic or anti any race or religion. The Social Credit Movement exists for one purpose...to establish a properly functioning democracy, based upon the fundamental principles of Christianity."⁴⁹ In addition to claiming religious tolerance while advocating Christianity as the only religion able to effect good government, Low also placed the onus of ending anti-Semitism on Jews themselves: "they can do so by denouncing the arch-criminals who are engaged in the world conspiracy against human freedom, be they Gentile or Jew, and, through their powerful organization, join in the growing battle against International Finance, and the World Plotters."⁵⁰

Low's manoeuvre of pitting so-called "good Jews" against "bad Jews" was a common tactic used by Douglasites. The "good Jews" had to become aware that they

were the unwitting dupes of international Jewish financiers and plotting communists, and denounce their fellow "bad" Jews. It is relevant to note Alvin Finkel's statement with reference to Low: "[he] reasoned that he would be opposed to the world plotters no matter what their race or religion, but the majority of them just happened to be Jewish."⁵¹

Ernest Manning, Aberhart's successor as Premier, has been historically vindicated with respect to the Movement's anti-Semitism. Yet he too propounded a similar line, with the notable exception that he did not specifically name the "enemy." In the 1944 provincial election, Manning claimed that Douglas's social credit measures had not been implemented in Alberta because "a small group of international money monopolists" controlled the Ottawa government.⁵² Manning further accused socialists of being in a conspiratorial alliance with finance, and therefore mortal enemies of Social Credit.⁵³ He argued that the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, Social Credit's main political opponent during the war,⁵⁴ was the embodiment of international socialism.

As Finkel argues, Manning's rhetoric reveals that he believed there was an international conspiracy to dupe people into rejecting the social credit solution to their economic troubles.⁵⁵ It is important to note that Manning did not state that the international financiers were of a particular race or religion. However, the idea of an international conspiracy was as real to Manning as it was to the Douglasites. The framework for anti-Semitism was already laid in the conspiracy theory; it remained for Douglasites like Jaques or Low to take Social Credit ideology to its "logical" culmination—to "reveal" to Albertans that the international financiers were Jews.

An important question to be considered is the extent to which this mentalité pervaded the Social Credit Movement. If the Douglasites were the only Social Crediters propounding anti-Semitism, and other Social Credit leaders were merely expounding a conspiracy theory, what effect did this really have on the Movement as a whole? This question probes into the heart of social history, to the "regular" Social Crediters who did not hold positions of power. Although the effect is difficult to assess, some glimpses are

possible. The *Canadian Social Crediter*, widely read by Social Credit supporters, provides valuable insight. In a readers' questionnaire circulated in March 1946, Norman Jaques and Norman James, both Douglasites, were named two of the three most popular feature writers of the paper.⁵⁶ In the paper's "Open Forum," one reader wrote: "Does it not seem strange that...if even a whisper is heard protesting against unlawful acts by the Jews, or the interference in constitutional affairs or elections of other nations, by Russia, then the protester is ticketed as anti-Jew or anti-Russian [?]"⁵⁷

After reading in the *Canadian Social Crediter* that the international financial monopoly was composed mostly of Jews but also of Germans and other nationalities, another reader wrote: "I hope those people who go yapping anti-Semitic at us will take the time to read this article and discover that we are not listing just Jewish financiers but the financiers of every country."⁵⁸

Another reader stated with relief: "Now I can answer the perennial question: WHO are the international financiers?"⁵⁹

It is probable that there were thousands of Social Crediters who were not anti-Semitic. What is at issue here, however, is evidence, and the evidence points to the conclusion that anti-Semitism was not an isolated phenomenon within the Social Credit Movement. Anti-Semitic sentiment was not confined to a few marginal Social Crediters; rather, it was integral to the Movement's ideology. As explained in earlier chapters, because of the anti-Semitism inherent in Social Credit economic, political and religious doctrines, Social Credit ideology was, by definition, anti-Semitic. Those Social Crediters who embraced the Movement's economic, political, or religious doctrines, accordingly expressed anti-Semitic sentiment.

The anti-Semitism expressed in Social Credit circles, then, was a consequence of the Movement's ideology, not an afterthought created by a few embittered followers. It was the manifestation of this ideology among leading Social Crediters which Manning attempted to eradicate in the "purge" of 1948.

The story of the "Purge of '48" is complex and, unsurprisingly, has its origins in events which occurred well before 1948. The following series of events, which reached their apex in Manning's firing of top Social Credit politicians in February 1948, began with the activities of the Social Credit Board. John Barr notes that as early as 1943,

the Social Credit board began to pick up the thread of Douglas's world-plot theories and weave them into its annual reports...which made reference to a "fund of evidence" pointing to a plot, world-wide in scope, deliberately engineered by a small number of ruthless international financiers to accomplish their objectives. A listing of such financiers showed that many had Jewish names.⁶⁰

But it was the Social Credit Board's 1946 Annual Report which "discreetly supported Douglas' politically unacceptable ideas,"⁶¹ and which had been tabled without Manning's perusal or approval,⁶² that brought matters to a head. In Palmer's words, "[t]he inevitable purge came in 1947 after the Social Credit board's 1946 Annual Report, which was released in March, 1947."⁶³ Barr provides the most complete summary of the contents of the Board's report:

The report began with a repetition of the world-plot thesis and then went on to question the validity of the secret ballot. It proposed a signed, open ballot in which the individual voter would be liable to taxation only for those government programs he specifically endorsed on election day. It also called into question the desirability of political parties, arguing instead for non-partisan "leagues of electors" or voters' unions, carefully controlled from the bottom up and oriented to pressuring government for specific results.⁶⁴

The provincial legislature's response to the Social Credit Board's report was extremely negative. As Palmer notes, "the anti-semitism of the document coming on top of several years of public and legislative objection to public expenditure for the board, precipitated an uproar in the legislature."⁶⁵ Having earlier asserted the link between the Social Credit Board's policy and the anti-Semitism espoused by Major Douglas, C.C.F. provincial leader Elmer Roper stated that the Board's report was "absurd and a menace to democracy," and that the Board did not have the right to issue official statements as an

"arm of the government operating on public funds."⁶⁶ Premier Manning responded that the Social Credit Board was not an "arm of the government;" rather, it operated under the direct authority of the legislature and was "at liberty to function within that authority designated to it by this legislature."⁶⁷

On the government side, A. V. Bourcier, M.L.A. for Lac Ste. Anne and chairman of the Social Credit Board, declared that "at no place in the report can one say there is one reference to any Jews or to world plotters led by eminent Jews."⁶⁸ Premier Manning stated in the legislature that he would soon issue a statement on behalf of the Social Credit government and the party which would make clear their position *vis à vis* the Board's report.⁶⁹

Meanwhile, the *Calgary Herald* published an enlightening article on the Social Credit Board's Report in which it castigated the Board's members for offering "a warmed-over serving of the ideas of Major C. H. Douglas...with all overt indications of Major Douglas's basic philosophy of anti-Semitism carefully deleted."⁷⁰ The *Herald* noted that the Board offered "evidence" that increasing bureaucracy and state control were a result of a "diabolical Master Plan;" and that specifically, this could be seen in the figure of Bernard M. Baruch, who was appointed United States representative on the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission. The significance of this "evidence" requires explanation. As L. D. Byrne, Technical Adviser to the Social Credit Board stated:

[t]he framework of a world authority of control was brought into being under the United Nations Charter, with Zionists and their nominees occupying the controlling positions. The Atomic Bomb Control Committee in the U.S. was successively [sic] placed under Zionist chairmen. The Palestine issue has been developed by the Zionists as the focus of the deteriorating situation.⁷¹

Accordingly, commented the *Herald*:

This [evidence] is utterly meaningless unless one accepts Major Douglas's theory that every individual who is extremely wealthy and a Jew (and Bernard Baruch is both) is necessarily a ringleader in the plot to seize world power. Mr. Baruch's

high ideals and outstanding record of public service make such a notion preposterous.⁷²

At the closing of the legislative session on April 1, 1947, Premier Manning issued a statement in which he referred to a "deliberate attempt...to associate the government and the Social Credit Movement with various viewpoints and individual opinions which we, as a government and a movement, do not endorse and to which we do not subscribe."⁷³ Manning then outlined three resolutions: first, he reaffirmed Social Credit's "unswerving allegiance" to the principles of Social Credit; second,

We condemn, repudiate and completely disassociate ourselves and the Social Credit movement in Alberta from any statements or publications which are incompatible with the established British ideals of democratic freedom or which endorse, excuse or incite anti-Semitism or racial or religious intolerance in any form.⁷⁴

Lastly, Manning promised to unite the people of Alberta and Canada in order to end the "present vicious financial monopoly" and to restore control over money and credit to the people themselves.⁷⁵ These statements were the beginning of a very long battle, one in which Social Credit ideology would come under severe scrutiny.

L. D. Byrne offered Solon Low, national leader of the Social Credit Association of Canada (S.C.A.C.), his thoughts on the recent developments in the Movement in a letter dated April 14, 1947. Noting that "matters were brought to a head as a result of the rumpus created by Roper...over the [Social Credit] Board Report", Byrne stated that he thought a serious schism was inevitable:

Apparently the intention was for the caucus to disassociate the Alberta organization from the national movement, the Liverpool Secretariat and Douglas. (I gather that, like me, you are considered just a nasty anti-Semite.) The [Social Credit] Board was also to be either abolished or the personnel changed.⁷⁶

A concurrent event that was proving to be a thorn in the Movement's side was the controversial content of the Party's national organ, the *Canadian Social Crediter* (C.S.C.), or more specifically its editor, John Patrick Gillese. Gillese was a fervent Douglasite, and

he touted Social Credit's anti-Semitic ideology in his editorial policy. An informative document is an undated "strictly confidential" memorandum to "contributors and directors of policy" of the *C.S.C.*, in which Gillese informed these selected Social Crediters that,

we have allowed our propaganda to become too defensive, rather than offensive. In too many cases, we are continually explaining that we are not anti-Semitic, that we are not fascist, that we meant one thing when we said another...The enemy has manoeuvred us into this position. We should concentrate on offensive action again, putting the enemy on the defensive...The enemy has the best brains which money can buy; we must produce the best which money cannot buy...⁷⁷

Gillese was also very defensive in his role as managing editor of the paper. He rigidly adhered to the rule that the *C.S.C.* was a propaganda organ of the National Movement, not of the Alberta Social Credit Movement, or of any other provincial Social Credit movement. In theory, the *C.S.C.* did take its direction from the *S.C.A.C.*, and its instructions from the resolutions passed at the *S.C.A.C.*'s national conventions. The essence of the problem, however, was that although the *C.S.C.* was a national organ and only under the jurisdiction of the *S.C.A.C.*, the *S.C.A.C.* was in fact the national umbrella organization for all the provincial Social Credit movements--namely, the Social Credit Association of Canada in British Columbia, the Alberta Social Credit League, the Saskatchewan Social Credit League, the Manitoba Social Credit League, the Social Credit League of Ontario, and the Institute of Political Action in Quebec. These provincial movements circulated the *C.S.C.*, made contributions to the *C.S.C.*, and generally believed the paper to be a mouth-piece for the entire Social Credit movement in Canada. When Gillese did not print what each movement believed was the state of affairs in its respective province, it would be highly critical of him. Further, the only provincial Social Credit League to have an elected government was Alberta; hence, anything published under the Social Credit banner was associated in the public mind with the Alberta Social Credit government.

A conflict involving one of the provincial Social Credit movements and the *C.S.C.* occurred shortly after the Social Credit Board's controversial report. A confrontation arose between the British Columbia Social Credit movement and Gillese in his capacity as *C.S.C.* editor. It is important to note that although this confrontation seemed to precipitate Manning's ideological cleansing of the *C.S.C.*'s content, it is arguable that Manning already intended to effect changes in the *C.S.C.* as part of his larger attempt to dissociate Social Credit ideology from the Movement as a whole.

The major players in this conflict were Major A. H. Jukes, second vice-president of the S.C.A.C. and provincial president of the British Columbia Social Credit movement, *C.S.C.* editor John Gillese, S.C.A.C. president Solon Low, S.C.A.C. chairman J. N. Haldeman, and Premier Manning. Jukes wrote to Manning in May 1947, complaining about Gillese's editorials on B.C.'s Social Credit movement. Stating that one of Gillese's articles contained "seventeen major fallacies," Jukes further noted Gillese's refusal to publish Jukes's weekly contributions to the *C.S.C.* Jukes was part of the S.C.A.C. executive, yet he could not wield control over the *C.S.C.* or its editor. At his wits' end, he asked Manning what could be done.⁷⁸

Manning wrote to Jukes, stating that

I think my views with respect to the Social Crediter, under Gillese's editorship, are well known. I think I have advised pretty nearly every member of the National Executive that the Canadian Social Crediter for some considerable time has been a definite detriment to the Social Credit Movement and to our work as a Government in this Province. In spite of this fact the National Executive thus far has not taken any effective action to correct the situation.⁷⁹

Manning also stated that he had advised J. N. Haldeman as chairman of the S.C.A.C. that unless the policy and subject matter of the *C.S.C.* were drastically changed, the Alberta Movement would disassociate itself publicly from the paper.⁸⁰ He further noted that the *C.S.C.* should have had a circulation of about fifty or sixty thousand subscribers by that time when, in fact, it had only about eleven thousand. But, Manning continued,

no one who values their name or their influence is going to get behind a publication which contains little but negative and destructive criticism flavored with "Jew-baiting" and of a nature that tends to stir up discontent and discord instead of uniting the people of Canada in a positive, constructive crusade for social and economic justice and political and economic freedom.⁸¹

Manning's statement revealed his unflagging faith in the Social Credit "crusade;" however, as far as Manning was concerned, "Jew-baiting" was not an acceptable part of Social Credit ideology. He assured Jukes that "if the [C.S.C.] had remained under the provincial organization in this Province...its policy would be very different from what it is today[,] but I have refrained from interfering with a matter which is now under the jurisdiction of the National Executive."⁸² Nonetheless, Manning stated, he would no longer sit idly and watch the C.S.C. work to the detriment of the Movement and the government.⁸³

Accordingly, Manning's written "warning" to Haldeman and the S.C.A.C. indicated his hesitancy to interfere with an organ which was under the national organization, but because "in the public mind the Social Credit government of [Alberta] is bound to be associated with the viewpoints expressed in an organ which purports to be the official mouthpiece of the National Social Credit Movement,"⁸⁴ Manning believed he had grounds for intervention. Noting that the type of material frequently given prominence in the C.S.C. was at "complete variance" with the viewpoint and policy of the Alberta government, and with the principles, aims, and objectives on which Aberhart founded the Alberta Social Credit Movement, Manning warned that unless the S.C.A.C. executive was prepared to take necessary action to remove the detrimental effects of the C.S.C., "we will have no alternative but to disassociate ourselves from the paper entirely and make it clear to the public that it does not in any way express our views or have our endorsement."⁸⁵

Manning's official letter to Haldeman and the S.C.A.C. did not appease Jukes. Jukes reminded the premier that the only members of the S.C.A.C. executive who were responsible for the C.S.C. were not Haldeman, but national leader Low and Jukes himself.

Yet Solon Low completely supported Gillese and his editorship. In a letter to Gillese, Low had written:

You are quite right in declaring that the Canadian Social Crediter is first and foremost a policy organ...the paper is not the official publication of the B.C. party political organization nor the Alberta Social Credit League, nor the Saskatchewan Social Credit League. I look upon the Canadian Social Crediter as an organ through which the provincial party organizations can find expression and through which their cause can be advanced so long as they do not attempt to interfere with editorial policy.⁸⁶

According to Jukes, then, Manning's letter to Haldeman was useless. Low and Gillese were in league with each other, to the exclusion of Jukes. Low did not consult Jukes concerning the *C.S.C.*; Gillese excluded Jukes's written contributions to the *C.S.C.*; and yet Jukes was expected to share responsibility for the *C.S.C.* Consequently, Manning's letter to Haldeman stating that the *C.S.C.* was under the jurisdiction of the S.C.A.C. was really a bureaucratic clouding of the issue, according to Jukes. The only two people who were in control were Low and Gillese. The problem would be solved only if Low decided to take action against Gillese. Jukes stated: "...my position is intolerable...I must continue to promote the sale of the paper, but Gillese has developed a swollen head. Who is going to put him in his place? Solon Low? I doubt it."⁸⁷ Jukes further questioned the initial appointment of Gillese as editor of the *C.S.C.*, asking if it were not true that there were three men considered for the position of editor, and that Manning had rejected the other two candidates. Hence, Low's appointment of Gillese required and received Manning's full support, implied Jukes: "I understand you were all agreed on the appointment of Gillese."⁸⁸

A battleground was being prepared, then, with Manning of the Alberta Social Credit Movement backing Jukes of the British Columbia Movement, against the S.C.A.C. and the *C.S.C.* The issue hinged on the fact that only Alberta had elected a Social Credit government; hence, anything "Social Credit" was strongly associated with the Movement

in Alberta. Manning's influence, then, extended far beyond the Alberta Movement, as evidenced by the agreement soon reached between the S.C.A.C. and Manning over the status of the C.S.C.

Agreement was reached between Low, Haldeman and Manning to appoint a business manager to the C.S.C. who would be satisfactory to Manning. In recorded minutes of a "Meeting of the President of the Association and the Chairman of the Board and Management," it was agreed that,

a business manager should be appointed for the Canadian Social Crediter on the terms proposed by Premier Manning, namely, that if he should be one approved by Mr. Manning and his Government that they would pay his salary...Dr. Haldeman undertakes to write to Mr. Manning and ask him for suggestions as to a Business Manager in whom the Alberta Government would have confidence.⁸⁹

It is significant that the Alberta Movement would pay the C.S.C. manager's salary. Haldeman quickly informed Manning that "Mr. Low and I are of the opinion that Johnny Gillese should be retained as editor, although the business manager is to have complete jurisdiction."⁹⁰ In an earlier "personal and confidential" letter to Gillese, Low stated:

I am very sorry about the way things are working out. It grieves me to see our movement put in jeopardy. Please do not worry about the situation. Just go right ahead and continue doing a good job and I'll fight the battle to prevent our being completely muzzled and rendered incompetent.⁹¹

Soon after the above-noted meeting, Low officially advised Gillese that,

it was decided to obtain help for you in the form of a Business Manager for the paper...We are aware of the very heavy burden you have been carrying in trying to fill both positions--Editor and Business Manager...I am authorized to say that your editorial services are much appreciated and it is our desire to retain you in that position.⁹²

The problem, however, was not simply obtaining a business manager to take over policy of the C.S.C.; it was a battle over the ideology of the entire Social Credit Movement. For Manning, finding a new business manager would only be effective if it

changed the nature of the paper's ideological stance--namely, if the new business manager would silence the anti-Semitism prevalent in the paper's content. There remained, then, to find a business manager who was agreeable to Manning and who could bring Gillese in line.

After exploring several possibilities, the S.C.A.C. executive still had not found a business manager by autumn 1947. Jukes wrote Manning in late September, relaying to him a rumour that "You [Manning] have apparently closed down the Social Credit Board, owing partly to the fact Gillese has some influence with it, and that you are insistent that Gillese give up the editorship."⁹³ Manning, in his reply to Jukes, denied that he had eradicated the Social Credit Board. "With reference to the Social Credit Board," wrote Manning,

...there was very severe criticism of the Board during the last Session, particularly of the unfortunate report which it issued and which, undoubtedly, did the Social Credit Movement, provincially and nationally, considerable harm. Whether the Board will be continued is a matter for the members of the Legislature to decide.⁹⁴

Manning also stated that he was hopeful that a business manager would be found soon, as the paper was again going into the "red;" he admitted that his hopes for simultaneously boosting the paper while he canvassed for increased membership in the Alberta Social Credit League was hampered, "as long as the paper continues to carry the type of material which it has carried in the past."⁹⁵ Manning also repeated his ultimatum that "we will have no alternative but to disassociate ourselves publicly from the paper unless the necessary changes are made."⁹⁶

At the end of October 1947, C.S.C. editor Gillese provided S.C.A.C. chairman Haldeman with a financial statement showing the C.S.C. to be about \$5,000.00 in debt for 1947. Haldeman, seemingly frustrated, stated: "I saw this coming last February, and did everything possible to get things straightened out, but was unable to accomplish anything. It is up to the [National] Council to decide what they want to do...This condition cannot

go on."⁹⁷ Haldeman also referred to an altercation between John Fitzgerald, president of the Social Credit League of Ontario, and Gillese, in which Fitzgerald called Gillese's statements on the Ontario movement "rank impertinence, and contrary to the true facts."⁹⁸ The situation seemed to be escalating, given the exacerbating effect of the paper's revealed financial situation. It appeared that either a manager would have to be hired soon, or Solon Low would have to be brought on side in order to oust Gillese.

When Low forwarded to the members of the S.C.A.C. a proposed agenda for the Council meeting to take place at the end of November 1947, the *C.S.C.*, its policy and management were listed as the fifth of six agenda items.⁹⁹ Gordon Taylor, M.L.A. for Drumheller, who had been considered as a possible manager since July, attended the S.C.A.C. meeting, and the Council agreed to place him in charge of the business management of the paper. However, it is important to note that the position's title had been changed. When asked if he had anyone in mind to assist Gillese on the *C.S.C.*, Premier Manning stated: "I have canvassed the field. We have approached two or three people, but the only man I have in mind is Gordon Taylor of Drumheller, as **Managing Editor**" [emphasis mine].¹⁰⁰ There was also attached to the minutes of the Council meeting a 15-pointed "Policy of the *Canadian Social Crediter*." In this policy it was declared, among other things, that the *C.S.C.*,

...must reflect the principles and tenets of Social Credit as enunciated by Major C. H. Douglas in his address delivered at Swanwick, November 1924...It must put the spotlight on the enemies of the people, but in no case hold any race or creed up to ridicule...In spotlighting anyone, be extremely careful about calling him a Jew or a Scotsman, etc., unless there is a very good reason for so doing...The editors have full scope with the aims of Political Zionism. Political Zionism is tied up hand-and-glove with International Finance and Communism. Invite the Jews to take a stand on Communism.¹⁰¹

In a later document drafted by Gordon Taylor, he noted that it was also agreed at the S.C.A.C. meeting that,

the economic principles of Social Credit as enunciated by Major C. H. Douglas received whole-hearted endorsement but the political and personal views of Major Douglas particularly in regards to Semitism and Holy Scripture were definitely no part or parcel of the Social Credit Association of Canada.¹⁰²

It is important to note the unusual nature of this meeting. It was a National Council meeting--a meeting of the S.C.A.C.--yet Premier Manning from the Alberta Social Credit League was, in effect, "calling the shots." It was this very point which caused much disgruntlement among leading Social Crediters. As evidenced by later correspondence between J. E. Gregoire, vice-president of the S.C.A.C., and Solon Low, there existed the perception that the S.C.A.C. executive's authority was being usurped by Manning and the Alberta government:

...the Canadian Social Creditor has become or is becoming the tool of Mr. Manning and his government...A split is also apparent in the Social Credit Movement of Canada...I do not know exactly what happened at the last meeting of the National Council in Calgary. What I do know, is that no Quebec member was present, and that several non-members from Alberta were there--not all silent, either...as a member of the [national] executive, am I not to bear the responsibility of what is published by the supposed official organ of the Association? Is not this situation placing upon me, as upon Major Jukes and yourself, a responsibility without authority?¹⁰³

Meanwhile, the Alberta Social Credit League had held its convention at the end of November, 1947. At that gathering, Manning announced that the Social Credit Board was to be abolished at the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 1948).¹⁰⁴ Howard Palmer notes that Manning met with the Canadian Jewish Congress shortly after the Alberta Social Credit League convention:

[u]pon meeting with members of the executive of the Canadian Jewish Congress shortly thereafter, Manning also announced a new editorial policy for The Canadian Social Creditor which stipulated 'that in identifying the enemies of the people it should hold no creed or race up in ridicule.'¹⁰⁵

On December 15, 1947, just two weeks after the S.C.A.C. meeting, *C.S.C.* editor Gillese informed S.C.A.C. chairman Haldeman of his resignation from the *C.S.C.*¹⁰⁶ Haldeman expressed his disappointment to Gillese upon receiving his resignation, and asked him to reconsider the matter. "It was the wish of the Council and Mr. Taylor that you remain as Editor although Mr. Taylor would be in complete charge," wrote Haldeman.¹⁰⁷ He assured Gillese that the latter was "no means entirely to blame" for the difficulties and complaints the paper had encountered, as the policy for the running of the *C.S.C.* had never been clearly stated. Now that the S.C.A.C. had drawn up a policy, and had placed Gordon Taylor in charge, Haldeman hoped that Gillese would continue to help get the paper on a sound footing: "The urgency of present day events which you have often written about so well demands that every man do his duty," wrote Haldeman. "Please let us hear that you are continuing on the job."¹⁰⁸

Yet Gillese implied that a relinquishment of the business management of the paper, which he would be forced to do to make way for Taylor, necessitated his resignation as editor.¹⁰⁹ If he could not be the sole authority in the *C.S.C.*'s management, then Gillese would not remain editor.

Further, assertions of Gillese's culpability, however circumspect, prevented him from returning to the fold. Taylor, as new "managing editor," wrote an editorial outlining the new *C.S.C.* policy, which was to run in the paper early in 1948, and whose draft he forwarded to national leader Low for his perusal. The contents of the editorial were taken directly from Manning's closing speech in the legislature the previous April; they referred to "the writings and addresses of one or two within the movement" which made it necessary for the Social Credit Movement to,

condemn, repudiate and completely disassociate ourselves and the Social Credit Movement in Alberta from any statements or publications which are incompatible with the established British ideals of democratic freedom or which endorse, excuse or incite anti-Semitism or racial or religious intolerance in any form.¹¹⁰

It is interesting to note that the *Edmonton Journal*, earlier in the year, had quoted Gordon Taylor, in his response as party whip to the allegations that Social Crediters were Jew-haters, as stating "[that] could not be further from the truth. We flay certain Jewish bankers for their world-planning Communistic tactics but we have never accused all Jews as being participants in a hideous world-plot to enslave the masses."¹¹¹

The *Calgary Herald*, meanwhile, had been following the activities of the provincial and national Social Credit movement. In a telling editorial, it provided details of the "Social Credit purge." It referred to the break-up of the Social Credit Board, whose propaganda wing was transferred to the Alberta Social Credit League, and whose "research" section was relegated to the Department of Economic Affairs. The editorial also mentioned the Alberta Social Credit League's meeting in November, in which it was resolved that no party faction would be able to act independently of the S.C.A.C., thereby eliminating a separate Douglasite faction. The editorial then referred to the C.S.C.:

Its editor has resigned, and one of his principal contributors, Norman Jaques, M.P., has been informed that his anti-Semitic diatribes have no place in the chaste--or chastened--pages of the party organ. The writings of Major C. H. Douglas will also be subject to purification.¹¹²

Commenting on the several occasions when Manning felt compelled to rise in the legislature to disclaim any concurrence with Jaques's views, the *Herald* editor asked if there were a Manning Social Credit or a Low Social Credit distinct from Douglas Social Credit, or "has the government so far departed from the true philosophy that it can no longer countenance the very teachings that gave it birth? Is it the heretics who are going to the scaffold--or the true believers?"¹¹³ In asking this question, The *Herald* pointed to the fundamental shift occurring within Social Credit ideology. Manning was "cleaning house" of the unacceptable manifestations of the Movement's ideology.

B. R. Swankey, provincial leader of the Labor-Progressive Party offered his party's interpretation of this recent "housecleaning." In a radio speech given over Station CFRN

on December 30, 1947, Swankey, referring to the change in editorial policy of the *C.S.C.*, stated:

It seems to me that this latest announcement does not indicate any real change in Social Credit policies...it is a case of a section of one of its groups being severely rapped over the knuckles, not for being anti-Jewish or pro-fascist, but for expressing these attitudes publicly and thus discrediting the party in the eyes of the Alberta people. Some face-lifting is being done. The show window is being cleaned up but the shelves inside are still piled with the same reactionary goods.¹¹⁴

The Douglasite *Social Crediter* in England did not view recent occurrences in the Canadian Social Credit Movement kindly. Claiming that Jews were tied to international Communist revolution, the paper's editor asserted that Manning's purge was part of this revolutionary attempt:

Mr. Gillese, the able young editor of the Canadian Social Crediter, has "resigned" in favour of a nominee whose first action was to announce that no articles, e.g., by Mr. Norman Jaques, M.P., would be permitted; or any anti-anything. So we can conclude that, for the moment, a faction has gained control in the Province which is benevolently inclined to revolution...A battle is in progress for the soul of the world; and it may easily be that Alberta is a key position.¹¹⁵

If Gillese's somewhat forced resignation were not enough to create dissension within the Movement, one final event occurred which precipitated Manning's "purge of '48." The matter was L. D. Byrne's report to the Social Credit Board, submitted in January 1948 in his capacity as Technical Advisor to the Movement. Because Manning had already decided to abolish the Social Credit Board, Byrne was responsible for making a final report to the Board. In his final report, Byrne flaunted in all its finery Douglas's world plot thesis. "[T]he issue in the world at the present time," wrote Byrne,

is Christendom versus Zionism; that the present plight of the remnants of our civilization is the result of a deliberate and deep-seated conspiracy to enslave humanity under a World Police State pursued through the policy of monopoly, manifested in international finance, socialism and communism, and rooted in political Zionism.¹¹⁶

It is worth noting that page 9 of this document is missing from the archival records. The last point preceding the missing page refers to Douglasites' perceptions of being slandered as "anti-Semitic":

The evidence is overwhelming that the principals in the advancement of the policy of Monopoly are those comprising the hierarchy of international Zionism. Any attempt to expose this fact, to identify the individuals concerned or to bring out the evidence, is met immediately with frantic counter-attacks. The persons making any such attempt are denounced as "anti-Semitic", as "fascists" and anything else that might serve to minimize their influence. The evidence is discredited as being "forged", "prejudiced", or "false".¹¹⁷

Among other points, Byrne also argued that before economic changes could be effected along the lines advocated by C. H. Douglas, the "enemy" in all its political and social forms, would have to be challenged and defeated. Only then could real Social Credit measures be implemented. Byrne also sided with the Ontario and Quebec Social Credit Movements, which were Douglasite in ideology and had been working at cross-purposes to Manning's movement for quite some time. Byrne explicitly stated that, with the exception of the Ontario and Quebec movements, "the Canadian movement is pursuing a course of action which is, in itself, in conflict with the policy of Social Credit. This cannot fail to play into the hands of the enemy, and if persisted in, lead to the disruption of the Movement."¹¹⁸

In addition to presenting his report to the Social Credit Board, Byrne also submitted a copy of the Report to the provincial cabinet. The cabinet had a meeting on the matter of Byrne's Report, and R. E. Ansley, Minister of Education, agreed with the contents of Byrne's report and supported Byrne's position.¹¹⁹ At this point Premier Manning stepped in and began executing the "Purge." As John Barr relays:

When the matter of Byrne came before cabinet, Ansley supported Byrne. Later, Manning called Ansley into his office and suggested that in light of the need for cabinet unanimity, perhaps Ansley should resign. Ansley stolidly replied that he couldn't see why this disagreement should be reason for his resignation. 'All right,'

said Manning dryly, 'I'm asking you for your resignation. Now you've got a reason.'¹²⁰

On February 21, 1948, the press announced that Manning had asked for the resignations of L. D. Byrne, Social Credit Board Technical Adviser, and Minister of Education, R. E. Ansley. Byrne, Ansley, and Gillese were the only persons whom Manning "fired." A. V. Bourcier, M.L.A. and chairman of the Social Credit Board, Norman James, M.L.A., columnist for the *C.S.C.* and a member of the Board,¹²¹ Patrick Ashby, M.L.A.,¹²² Ron Gostick, organizer of the Union of Electors (a Douglasite faction from Ontario which had been attempting to elect non-party representatives), J. E. Gregoire, vice-president of the S.C.A.C., and Norman Jaques, M.P.,¹²³ all departed Social Credit ranks by their own choice. What was initially labelled a cabinet shake-up turned into a full-blown rift within the Social Credit Movement.

In his draft notice to the Legislative Assembly announcing the resignation of Ansley, Premier Manning denied a split in Social Credit ranks. He specifically stated that,

...the matter in which Mr. Ansley finds himself at variance with the government does not arise from any change in the government's position with respect to its allegiance to Social Credit principles and its determination to establish a true Social Credit economy in this country...Mr. Ansley has felt unable to disassociate himself from viewpoints and actions at distinct variance with those of the Government and the Social Credit Movement in Alberta.¹²⁴

The reason for Ansley's and Byrne's firings was not at all clear. The *Calgary Herald* reported that the schism in the Movement was because,

[t]he "Manningites" and the Douglasites" disagreed over the question of whether further efforts should be made to institute Social Credit theories in the province or whether the party should concentrate on efforts to elect a federal government and then inaugurate the party's monetary reform theories on a Canada-wide scale.¹²⁵

Although the *Herald* was correct that the issue of expanding the Social Credit Movement to the national level had been a point of contention, the reasons for Manning's firings were much larger. The impetus behind Manning's purge went to the heart of Social

Credit ideology--there was an ideological battle occurring, not between the Social Credit Movement and the powers of International Finance--but between those who accepted and advocated Social Credit ideology in all its manifestations, and those who did not. The fact that Byrne's original mandate had been to construct a plan to implement Social Credit theories, and that ultimately Manning rejected his plans and ideas, showed that Manning's rejection was a direct repudiation of Social Credit ideology. Manning's purge was effected not only to move away from Social Credit economic theories, but to stifle also Social Credit's anti-Semitic component. The result was a tearing apart of the Movement, not a quiet shift in ideological focus.

Contemporary newspaper reports and editorials offer valuable insight into the cabinet debacle. In "Kick Them Out: They Believe in Douglas," the *Calgary Herald* noted that both Ansley and Byrne were known to be "strong advocates of the simon-pure Douglas theory." However, stated the *Herald*, "[the government] has been moving farther and farther away from the party's original platform, doubtless because the possibility of its implementation has become demonstrably more remote."¹²⁶ In assessing the repercussions of the purge, the *Herald* stated:

[The Alberta government] has already "purged" the party newspaper and has, for all practical purposes, cut itself adrift from Douglas Social Crediters in the federal field. It will undoubtedly pay lip service to the Social Credit theory so long as it continues to call itself a Social Credit party. But so far as practical policies are concerned, it will be an "old line" party very similar to those it has consistently vilified.¹²⁷

The *Medicine Hat Daily News*, remarking on the "split developing" in Social Credit ranks, similarly commented:

The provincial government has learned by the salutary experience of the responsibilities of administration that a major part of the Social Credit theory cannot be made effective by a provincial government. Consequently it has carried on as a nominal Social Credit administration but actually it has governed the province along orthodox lines. This apparently is not to the liking of the fanatical

element of the party which has learned nothing from the experiences of the past 25 years, and consequently has been in more or less revolt against the government.¹²⁸

The *Lethbridge Herald* interpreted Manning's purge as a pre-election manoeuvre.

Noting the necessity of a provincial election in the near future, the *Herald* stated: "It would appear that Mr. Manning is readying for an election...He is going to make Social Credit as respectable as it can be made with such a party name in the hope that it will be re-elected not as a Social Credit party in the 1935 meaning of the term but as a Manning party bent on the best development of a Province abounding in Nature's riches."¹²⁹

The *Edmonton Bulletin* and *Calgary Albertan* were more precise in their interpretations of the reason for Manning's purge. The *Bulletin* reported: "The difference of opinion in the government...stems from the reluctance of many Social Credit members, including Premier Manning, to support the alleged anti-Semitic policies of Major Douglas."¹³⁰ The *Albertan* cleverly noted that "[i]n recent years Major Douglas has been advocating doctrines which Premier Manning would not accept, such as anti-Semitism and certain limitations of the democratic processes. Mr. Byrnes [sic] apparently had been following his mentor, Major Douglas, rather than his employer, the Alberta government."¹³¹ In its editorial, the *Albertan* also noted the long-standing division within Social Credit ranks:

For some years it has been evident that the strength of the government lay in an unofficial coalition of two forces. First there have been the original die-hard Social Crediters anxious for a major change in the economy of the province and the country, and secondly many thousands of responsible citizens who think Social Credit is silly but that the Manning government is a good government and deserves to be supported...Both [Byrne and Ansley] have made it clear by their stand that they consider allegiance to their principles more important than allegiance to the government.¹³²

The *Peace River Record-Gazette* had a similar, albeit convoluted, message of government support:

Supporters of the government will find something worthy of commendation in the fact the government has had the courage to remove from its midst a member and an employee who did not agree entirely with the philosophy and its administration, and therefore could not be expected to implement the wishes of the government, with the result a purge seemed in order.¹³³

While the press was commenting on the split in party ranks, the Douglasites were busy organizing a rival body. In a memorandum to "all Canadian Social Crediters," L. D. Byrne advocated that,

steps be taken forthwith to mobilize the Canadian [Social Credit] Movement as an effective instrument for militant action against the unchecked onslaught of the forces identified with so-called communism, monopoly finance, and state socialism which are centred in international Zionism seeking world domination...For this purpose it has become necessary to set up a Canadian Social Credit Secretariat working in close conjunction with The Social Credit Secretariat of Major C. H. Douglas.¹³⁴

Byrne also advocated setting up a national Social Credit publication in order to pursue a "genuine" Social Credit policy and which would serve as the spearhead for the Douglasites' offensive.¹³⁵

Meanwhile, former *C.S.C.* editor Gillese, along with the *C.S.C.*'s assistant editor Kenneth Burton, established the Douglas Social Credit Council. In an attempt to rally support, Gillese distributed among rank and file Social Crediters a circular under the name of the Douglas Social Credit Council. In it, the Council asserted that the National Council of the S.C.A.C. had decided that no longer would there be "any effective exposure of communism and socialism," at a time when Social Crediters' very existence was threatened by international communism. Second, except for his economic proposals, "which in themselves are no longer considered dangerous by the enemy," Douglas's writings were to be completely repudiated. (In fact, Manning was repudiating Douglas's economic theories as well.) Third, "fearless and informed Social Credit writers such as Norman Jaques, M.P." were to be banned from the paper, notwithstanding that Social Crediters pledged to

uphold "freedom in all respects." Moreover, the circular argued, Jaques had been honoured internationally for his "fearless exposure of the enemy."¹³⁶

The notice also appealed for funds for the Douglas Social Credit Council, whose policy was,

to advance Christian democracy and personal freedom. We shall fearlessly attack and expose the three evil enemies of genuine democracy--international finance, international communism and international political Zionism (which, for the most part, is controlled by atheists and is also an enemy of the **common Jew** [emphasis mine] and of cultural and religious Judaism).¹³⁷

The distinction the Douglasites made between "international political Zionism" and "cultural and religious Judaism" will be discussed ahead. The present point to be made is that the Douglasites, in desiring to avoid the label "anti-Semitic," focused instead on the division between supporters and opponents of Zionism. It was this kind of obscurantism which allowed Douglasites to rally against Zionism when, in fact, their diatribes were against the traditionally perceived enemy: international Jewish conspirators. The new Douglas Council was earnestly attempting to avoid the slander of anti-Semitism, while still holding tightly to Social Credit's anti-Semitic ideology.

The Douglas Social Credit Council circular was met with much confusion among regular Social Crediters. Manning was inundated with letters from loyal Social Crediters asking for clarification of the division within Social Credit ranks. One H. Bridges, a retired pensioner from Strathclair, Manitoba, wrote to Manning:

Being in a little quandary i thought possibly you might help me out on a few questions, Having listened to your back to the Bible hour i would judge that anything you would say could be relied on as being correct, About a week ago i received from the Doulas [sic] Credit Council A printed letter together with a form to fill out & return to their Edmonton Address, As you know i am 100 per cent Social Credit i did not feel like returning form until i had got a little more information & i thought ~~you~~ could give me some information that i need...¹³⁸

A. A. Downey, a Presbyterian preacher from Nokomis, Saskatchewan, wrote:

Just a few lines to yourself Personally to ask you a straight Question. It is being circulated and used for Political propaganda here that the Social Credit Party is Anti-Jewish or to use the exact words: is Anti-Semetic [sic] Now is this true Mr. Manning or it is not. I want a definite statement from yourself. Is it true with the Alberta set-up of Social Credit or is it true with the original frame work of Social Credit as it was established in the Old Land. Let me Know by Return Mail.¹³⁹

T. W. Bridges from New Westminster, B.C. also required clarification:

Persistent rumours have it you have become sympathetic to the political Zionist, which I find hard to believe. I do not expect, however, you to come out with views which would indicate you to be "anti-Semitic." a term cleverly used by the Jew to denounce anyone who detests that national's [sic] conduct, as now coming to light. But it does seem to me there is a method of approach to this vital subject--this Jewish question--which would indicate to those intent on wrecking the British Empire you are utterly opposed to their anti-Christian propaganda & I sincerely hope you will divulge to the world that you have nothing in common with political Zionism & all it stands for.¹⁴⁰

All these letters to Premier Manning wanted answers to the same question: What was going on in the Social Credit Movement and whose side should "loyal" Social Crediters be on? Rather than circulating a form letter of his own, Manning responded to each letter, claiming, with little variation in rhetoric, that,

we are determined not to allow anything to divert us from the course that we have followed...since the time the movement was started in Alberta under the late leader, Premier Aberhart...There has no and will not be any repudiation of Social Credit principles and we...shall not be sidetracked by abstract side issues and racial prejudices which have nothing to do with the fundamental principles of a true Social Credit economy.¹⁴¹

In a separate letter to a Social Creditor, Manning stated the "so-called" Douglas Social Credit Council,

consists of only a very few individuals who seem to feel that they have some special claim to allegiance to Social Credit principles...they seem to be imbued with the idea that the way to advance the Social Credit cause is to attack Zionism and to brand as a Communist anyone who disagrees with anti-Semitism.¹⁴²

On the Social Credit Hour Radio Broadcast, Manning gave a speech which the *C.S.C.* printed verbatim on March 25, 1948. In it Manning referred to the actions of a "handful of unnamed individuals" who, through the former editor of the *C.S.C.* were appealing for funds for their "self-styled" Douglas Social Credit Council. Stating that the Douglas Social Credit Council's criticisms had no foundation in fact, and were misleading and false, Manning asserted that propaganda claiming "that the Government or the Alberta Social Credit League has, in any way, repudiated the principles of Social Credit as enunciated by Major C. H. Douglas likewise is wholly false and unjustified."¹⁴³ It is crucial to note that what was equally false, however, was Manning's own statement. His purge was, in effect, a complete repudiation of Social Credit ideology and its inherent anti-Semitism.

Yet Manning's purge contained a fundamental paradox, for he was simultaneously repudiating and embracing Social Credit ideology. Reiterating that which had been adopted as policy at the Alberta Social Credit League convention the previous November, Manning stated:

We re-iterate our intention to do everything in our power to unite the people of this Province and country irrespective of color, race or creed in an all out effort to end the present vicious financial monopoly and restore the effective control over money and credit to the people themselves.¹⁴⁴

So, although Manning dissociated the Movement from any statements or publications which "endorse, excuse or incite anti-Semetism [sic] or racial or religious intolerance,"¹⁴⁵ his rhetoric implied that his faith in the international financial conspiracy had not waned. In dissociating his government and the Movement from the Social Credit ideologues, Manning simply preferred to leave the enemy unnamed.

It can be argued, then, that wide ideological differences were not the impetus for Manning's purge. The difference in ideology between Manning and the Douglasites was merely one of degree. Manning ran with the conspiracy theory to a point--and stopped

short of labelling the ideologically defined enemy. Why Manning did not bring the conspiracy theory to its full culmination is not an easily answerable question. However, the answer may be found in an examination of the reasons for the purge. It must be emphasized that the issue is not whether or not Manning purged these Social Credit members because of their anti-Semitism. It is accepted that one of the main reasons Manning effected the purge was due to the anti-Semitism evidenced in the Movement. The question, rather, is this: What caused Manning to purge these Social Credit ideologues--these anti-Semites--notwithstanding many ideological affinities with them? It is beneficial to examine others' interpretations of this matter.

John Barr offers a straightforward explanation for Manning's purge. He states that "[b]y 1947 it was obvious that the Douglasite militants in the cabinet and the Social Credit Board were becoming a political liability to Social Credit, as well as a challenge to Manning's new direction in leadership. It was clear the militants would have to be removed."¹⁴⁶

C. B. Macpherson offers an insightful interpretation of the reasons for the purge:

Genuine detestation of anti-Semitism, as well as recognition of its inappropriateness in Alberta, led Manning to purge the "Douglasites" from the Alberta movement and government. But to jettison "Douglasism" was really to complete the rejection of all the principles that were uniquely social credit; all that was left was the plebiscitarian heritage. The Manning forces, who called themselves the "realists," in opposition to the Douglasites, were, in view of their failure to introduce social credit in practice, truly realist in abandoning social credit principles. But this kind of realism required also that they should continue to assert the principles. It is the realism of plebiscitarian leadership.¹⁴⁷

Finally, Howard Palmer provides the most comprehensive explanation for Manning's purge:

...Manning's expulsion of the Douglasites had many causes and was not simply a reaction to their anti-semitism. Some of them had criticized Manning's government for its failure to implement Social Credit policies and were thus challenging his leadership from within the party. In addition, the Social Credit

Board's 1946 report was not only more openly anti-semitic than previous reports, but it also followed Major Douglas in criticizing the secret ballot...Combined with these notions, the board's anti-semitism appeared to be just one more aspect of an ideology which was veering toward fascism. Further, Douglasite opposition to Zionism...was incompatible with the world-view of many Alberta Protestants who saw the return of the Jews to Palestine as a fulfillment of prophecy and one of the key "signs of the times" foretelling the imminence of Christ's second coming. Finally, the anti-semitism of Douglas and his followers had, upon the revelations in 1946 of the mass destruction of Jews by Nazi Germany, become intolerably incompatible with the sympathies of democratic countries.¹⁴⁸

Many key issues are raised in these three interpretations. Barr raises the issue of "political liability;" Macpherson emphasizes that there was a complete abandonment of Social Credit's economic, political and religious doctrines, with the result that the Movement was Social Credit only in name. Palmer brings to the fore the issue of Protestantism and its relationship to Social Credit anti-Semitism. In assessing these interpretations, it is useful to categorize them in accordance with Social Credit ideology. The reasons for Manning's purge, then, can be divided into three categories: economic, political, and religious.

Possible religious reasons for Manning's purge will be examined first. As discussed in Chapter Two, earlier histories of Social Credit have emphasized the link between the Movement's anti-Semitism and Protestant fundamentalism.¹⁴⁹ However, as Howard Palmer, David Elliott, and others have shown, both Aberhart's and Manning's fundamentalism was of a kind that was simultaneously positive and ambivalent toward Jews.¹⁵⁰ Palmer makes a crucial statement with respect to this issue:

...it should be stressed that the tie between Social Credit and anti-semitism did not come through Protestant fundamentalism. None of the eight social Credit MLA's who served on the Social Credit board belonged to fundamentalist sects: two were Catholics, four belonged to the United Church and two identified themselves as non-denominational Protestants. Norman Jaques was a nominal Anglican. On the other hand, the two fundamentalist premiers of the province, Aberhart and Manning, became increasingly critical of anti-semitism; and Manning eventually forced the Douglasites into silence.¹⁵¹

Palmer's statement calls into question a traditionally accepted interpretation of the history of Alberta's religious culture. If we return to the arguments presented in earlier chapters, it becomes clear that it was not specifically Protestant fundamentalism which provided a framework for anti-Semitism within Social Credit, but Christianity itself. Social Credit ideology held up Christianity--whether Protestant and Catholic--as the bastion of freedom and democracy, and pitted Christianity against Judaism and all its accompanying "evils." Accordingly, Social Credit anti-Semitism was rooted in a very basic dichotomy between Christianity and Judaism. Certain denominations may have been more predisposed to anti-Judaism, but to state that anti-Semitism within the Social Credit Movement was a result of its Protestant fundamentalist base is highly misguided.

The possible religious reasons for Manning's purge, then, cannot be ascribed to his fundamentalist faith or a repudiation of his fundamentalist faith. Rather, any religious reasons for the Purge would have rested in Manning's own personal stand on Jews and Judaism, which cannot clearly be gleaned from his fundamentalist leanings. What is clear, however, is that Manning wanted no part in "Jew-baiting." Historians of Social Credit reinforce this interpretation. David Elliott states that "Manning found the anti-Semitism of the Douglasites an embarrassment;"¹⁵² David Bercuson argues that "Manning was not pleased with the anti-Semitic tinge which the Social Credit board and followers of Douglas were giving to the government of Alberta;"¹⁵³ and Alvin Finkel notes that "Manning set out to rid the party of people whose views reminded the public of the Nazis rather than their opponents."¹⁵⁴ How much weight can be given to the religious reasons for Manning's purge, however, is difficult to measure. It is important to note that when Manning took over as premier in 1943, anti-Semitism was alive and well in the Movement. If religious repugnance to anti-Semitism was the impetus for the purge, it must be asked why it took Manning four years to pass judgment on the lack of racial-religious tolerance within the Movement.

Other motives, then, must be considered. Palmer offers an explanation for Manning's purge which includes religious as well as political motives:

After Aberhart's death, Manning was left to deal with the Douglasites and their increasingly outspoken anti-semitism, which was blackening the reputation of the Social Credit movement. Ultimately, Manning was forced to take a public stand on the question...Not only did Manning's particular fundamentalist views conflict with anti-semitism, but also Manning was too politically astute to allow Social Credit dogmatism to prevent him from seeing the political consequences of anti-semitism. Manning's view of who was threatening freedom was more circumscribed and certainly more respectable than that of Douglas. For Manning and his followers, socialism was the prime ideological and political foe.¹⁵⁵

If religious reasons were not the primary motives for Manning's purge, it is clear that they played some role. However, as Palmer notes, political expediency had much to do with the events of 1948. To fully understand the political and economic motives for the purge, the political and economic climate of the 1940s must be examined.

Alberta's political climate was shaped by several events. The 1940s witnessed phenomena world-wide in their implications--World War II, European Jewish decimation, Zionism and the birth of Israel, as well as the growth of communism and the ensuing Cold War. The effect of these events on Alberta's political culture can hardly be overemphasized.

World War II and the consequent Jewish refugee crisis was met with mixed reactions by both Canadians and Albertans.¹⁵⁶ In 1943, the Wartime Information Board reported that "it is obvious that prejudice against 'foreigners' in general and Jews in particular has grown during the war."¹⁵⁷ In 1944, the Board reported that Canadians who desired a "closed door" immigration policy had increased to 30 per cent of the population, whereas those who desired an "open door" policy had decreased to 13 per cent.¹⁵⁸

A second statistic is that from a national opinion poll taken in 1946, in which Canadians were asked: "If Canada allows more immigration, are there any of these nationalities which you would like to keep out?"¹⁵⁹ Sixty per cent of the pollsters chose

the Japanese; 49 per cent chose Jews; and 34 per cent chose Germans. As Erna Paris notes with respect to the 49 per cent who chose Jews, "[t]hat figure was less than the sixty per cent who picked the Japanese (who had been interned in Canada during the war), but significantly more than the thirty-four per cent who named the Germans, against whom the war had been fought."¹⁶⁰

In Alberta, response to the revelations of the Holocaust was ambivalent. In the immediate post-war period, the *Canadian Social Crediter* featured many articles about the international financial conspiracy, Semitism, anti-Semitism, Zionism, communism, socialism, and other conspiratorial phenomena, but there was a near paucity of articles on Jewish refugees, Nazi atrocities, or the then current Nuremberg war crimes trials. The paper's few references to these issues were couched in terms like, "[i]t is high time someone exposed a few of the crimes of our own Canadian Gestapo,"¹⁶¹ referring to the persecution of a Christian at the Currie Military Detention Barracks near Calgary. The paper also published little ditties such as, "Why sail away to Europe, [t]o try war criminals there? We have our own. Right well they're known. Of this we're all aware."¹⁶²

However, it must be noted that non-governmental press coverage of these issues was much different. Alberta's papers covered extensively the Jewish refugee crisis, the Nuremberg war crimes trials, Nazi atrocities, and the problem of anti-Semitism in Canada. It is revealing that the provincial government's propaganda organ was publishing highly ambivalent responses to these horrors, while Alberta's regular papers were expressing more empathic responses.

The response of everyday Albertans to the Jewish refugee crisis reveals similar ambivalence. Palmer writes:

Alberta opinion on Jewish refugees divided roughly along urban-rural lines. In urban areas, there was limited support expressed for allowing the entry of Jewish refugees. Most of the opposition came from rural areas...the refugee issue does not appear to have aroused much concern among Albertans; they were too preoccupied with their own economic problems...As the refugee issue drew more

public attention, Aberhart came under pressure from Social Credit locals, mostly in rural areas, to keep out all immigrants. They sent him resolutions opposing immigration of any kind and some opposed Jewish immigrants in particular. They all gave economic considerations as their main reason for opposition.¹⁶³

A related phenomenon to the Jewish refugee crisis was the issue of Palestine and the creation of a Jewish state. In a Gallup poll conducted by the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion in January and February 1946, 49 per cent of those polled agreed that Jews should "be allowed to settle freely in Palestine," and a further 20 per cent agreed that Jews should be allowed to settle there in limited numbers. Seven per cent opposed further Jewish settlement, and 24 per cent were undecided.¹⁶⁴ As David Bercuson notes, "[i]t is likely that the poll reflected a mixture of motives...there can be little doubt that some Canadians favoured Jewish immigration to Palestine because they did not want Jews coming to Canada."¹⁶⁵

Another Gallup poll published in February 1948 revealed that 58 per cent of those polled expressed no opinion with respect to the Palestine issue; 19 per cent sympathized with the Jews; and 23 per cent sympathized with the Arabs. These statistics indicate that many Canadians were either neutral or skeptical about the Palestine issue.¹⁶⁶ As Zachariah Kay argues, "[Canadians] felt that the Canadian government had done what it could to settle the problem, and there was no reason to get involved in the partisanship which had complicated the American political scene."¹⁶⁷

The Social Credit Movement also expressed mixed responses to the establishment of a Jewish state. As noted in an earlier chapter, William Aberhart believed that establishment of a Jewish homeland was a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. Premier Manning was similarly sympathetic to the establishment of a Jewish homeland. He belonged to the Canadian Palestine Committee, which promoted the idea of a Jewish state,¹⁶⁸ and in November 1943, Manning publicly supported the Zionist cause:

The Balfour Declaration is a milestone in the efforts of the Jewish people to gain a foothold in their Homeland...that is so rightfully theirs. It is in Britain's interests to recognize the rights and justice of the Jewish people. Further, there was a Divine

promise that the Jews would someday hold the title deeds of Palestine. They are the only people in the world who had such a promise.¹⁶⁹

Other Social Credit members were not so judicious. Norman Jaques was the most ardent opponent to Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel. He consistently linked patriotism and protection of the sovereignty of the mother country (Britain) with anti-Semitic, anti-Zionist rhetoric. In December 1945, Jaques stated: "...it seems to me that the public hears only the Zionist arguments, never the Arab side of the question...instead of historic fact, the Zionists base their case on racial, cultural and commercial superiority. These claims on behalf of a favoured nation and a chosen people are upheld especially by leftists and internationalists."¹⁷⁰ Ironically, Jaques referred to "historic fact," seemingly implying that if Zionists based their claims on historic fact (such as the 1917 Balfour Declaration), perhaps their argument would be more valid. However, Jaques later denied that the Balfour Declaration had provided a home for the Jews.¹⁷¹

In a separate diatribe, Jaques wove anti-Semitism, anti-communism, and anti-Zionism into a patriotic directive to all Canadians:

In Canada the Zionists are able to mould public opinion through their control of the means of propaganda...they prevent any effective public discussion of Palestine by smearing as Fascist and Anti-Semitic anyone who fails to endorse Zionist policies...The truth is that organized Zionism is the most violent source of anti-British agitation in the world, in which they make common cause with the Communists...in the interests of peace, justice and freedom, Canadians should dissociate themselves from racial, and political Zionism.¹⁷²

It should be noted that Jaques' opposition to Zionism and his support of the Arab cause was not, in itself, inherently anti-Semitic. As Morton Weinfeld writes:

It is, of course, absurd to suggest that all criticism of Israel should be equated with antisemitism, virulent or mild...It is equally absurd, however, to believe that purely political instincts have motivated all criticism of Israel...In recent years, it has become fashionable for mischievous men to mask their hostility towards Jews with the guise of anti-Zionism. Drawing a distinction between the "bad" Zionists and the "good" Jews, they make all criticism of Israel and Zionism legitimate. This sort of anti-Zionism is merely recycled antisemitism and a particularly subtle form of

attack upon the integrity of the Jewish people. In the hands of the unscrupulous, such anti-Zionism is a marvellous weapon with which to attack Jews with near impunity.¹⁷³

Jaques and those Douglasites who established the Douglas Social Credit Council might well be labelled "mischievous men." In these cases, anti-Zionism was nothing but thinly-disguised anti-Semitism. However, in the larger picture, Jaques's vituperative harangues¹⁷⁴ were for naught: On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was proclaimed and Jewish sovereignty was re-established in Palestine after 1,878 years.¹⁷⁵ (Of course, the history of Israel in the post-1948 period is a completely separate account.)

A related phenomenon to the Jewish refugee crisis and the Palestine issue is that of the growth of communism and the ensuing Cold War. The fears of the spread of communism, of the domino theory, and of un-American activities which pervaded the United States, gripped all of Canada as well as Alberta. Prime Minister Mackenzie King warned against the dangers of communism and its machinations for world control; he was joined in his fears by most other Canadian politicians. Norman Jaques argued that Canada was as infiltrated with communists as was its southern neighbour:

...our own country is no exception. The government has information. Why does it not act? It must act if we are to remain free. People with known Communist associations have no business in responsible jobs in this government, or in any other government which is free, and hopes to remain free. I should like this parliament to set up a committee on un-Canadian activities, just as they have such a Committee of Congress, I say this ought to be done and those who are plotting to destroy our freedom must be put where they can do no harm.¹⁷⁶

Canadian political climate of the 1940s was one generally filled with paranoiac fear of communism. Included in this Cold War sentiment was a prevalent perception of the connection between Jews and communists. As Erna Paris notes, this had serious implications for post-war Jewish refugees:

Ordinary Canadians were not unaware of the desperate Jewish refugees across the Atlantic, but if immigration was generally undesirable, Jewish immigration--refugees or no--was particularly undesirable. Although the real peril of the day

was fascism, people worried mainly about communism. And Jews were thought to be communists. The total number of Jews in the Communist Party of Canada in 1937 has been estimated at about four hundred fifty. But the label stuck.¹⁷⁷

Public opinion on the relationship between Jews and communists was informed by both fact and propaganda. It is true that the only communist Member of Parliament to sit in Ottawa was Fred Rose (born Rosenberg), who represented the Montreal riding of Cartier during the 1940s.¹⁷⁸ In Canada, many Jews became involved with early left-wing groups such as the Socialist Party of Canada, the Social Democratic Party, the Communist Party of Canada, as well as the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.¹⁷⁹ With respect to the Communist Party of Canada, writes Paris:

In the 1930s and 1940s, when the fascist threat loomed ominously both inside and outside Canada, Jews grew deeply attached to the Communist Party's official United Front against fascism. Jewish membership in the Party grew substantially during this period, but it never represented more than a fraction of the Jewish population.¹⁸⁰

However, the exposure of the Gouzenko defection in September 1945 and the subsequent 1946 Royal Commission on Espionage further contributed to a public association between Jews and Communists, or more specifically, Communist spies.¹⁸¹ In September 1945 Igor Gouzenko, a cipher clerk at the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa, had defected by exposing secret documents which revealed the existence of several spy rings operating in Canada, with associations to other rings in the United States and Britain.¹⁸² As David Bercuson states, "[t]his was dramatic evidence that all was not well with the wartime alliance and that the USSR and the West might not, after all, share common interests on matters of post-war peace and security...The Gouzenko defection did not...push Canada completely into the Cold War, but it was the first definite shove in that direction."¹⁸³

The two men implicated in the Gouzenko spy trial were Sam Carr, the highest-ranking Jew in the Canadian Communist Party,¹⁸⁴ and Fred Rose, the federal M.P. for Cartier riding in Montreal.¹⁸⁵ They were exposed as senior liaison agents to Colonel

Grant Zapotin, the Soviet military attaché in Ottawa and director of the espionage operation.¹⁸⁶ As Paris notes, "a new blow to Canadian communists came with the 1946 Gouzenko trials and the betrayal of the primarily Jewish voters of Cartier, who found themselves represented in Parliament by a convicted spy. The support lost in Cartier was Jewish support and it never returned to the [Communist] Party."¹⁸⁷

The effects of the Gouzenko defection on Canadians' attitudes toward Jews, Jewish refugees, and Jewish Communists have not been extensively addressed by historians or political scientists. However, in Social Credit circles specifically, it seems likely that these facts would only contribute to preconceived prejudices about Jews.

However, Social Credit ideology was more effective perhaps than actual facts in associating Jews and Communists. In the Cold War environment of the mid-1940s, Social Credit philosophy shifted emphasis from international financiers to international communists. (Whether these international communists were also Jews depended in large extent on the pre-existing conspiracy framework of the Social Crediter in question.) For Manning, the new enemy was no longer the international financier but the international communist, neither of which, in his world view, were Jews. He noted that,

...the socialistic doctrines of a supreme State are, in principle, identical with the doctrines of financial dictatorship which the rank and file of many socialistic parties claim to be fighting...the socialistic move is, if anything a greater threat today to true democracy than the actions of those who continue to champion the already established financial dictatorship.¹⁸⁸

In a speech to the Social Credit League in November 1949, Manning stated that things were different in 1949 than they were in 1935, and that the Social Credit Movement's approach to them must be different also.¹⁸⁹ The "enemy" operated no longer in the financial field as much as he did in the political field. He had enslaved many countries and "there was even a tendency to this enslavement in Canada and the United States."¹⁹⁰

The war against international socialism was great political arsenal for Social Credit's battle against the contending Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. It should be remembered that when Social Credit became the provincial government in 1935, it promised to implement social credit economic theories. By 1940, after its first term, the Social Credit government had experienced the inevitable political transformation from theory to practice and was resigned to its role as a democratic political party attempting to provide good government. But Albertans were not so easily appeased--because there were still Social Credit ideologues advocating the implementation of "real" Social Credit, hopes for a government which would implement social credit economics remained intact. As C. B. Macpherson notes, support for the Social Credit government waned when it became apparent that social credit measures were not going to be achieved:

[h]ow nearly the government had come to paying for its inability to establish social credit in its first term is indicated by the fact that in the provincial election of March 1940 it lost a substantial proportion of seats, emerging with 36 out of 57 seats, or 63 per cent as compared with its previous standing of 89 per cent of the legislature.¹⁹¹

After 1935, then, opposition parties became more of a threat to the Social Credit government. In the 1940 provincial election the Independents (a loosely-knit coalition of Liberals and Conservatives, whose only real bond was opposition to Aberhart and Social Credit) won 42 per cent of the popular vote and 19 seats out of 57. By the early 1940s the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation had gained popularity, and in the 1944 provincial election, the C.C.F. won 25 per cent of the popular vote and three seats out of 57 in the legislature.¹⁹²

Consequently, the C.C.F. was a political opponent to be taken seriously. As C. B. Macpherson notes, by the 1944 provincial election the struggle against socialism had conveniently replaced the struggle for social credit.¹⁹³ Macpherson writes:

On this issue the government was returned with a larger majority than ever before. If it lost some of its radical supporters to the C.C.F., it gained many more from the business community, which was now convinced, with good reason, that Manning's social credit was no menace to private enterprise but the best protection against the growing strength of the socialist C.C.F. The menace of socialism became and remained the staple of the official Alberta social credit propaganda.¹⁹⁴

Through the new bogey of socialism, Social Credit could attack the C.C.F. by associating it with international communism. For Manning and many other Social Crediters, Social Credit ideology had shifted focus. The international financiers had been usurped by the international communists; consequently, the enemy now had to be fought on the political front more than on the economic front. This was no more clearly evidenced than in the local battle against the C.C.F.

However, international communism, as with international finance, also could be linked with anti-Semitism. As Macpherson points out, Douglas had always been in favour of private enterprise and against socialism; he argued that post-war socialist parties were part of the world plot against freedom because the financiers, having been driven out of their first position by the social crediters' exposure of their manipulation of the monetary system, had then resorted to socialism as a means of maintaining their grip on the world's wealth. Socialism was thus linked with high finance; and the only way to attack the international financiers was to attack socialism.¹⁹⁵ The personification of these evils became the international Jewish **communist** financier. Thus for Social Credit ideologues, Social Credit ideology had not shifted, but simply had been augmented. The international financiers were still Jews; in addition, the international communists were also Jews.

In Alberta, then, Cold War sentiment was compounded by Social Credit's mixed brand of anti-socialist, anti-Semitic propaganda. Ernest Manning, although an ardent Cold Warrior, differed from the traditional Social Credit ideologues at crucial points: he supported Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel; he emphasized that the new enemy was the international communist, and no longer the international financier. At junctures in which other Social Credit ideologues veered off into anti-Semitism, Manning

remained just "anti-." Given the fact that Social Credit economic theories had been shelved permanently, and that, for Manning at least, communism had **replaced** finance as the international enemy, traditional Social Credit ideology, with its emphasis on economic theories and financial conspiracies, had become obsolete. Politically, Social Credit ideologues had become a liability. The evidence also seems to indicate that Manning found the anti-Semitism of the Social Credit ideologues politically inexpedient, given the post-war, post-Holocaust state of affairs. The political reasons for Manning's purge then, were strongly connected to the broader post-war, Cold War environment.

Alberta's economic climate of the 1940s was also conducive to a shift in Social Credit ideology. In fact, it can be said that the economic climate in post-war Alberta was far more revolutionary than the perceived international-Jewish-communist-financial conspiracy. On February 13, 1947, seventeen miles southwest of Edmonton, "Leduc No. 1" oil well blew.¹⁹⁶ As R. Douglas Francis comments:

Up with the soaring oil went the future of Alberta. Leduc was an oil field twice the size of Turner Valley. A new era of expansion was underway which created a demand for skilled and unskilled workers beyond the capacity of the province to fulfill. Once again, Alberta became what the Parry Sound settlers had called "the Promised Land."¹⁹⁷

Richards and Pratt provide the best exposition of the impact of the oil discovery on Alberta's political culture. They argue that from the beginning, the Social Credit government "made it clear that the radical thrust of their right populist movement was not directed at the oil industry. In the desperate economic circumstances of the great depression, with Alberta deeply in debt, Social Credit was eager to entice outside capital into the search for oil."¹⁹⁸ Alberta, like Saskatchewan, needed to diversify away from an agriculture-dependent economy as quickly as possible.¹⁹⁹ Oil offered this promise of diversification; it also could eliminate Alberta's public debt burden without increasing personal taxation. However, money was required to develop the oil industry, and the Social Credit government was not prepared to assume the risk of undertaking government

investment of the industry. Moreover, there was a strong ideological bias against public investment and a strong emphasis on the rights of private enterprise.²⁰⁰

Consequently, the Social Credit government, with Nathan Tanner, Minister of Lands and Mines at the helm, proceeded to attract foreign investment to develop Alberta's oil industry. Albertans' response was not entirely positive. As Richards and Pratt write:

To some Social Credit supporters Nathan Tanner's campaign to attract development money to Alberta was nothing short of betrayal. Standard Oil was about as popular among prairie populists as the CPR or any other outside monopoly. Worse, Tanner had even enticed eastern Canadian capital into the hunt for oil! It was too much.²⁰¹

Eastern Canadian capital was not interested in a speculative search for Alberta's oil; however, American capital was more forthcoming. The consequence was an Americanization of the province's oil and natural gas resources.²⁰² However, as Richards and Pratt emphasize, "given the indifference of eastern Canadian capital and the relatively undercapitalized state of Alberta business after World War Two, rapid development of new export staples would have been impossible without heavy foreign investment."²⁰³ Moreover, the existing political climate was conducive to American economic domination:

The conservative, almost xenophobic, ideological climate prevailing in Alberta in the early years of the Cold War smoothed the way for the Americanization of the province's oil and natural gas resources. The military security of the continent was invoked on numerous occasions to justify reliance upon U.S. capital or the approval of controversial exports of gas to Montana and the Pacific Northwest. Alberta's resources were to be committed to the free world's struggle with Godless communism.²⁰⁴

American capital, then, opened up the search for oil in Alberta, with results beneficial to American investment and the province. The turning point came in February 1947, with the Imperial Oil strike at Leduc. As Barr notes, the 1947 discovery marked "the major turning point in Alberta's social and economic history."²⁰⁵ The province's public sector became enormously wealthy; "the tremendous yearly income from oil made it

possible to provide a high level of services and public facilities without high taxation."²⁰⁶

Over a very short time, Alberta turned from a "have-not" to a "have" province, and its implications on Alberta's social, economic, and political culture were phenomenal.

Macpherson comments on the discovery's political implications:

By [1947]...the tide of post-war prosperity, heightened by the new provincial revenues from the discovery and opening up of enormous new oil deposits, had put the government effectively beyond the need of any further effort to subdue the financiers or otherwise implement social credit principles.²⁰⁷

Alvin Finkel and Walter Young offer similar interpretations. Finkel argues that the Alberta government had, in effect, shifted gears: big business, big banking interests were no longer the enemy; labour and socialism were the new evils.²⁰⁸ Young cleverly notes that economic prosperity "à la Douglas" was cast aside; oil and free enterprise would succeed where the "monetization of unused capacity" and the "A plus B theorem" had not.²⁰⁹ Accordingly, there was no room left for the old enemy, finance; Social Credit ideology named socialism the only surviving menace.

Richards and Pratt provide an insightful assessment of the implications of the discovery of oil in Alberta:

Oil and gas provoked a populist response in Alberta, part of the response in the great plains of North America to the eastward advance of industrialism and corporate capitalism...Gradually the protests were overwhelmed in the harsh ideological climate of the early Cold War--a climate carefully nurtured by the pious heirs of Aberhart--by the sheer crushing advantages of foreign capital. Oil brought prosperity, urbanization, and the rise of a new middle class which lacked attachments or loyalties to populist concerns. Populism in Alberta was simply extinguished, swallowed up in the gaping maw of Americanization. Given this legacy, Social Credit's own fate was both inevitable and fitting.²¹⁰

The Alberta Social Credit Movement was far different in 1948 than it had been a decade earlier. A metamorphosis had occurred, in S. M. Lipset's words, which changed Social Credit "from a radical to a conservative movement."²¹¹ Beginning as a populist movement against the eastern banking interests and international financiers, Social Credit

evolved into one of the most conservative political parties in Canada, receiving the open support of the conservative business groups that initially opposed it.²¹² When Harper Prowse revived the provincial Liberal party of Alberta in 1947, he found businessmen reluctant to give him contributions.²¹³ "We've got a business-oriented government now...Why rock the boat and let in the CCF?"²¹⁴ As Richards and Pratt note, the Social Credit Movement evolved into a "businesslike conservative administration."²¹⁵

By 1948, Social Credit was social credit only in name. The original Social Credit theories had become obsolete; and the proponents of Social Credit ideology had become political liabilities. Economic and political powerlessness had provided the impetus for Social Credit and all its accompanying economic, political, and religious panaceas; by 1948, Alberta was no longer powerless, and its enemies had become insignificant. Whether Manning effected his purge because of an over-riding ethical obligation toward racial and religious tolerance is questionable; that he effected the purge to expedite Alberta's economic and political fortunes is much more plausible. The consequence was a silencing of radicalism--economic, political, and ideological. Yet the legacy of Social Credit lived on in Alberta's political culture, even after the final defeat of the Party in 1971. This "legacy" of the Social Credit Movement is the subject of the final chapter.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

¹John J. Barr, The Dynasty: The Rise and Fall of Social Credit in Alberta (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), 53.

²Ibid.

³John A. Irving, The Social Credit Movement in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), 85.

⁴Barr, 53.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., 54.

⁸Barr, 53.

See also David R. Elliott, Bible Bill: A Biography of William Aberhart (Edmonton: Reidmore Books, 1987), 125.

⁹Elliott, Bible Bill, 131-132.

¹⁰Barr, 53-54.

¹¹Elliott, Bible Bill, 144.

¹²Barr, 54.

¹³Ibid., 55.

¹⁴Ibid., 63.

¹⁵Ibid., 64.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Elliott, Bible Bill, 256.

¹⁸Barr, 102.

¹⁹Elliott, Bible Bill, 256.

²⁰Irving, The Social Credit Movement in Alberta, 195.

²¹Barr, 102.

²²Elliott, Bible Bill, 256.

²³Barr, 104.

²⁴C. B. Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta: Social Credit and the Party System (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 175.

²⁵Barr, 106.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid., 103.

²⁸Elliott, Bible Bill, 269.

²⁹Barr, 127.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Macpherson, 210.

³²Barr, 127.

³³John Richards and Larry Pratt, Prairie Capitalism: Power and Influence in the New West (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1979), 35.

³⁴Walter D. Young, Democracy and Discontent: Progressivism, Socialism and Social Credit in the Canadian West (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1969), 99.

³⁵Ibid., 99-100.

³⁶Barr, 127-128.

³⁷Macpherson, 192.

³⁸Howard Palmer, "Ethnic Relations and the Paranoid Style: Nativism, Nationalism and Populism in Alberta, 1945-1950," Canadian Ethnic Studies 23(3) (1991), 21.

³⁹Macpherson, 210.

⁴⁰David Bercuson and Douglas Wertheimer, A Trust Betrayed: The Keegstra Affair (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1985), 32-33.

⁴¹Alvin Finkel, The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 82-83.

⁴²Canada, Parliament, House of Commons: Debates (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 9 July 1943), 4616.

⁴³Debates, 14 May 1947, 3089.

⁴⁴The Canadian Social Crediter (Edmonton), 17 October 1946, 4.

⁴⁵The Canadian Social Crediter, 26 October 1944, 10.

⁴⁶Howard Palmer, "Politics, Religion and Antisemitism in Alberta, 1880-1950," chap. in Antisemitism in Canada: History and Interpretation, ed. Alan Davies (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1992), 186.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹The Canadian Social Crediter, 11 January 1945, 1.

⁵⁰Ibid., 2.

⁵¹Finkel, The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta, 104-105.

⁵²Young, 99-100.

⁵³Finkel, The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta, 85.

⁵⁴Alvin Finkel, "Alberta Social Credit Reappraised: the Radical Character of the Early Social Credit Movement," Prairie Forum 11(1) (1986), 82.

⁵⁵Finkel, The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta, 82-83.

⁵⁶The Canadian Social Crediter, 14 March 1946, 3.

⁵⁷The Canadian Social Crediter, 21 February 1946, 11.

⁵⁸The Canadian Social Crediter, 16 May 1946, 8.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Barr, 128.

⁶¹Richards and Pratt, 35.

⁶²Barr, 129.

⁶³Howard Palmer, "Ethnic Relations and the Paranoid Style," 23.

⁶⁴Barr, 129.

⁶⁵Howard Palmer, "Ethnic Relations and the Paranoid Style," 23.

⁶⁶"Calls S.C. Report, 'Absurd, Menace,'" Edmonton Journal, 28 March 1947.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸"Denies S.C. Report Refers to Jews," Edmonton Journal, 1 April 1947, and "Session Ends," Calgary Herald, 1 April 1947.

⁶⁹"Calls S.C. Report, 'Absurd, Menace,'" Edmonton Journal, 28 March 1947.

⁷⁰"The Social Credit Board Report," Calgary Herald, 28 March 1947.

⁷¹Report Submitted to the Alberta Social Credit Board by L. D. Byrne, Technical Adviser to the Board, January 1948, reprinted by The Douglas Social Credit Council, October 1948, Norman B. James Papers, Alberta Social Credit Collection, Box M574, File 6, Glenbow-Archives Institute, Calgary, Alberta.

⁷²"The Social Credit Board Report," Calgary Herald, 28 March 1947.

⁷³The Canadian Social Crediter, 3 April 1947, 2.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*

⁷⁵*Ibid.*

⁷⁶L. D. Byrne to Solon Low, 14 April 1947, Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 35, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

⁷⁷"To Contributors and Directors of Policy," undated memorandum from John Patrick Gillese, Editor-in-Chief, The Canadian Social Crediter, Social Credit Printed Matter, 1946, Patrick Ashby Papers, Box M31, File 6, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

⁷⁸A. H. Jukes to Ernest Manning, 13 May 1947, Alberta Social Credit League, Premiers' Papers, File 1472, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta.

⁷⁹Ernest Manning to A. H. Jukes, 20 May 1947, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1472, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*

⁸¹*Ibid.*

⁸²*Ibid.*

⁸³*Ibid.*

⁸⁴Ernest Manning to J. N. Haldeman, 21 May 1947, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1472, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*

⁸⁶Solon Low to J. P. Gillese, 15 May 1947, Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 173, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

⁸⁷A. H. Jukes to Ernest Manning, 26 May 1947, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1472, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*

⁸⁹Minutes of a Meeting of the President of the Association and the Chairman of the Board & Management, 10 June 1947, Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 476, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

⁹⁰J. N. Haldeman to Ernest Manning, 13 June 1947, Social Credit Association of Canada, File 1464, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

⁹¹Solon Low to J. P. Gillese, 30 May 1947, Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 173, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

⁹²Solon Low to J. P. Gillese, 16 June 1947, Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 173, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

⁹³A. H. Jukes to Ernest Manning, 19 September 1947, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1472, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

⁹⁴Ernest Manning to A. H. Jukes, 2 October 1947, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1472, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*

⁹⁶*Ibid.*

⁹⁷J. N. Haldeman to Ernest Manning, 29 October 1947, Social Credit Association of Canada, File 1464, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*

⁹⁹Notice to Members of the National Council from J. N. Haldeman, 7 November 1947, Social Credit Association of Canada, File 1464, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹⁰⁰Minutes of National Council Meeting of the Social Credit Association of Canada, 29-30 November 1947, Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 469, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

¹⁰¹"Policy of the Canadian Social Creditor," from Minutes of National Council Meeting of the Social Credit Association of Canada, 29-30 November 1947, Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 469, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

¹⁰²"Those Who Have Ears--Let Them Hear!," document attached to letter, Gordon Taylor to Solon Low, 23 December 1947, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1472, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹⁰³J. E. Gregoire to Solon Low, 27 January 1948, Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 181, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

¹⁰⁴Macpherson, 211.

¹⁰⁵Howard Palmer, "Ethnic Relations and the Paranoid Style," 23.

¹⁰⁶J. P. Gillese to J. N. Haldeman, 15 December 1947, Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 173, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

¹⁰⁷J. N. Haldeman to J. P. Gillese, 18 December 1947, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1472, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹J. P. Gillese to J. N. Haldeman, 15 December 1947, Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 173, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

¹¹⁰Gordon Taylor to Solon Low, 23 December 1947, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1472, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹¹¹"Says Roper Tries to 'Build Hatred,'" Edmonton Journal, 4 March 1947.

¹¹²"Dropping the Heretics? Or Dropping the Faithful?," Calgary Herald, 17 December 1947.

¹¹³*Ibid.*

¹¹⁴Radio Speech delivered by B. R. Swankey, Provincial Leader, Labor-Progressive Party, Alberta, over Station CFRN, Edmonton, 30 December 1947, John Blackmore Papers, Box M100, File 184, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

¹¹⁵Editorial in The Social Crediter (England), 3 January 1948, addendum to A. V. Bourcier's letter to unnamed person, 10 January 1948, Social Credit Board, File 1833, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹¹⁶Report Submitted to the Alberta Social Credit Board by L. D. Byrne, Technical Adviser to the Board, January 1948, reprinted by The Douglas Social Credit Council, October 1948, Norman James Papers, Box M574, File 6, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹¹⁹Forward to the Report Submitted to the Alberta Social Credit Board by L. D. Byrne, Technical Adviser to the Board, January 1948, reprinted by The Douglas Social Credit Council, October 1948, Norman James Papers, Box M574, File 6, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

¹²⁰Barr, 130.

¹²¹Norman James, in a personal letter to one Henry Button, gave his own interpretation of recent events: "...Johnnie [Gillese] was, in the eyes of the Hierarchy to [sic] aggressive and progressive so they hired a nice little scoutmaster from Drumheller (G. Taylor, M.L.A.) as Managing Editor, and put Johnnie in a subordinate position. Johnnie quit of course. Then the scoutmaster issued an ultimatum. No writings or writers that indulged in "antiisms" (such as liberalism, conservatism, communism, socialism, or atheism (these were not mentioned categorically) would be allowed. He was to censor everything. As I can only write free and untrammelled I just had to quit, and they have not yet asked me to carry on. Back of this is a very unpleasant situation. Politics and expediency are ruling the roost, and I am not interested in party politics.

Norman James to Henry Button, 19 January 1948, Norman James Papers, Box M574, File 7, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

¹²²Patrick Ashby was recorded as saying that he believed R. E. Ansley and L. D. Byrne had been "unable to tolerate any longer" the Manning methods of implementing the Social Credit theories of Major C. H. Douglas. Hailing Douglas as "the greatest voice since that of Christ," Ashby said the two had probably tired of "butting their heads against a stone wall" and finally forced a confrontation.

"Casey Succeeds Ansley," Lethbridge Herald, 23 February 1948.

¹²³In a speech written for radio broadcast on 10 March 1948, Norman Jaques gave a personal tribute to Ansley and Byrne, who had been, stated Jaques, among his "intimate friends" for many years, and who were such faithful public servants that rather than compromising their principles, they gave up their positions and salaries. [Their lack of choice in the matter was not addressed.] Jaques further stated

that "[s]uch loyal faith is not common these days, but were there more men of their character in public service in the world to-day, I venture to say the world would not be in such peril as it is at the present time."

Broadcast for 10 March 1948, Norman Jaques, n.d., Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 476, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

¹²⁴Ernest Manning, Draft Notice, n.d., R. E. Ansley, File 1602, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹²⁵"Kick Them Out: They Believe in Douglas," Calgary Herald, 23 February 1948.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*

¹²⁷*Ibid.*

¹²⁸"Split Developing," Medicine Hat Daily News, 23 February 1948.

¹²⁹"The Cabinet Creaks," Lethbridge Herald, 23 February 1948.

¹³⁰"Casey Sworn in as Alta. Minister of Education," Edmonton Bulletin, 23 February 1948.

¹³¹"Education Minister, 'Expert,' Lose Jobs," The Albertan (Calgary), 23 February 1948.

¹³²"A Major Test for Premier Manning," The Albertan (Calgary), 23 February 1948.

¹³³"Democracy in Action Cabinet Change is Example of," Peace River Record-Gazette, 26 February 1948.

¹³⁴L. D. Byrne, "To All Canadian Social Crediters--Mobilization for Action," n.d., Norman James Papers, Box M574, File 6, Glenbow-Archives Institute.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*

¹³⁶John P. Gillese, Douglas Social Credit Council circular, n.d., Alberta Social Credit League, File 1830, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹³⁷*Ibid.*

¹³⁸H. Bridges to Ernest Manning, 6 May 1948, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1830, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹³⁹A. A. Downey to Ernest Manning, 10 June 1948, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1830, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹⁴⁰T. W. Bridges to Ernest Manning, 6 June 1948, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1830, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹⁴¹Ernest Manning to Mrs. T. W. Lindsey, 11 March 1948, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1830, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹⁴²Ernest Manning to H. Bridges, 13 May 1948, Alberta Social Credit League, File 1830, Provincial Archives of Alberta.

¹⁴³The Canadian Social Crediter, 25 March 1948, 9.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Ibid.

¹⁴⁶Barr, 129.

¹⁴⁷Macpherson, 236.

¹⁴⁸Howard Palmer, "Ethnic Relations and the Paranoid Style," 24.

¹⁴⁹For a comprehensive discussion of Protestant fundamentalism in Alberta, see W. E. Mann, Sect, Cult, and Church in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955). Mann's argument about Albertan Protestant fundamentalism is informative, but his attempt to prove that Social Credit support stemmed largely from the fundamentalist sects has been disproved by subsequent studies. See, for example, J. Paul Grayson and Linda Grayson, "The Social Bases of Interwar Political Unrest in Urban Alberta," Canadian Journal of Political Science 7(2) (June 1974): 289-313; Edward Bell, "The Petite Bourgeoisie and Social Credit: A Reconsideration," Canadian Journal of Sociology 14(1) (Winter 1989): 45-65; H. L. Malliah, "A Socio-Historical Study of the Legislators of Alberta, 1905-1967" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1970); and Owen Anderson, "The Alberta Social Credit Party: An Empirical Analysis of Membership, Characteristics, Participation and Opinion" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1972).

¹⁵⁰For an insightful discussion of the "eschatology" in Social Credit thought, see David R. Elliott, Bible Bill: A Biography of William Aberhart (Edmonton: Reidmore Books, 1987), as well as Elliott's article, "Antithetical Elements in William Aberhart's Theology and Political Ideology," Canadian Historical Review 59(1) (1978), 38-58.

¹⁵¹Howard Palmer, "Ethnic Relations and the Paranoid Style," 22.

¹⁵²Elliott, Bible Bill, 85.

¹⁵³Bercuson and Wertheimer, 37.

¹⁵⁴Finkel, The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta, 105.

¹⁵⁵Howard Palmer, "Ethnic Relations and the Paranoid Style," 23.

¹⁵⁶For one of the best pieces of research on Canadian response to the European Jewish refugee crisis, see Irving Abella and Harold Troper, None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948 (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1982).

¹⁵⁷Norman Hillmer, Bohdan Kordan, and Lubomyr Luciuk, eds., On Guard For Thee: War, Ethnicity, and the Canadian State, 1939-1945 (Ottawa: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1988), 46.

¹⁵⁸Ibid.

¹⁵⁹Erna Paris, Jews: An Account of Their Experience in Canada (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1980), 59.

¹⁶⁰Ibid.

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- ¹⁶¹The Canadian Social Crediter, 1 November 1945, 1.
- ¹⁶²The Canadian Social Crediter, 11 October 1945, 10.
- ¹⁶³Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, 151.
- ¹⁶⁴David J. Bercuson, Canada and the Birth of Israel: A Study in Canadian Foreign Policy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 41.
- ¹⁶⁵*Ibid.*
- ¹⁶⁶Zachariah Kay, Canada and Palestine: The Politics of Non-Commitment (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1978), 148.
- ¹⁶⁷*Ibid.*
- ¹⁶⁸Howard Palmer, "Politics, Religion, and Antisemitism in Alberta, 1880-1950," in Davies, 183.
- ¹⁶⁹*Ibid.*
- ¹⁷⁰Debates, 17 December 1945, 3706.
- ¹⁷¹The Canadian Social Crediter, 14 February 1946, 6.
- ¹⁷²The Canadian Social Crediter, 6 June 1946, 6.
- ¹⁷³Morton Weinfeld, William Shaffir, and Irwin Cotler, eds., The Canadian Jewish Mosaic (Toronto: John Wiley & Sons Canada Limited, 1981), 391.
- ¹⁷⁴Kay, 146.
- ¹⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 151.
- ¹⁷⁶Norman Jaques, Broadcast for 10 March 1948, n.d., Solon Low Papers, Box M695, File 476, Glenbow-Archives Institute.
- ¹⁷⁷Paris, 58.
- ¹⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 174.
- ¹⁷⁹Bercuson, Canada and the Birth of Israel, 18.
- ¹⁸⁰Paris, 145.
- ¹⁸¹For an informative and insightful discussion of the history of post-World War II Canadian espionage, see J. L. Granatstein and David Stafford, Spy Wars: Espionage and Canada From Gouzenko to Glasnost (Toronto: Key Porter Books Limited, 1990).
- ¹⁸²Bercuson, Canada and the Birth of Israel, 38.
- ¹⁸³*Ibid.*
- ¹⁸⁴Paris, 167.

¹⁸⁵Ibid., 171.

¹⁸⁶Ibid.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., 181.

¹⁸⁸Alvin Finkel, The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta, 86.

¹⁸⁹"No More Nonsense About Social Credit," Calgary Herald, 28 November 1949.

¹⁹⁰Ibid.

¹⁹¹Macpherson, 202.

¹⁹²Howard Palmer, "Ethnic Relations and the Paranoid Style," 8-9.

¹⁹³Macpherson, 206.

¹⁹⁴Ibid.

¹⁹⁵Ibid.

¹⁹⁶R. Douglas Francis, "'Rural Ontario West': Ontarians in Alberta," chap. in Peoples of Alberta: Portraits of Cultural Diversity, eds. Howard Palmer and Tamara Palmer (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1985), 140.

¹⁹⁷Ibid.

¹⁹⁸Richards and Pratt, 78.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., 155.

²⁰⁰Ibid., 89.

²⁰¹Ibid., 79.

²⁰²Ibid., 82.

²⁰³Ibid., 155.

²⁰⁴Ibid., 82.

²⁰⁵Barr, 120.

²⁰⁶Ibid., 157.

²⁰⁷Macpherson, 209.

²⁰⁸Alvin Finkel, "The Cold War, Alberta Labour, and the Social Credit Regime," Labour 21 (1988), 132.

²⁰⁹Young, 98.

²¹⁰Richards and Pratt, 91.

²¹¹Seymour Martin Lipset, Agrarian Socialism: The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan (Berkeley: University of California Press, Ltd., 1971), 334.

²¹²*Ibid.*

²¹³Richards and Pratt, 81.

²¹⁴*Ibid.*, 81-82.

²¹⁵*Ibid.*, 59.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESURRECTING DOUGLAS'S DISCIPLES: THE SOCIAL CREDIT LEGACY IN ALBERTA'S POLITICAL CULTURE

Ernest Manning's "Purge of '48" did not end anti-Semitism in the Alberta Social Credit Movement. If it had, the historical importance of these events would certainly be less significant. The purpose of this final chapter is twofold. First, it will show how anti-Semitism in the Social Credit Movement persisted long after Manning's purge. Evidence of resurgent anti-Semitism in the Movement from 1948 up to the 1980s will show the tenacity of Social Credit ideology and its inherent anti-Semitism, and the difficulties in attempting to eradicate this decades-old philosophy.

Second, as an epilogue to the story of the Alberta Social Credit Movement, this chapter will show that Social Credit ideology created a political culture which included sentiments other than anti-Semitism. That is, Social Credit ideology perpetuated a particular world view which could accommodate other expressions of intolerance. An examination of Preston Manning's Reform Party will reveal striking ideological similarities with the Social Credit Movement. The two movements possess more than a filial connection: they both expounded an ideology which embraced a Manichean, absolutist interpretation of the past and present, an ideology which so wholly encompassed an "us versus them" mentalité that any forces deemed threatening or outside Albertans' interests were immediately attacked and labelled as "the enemy." This epilogue, then, will emphasize that anti-Semitism within the Social Credit Movement was really a manifestation of broader socio-economic-political impulses, the same impulses which Social Credit ideology reflected and shaped, and which, through the Reform Party, create a present Albertan political culture which breeds provincialism and intolerance.

Before Social Credit's legacy of the 1990s can be discussed, however, the fate of the Douglasites after 1948 needs to be examined. In Chapter Three it was noted how Manning's purge seemingly eradicated Social Credit economic, political, and religious doctrines (all three of which encompassed anti-Semitism) from the Movement. Historians of Alberta Social Credit, in assessing the effects of the purge, support this interpretation. John Irving notes that "[t]he dismissal of Byrne and the 'resignation' of the editor of the Canadian Social Crediter broke the last links (which had been growing steadily weaker since Aberhart's death) of the official Alberta movement with Douglas."¹ John Barr, referring to the short lifespan of the Douglas Social Credit Council, notes:

For a time the Douglasites fought back with the few weapons they had left...Their campaign came to nothing; the government was now firmly in the hands of Manning and men loyal to him...The time for them to have made their stand and gathered allies around them was when they were still in the government, with all the resources of government. Out of government they were helpless. One by one they drifted away to their old jobs as teachers, civil servants, insurance agents.²

C. B. Macpherson provides a similar assessment. Manning's "purge," writes Macpherson, "effectively destroyed the influence, in government and league, of those who had consistently followed Douglas in his later political teachings. It was widely said that it marked the final abandonment of social credit principles as well as practice."³

Bob Hesketh, writing on Alberta Social Credit women, attempts to show how Douglasites in the Alberta Social Credit Women's Association (ASCWA) similarly were silenced and altered their activities after the 1948 purge:

Interestingly, the final withdrawal of the ASCWA from outreach work coincided with the exit of the Douglasites from positions of power within the party. It seems likely that the true believers at the grass-roots level, who became disenchanted with the party following the 1948 purges, had previously provided much of the energy for the ASCWA's activities. Now, with the purging of the Douglasites, women's social skills were needed in the larger party to help heal wounds. In these trying times, Social Credit women were encouraged to act as the "cement" which would hold the Social Credit groups together.⁴

Offering a broader perspective on the effects of the purge, Walter Young notes:

By 1960 the discontent that had brought forth protest had been transformed into prosperity. There was no need to oppose the status quo, to vilify the money barons or to damn the party system. In Alberta there was no party system anyway...There were some who still believed fervently in Douglasite social credit doctrine--and some of these were even in government. But few people took such ideas seriously. Like antique furniture, they were retained as curious reminders of the past but never used, partly out of respect and partly through fear that they might collapse under the weight of reality.⁵

A. E. Carlsen offers a similar assessment of the evolution in Social Credit ideology after 1948. Noting that there still existed some who believed that "not one job and not one title" of Douglas should be discarded, Carlsen emphasizes that,

within the Movement itself the fundamentals have been questioned and modified, and, in this process, the world outlook has lost much of its extreme character. In a sense, Social Credit thought has evolved along Darwinian lines: no longer useful appendages--while still observable--have withered, and new features have emerged to meet the needs of a new environment. It would be pleasant for humanity if all ideologies were similarly adaptive.⁶

Howard Palmer not only concurs with these interpretations of the demise of Douglasite ideology within the Movement, he also argues that anti-Semitism in Social Credit was narrow in scope and limited in influence. He writes:

The extent to which the anti-semitism of the Douglasite faction sealed their fate within the Social Credit movement is unknown, one can, however, conclude from this incident that there were definite limits on anti-semitism within Alberta. In retrospect, its appeal seems to have been confined primarily to the most fervent followers of Major Douglas; it was regarded outside the Social Credit party as a crank phenomenon and within it as an embarrassment. Thus Manning's purge of the Douglasites and the death of Norman Jaques [1949] effectively silenced overt anti-semitism within the ranks of Social Credit.⁷

Manning's purge, according to these interpretations, was both effective and long-lasting. In terms of tangible results, it cannot be disputed that Manning's purge had definite consequences. At the Alberta Social Credit League Convention in November 1948, Manning stated that "[t]he most difficult part of my work for the last three or four

years has been combatting of the undermining of the movement by those who profess to be Social Crediters....If you want these people in the movement you don't want me and if you want me, you don't want them."⁸ Accordingly, men such as A. V. Bourcier, member for Lac Ste. Anne and former chairman of the Social Credit Board, Johnny Gillese, former editor of the *Canadian Social Crediter*, and Kenneth Burton, one-time staff writer of the national paper, were refused renewal of their League membership cards.⁹

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, other "extreme" Douglasites were purged from Social Credit ranks. Ron Gostick, son of Edith Gostick, a former Alberta Social Credit M.L.A., published the *Canadian Intelligence Report* from Flesherton, Ontario. The *Report*, in addition to being violently anti-Semitic, also contained a book service which distributed, among other materials, the spurious *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*.¹⁰ Consequently, Gostick's activities were promptly repudiated by the Movement. As the *Financial Post* remarked, "[e]ven if [Gostick] might be on the right lines of thought for some of the party men, his expression of it is recognized to be too violent and extreme for public acceptance."¹¹ Louis Even, head of the Quebec wing of the National Social Credit Party, was also ousted. Publishing the newspaper *Vers Demain*, Even and his supporters espoused both Fascism and anti-Semitism, and they too published translations of the *Protocols of Zion*.¹² After their removal from the Movement, Even and his supporters changed their name to the Union des Electeurs and ran several candidates in 1949, with great success in Quebec. National leader Solon Low stated that the main issue between the Quebec wing and the national party was anti-Semitism.¹³

It is clear that Manning's intentions to purge the Douglasites from the Social Credit Movement were unequivocal. However, an examination of the Movement after 1948 will reveal that anti-Semitism and its accompanying conspiracy theories were far from dead. Manning's purge may have prevented temporarily Social Credit theories from being publicly espoused, but the religious-economic-political impulses which reflected and shaped Social Credit ideology were still very palpable. Silencing vocal proponents of the

Movement's ideology did not automatically eradicate the ideas behind that ideology. Consequently, it was only a matter of time before Social Credit ideology would re-emerge.

Evidence of the re-emergence of the Movement's ideology can be seen as early as 1950. In March of that year, the *Ottawa Journal* remarked on the existence of certain "rebel Social Crediters" within the Party; specifically, A. V. Bourcier, Earl Ansley, and William Tomin. Bourcier had moved to the opposition side by this date, but Ansley and Tomin were still sitting as Social Credit members. The *Journal* advocated that all three members be "booted right out of the party and the government caucus and benches,"¹⁴ because of their espousal of views which were intolerant to Manning and to the government's interpretation of Social Credit. The *Journal* stated:

...a small band within the party continued to regard Douglas as the infallible prophet and adopted his anti-Semitism in full. That band regards Social Credit as nothing more than a mission to expose the "vicious diabolical world conspiracy" of the Jews. Messrs. Bourcier, Tomin and Ansley apparently have identified themselves with that band, although they would not admit having any racial prejudice. They refer to "political Zionism" instead of the Jews...As long as any of them sits on the government side, the government will have to bear some of the responsibility for their terrible words.¹⁵

In a letter to the editor of the *Edmonton Journal* soon after, Norman James, former contributor to the *Canadian Social Crediter*, stated on behalf of those "of us who have broken away from the political Social Credit Party" that,

Jews AS Jews are just human beings like ourselves. Some are good and some are bad and we are only interested in them as human beings, with the same virtues and same failings as the rest of us. As to their religion,- that is entirely their business. They are non-Christians in that they do not believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of mankind. We do not agree with them but accede them their right to hold their non-belief...We are NOT anti-Jew. We look on the Jews as fellow victims with ourselves of the plot for world enslavement by a gang of power-maniacs who would reduce us all to the status of serfs to a World Government with a world police force (including a secret police) and a world bank which would render us not only political but individual and economic slaves to a cutthroat gang of thugs known as International and Political Zionists. This gang has absolutely no connection with either Zion or the tribe of Judah...It is NOT the

non-Christians that we fight. It is the vicious ANTI-Christians with whom we wage unceasing war.¹⁶

The above excerpt, although long, is important in several respects. Norman James' comments invoke many sentiments: anti-Semitism in the guise of religious tolerance; anti-Semitism in the form of a financial conspiracy theory; anti-Semitism in the form of a political conspiracy theory; anti-Semitism in the guise of anti-Zionism; and finally, anti-Semitism in the form of anti-Satanism, or a battle against the anti-Christ. Although this rhetoric comes from a Douglasite who was no longer part of the Social Credit Party, it is important to note that similar attitudes were being espoused by members still within the Movement. As Wilfred Eggleston noted in an article dated October 31, 1950, the Social Credit Movement "still has violently doctrinaire members who see a Communist behind every welfare cheque and an international financial plot in every stock promotion."¹⁷

Specifically, at the Social Credit Movement's national convention in Regina early in 1951, the traditional conspiracy theory rhetoric continued unabated. Richard Needham, reporting on the convention's highlights, noted:

There was good nourishing talk at the convention about the hellish machinations of the money barons (not specifically identified, but patently Easterners), there were denunciations of Socialism and communism, and there were frequent references to the happiness, freedom and prosperity of the folks back home in Alberta...There was plenty of religion. (When asked how many listened to Premier Manning's Sunday broadcasts, 90 per cent of the audience responded.)...At times it seemed like an evangelistic meeting. Speakers often used Biblical references, a hymn joined the National Anthem as an introduction on the opening day, and prayers opened daily sessions.¹⁸

Other examples of the continuity and tenacity of Social Credit ideology abound. As Bruce Fraser noted in a piece written in 1956, "[f]ascist and anti-Semitic views alone don't always lead to expulsion from Social Credit ranks." He states:

At a campaign meeting in Nokomis, Sask., in June, [1956] Orvis Kennedy, the party's national organizer, was quoted as saying, "Hitler would have been all right if he had been let alone." John Blackmore, MP and former House leader of the parliamentary groups, was challenged a year or two ago for distributing anti-

Semitic pamphlets postage-free by using his postal frank as a member of parliament. It turned out the pamphlets had been sent by his secretary, Doris Moore, but Blackmore made no apology or repudiation.¹⁹

Another notable example of Social Credit's continuing ideology lies in the person of Cornelia Wood, an avid Douglasite from the Party's earliest years. Utilizing Cornelia Wood's archival papers, Bob Hesketh provides an interesting account of this woman's lengthy involvement in Social Credit:

...Wood is best remembered in the 1950s and 1960s for her fiery anticommunist and antifluoridation campaigns. To her, the battle against finance was unabated, communism was a devious ploy of the financiers and fluoridation was an insidious communist plot. In the 1960s, she attacked Manning's stance on political realignment, before finally running in 1967 as an independent Social Credit candidate proudly advocating monetary reform and attacking the government for abandoning social credit.²⁰

Hesketh accurately notes that "Social Credit was never able to shake off completely the influence of the Douglasites--they had been officially expelled but, like Wood, they would not go away."²¹

It can be conceded that Cornelia Wood is not representative of all Social Crediters in the 1960s. F. Maria Arnim argues that Social Credit in the 1960s was of a different kind than its earlier form. Commenting on Social Credit's huge electoral victory in Alberta in 1959, Arnim writes:

As for its program, its original burning zeal to destroy eastern financiers and the grip of the money power has dwindled now to no more than a slight and sanctimonious abhorrence of debt, a stand all the more easy to maintain since over a third of the provincial revenues come from the exploitation of oil and natural gas.²²

However, Social Credit during the 1960s continued to reflect the traditional impulses which first brought it to power. On the national scale, a resurgence of Social Credit occurred under the leadership of Réal Caouette. Linking his Ralliement des Créditistes with the national Social Credit Party, Caouette invoked the traditional bogeys of Social Credit, and helped get elected twenty-six Quebec Social Credit members of

Parliament in the 1962 federal election. In what has been called "thundering, homey oratory"²³ and even "virtual mass hypnotism,"²⁴ Caouette railed against Social Credit's enemies:

I am a Catholic--others are Protestants--but we are all Christians and will remain so. We are Christians first and Social Crediters second. Let us be on our knees before God, but stand on our feet before men and the moneyed interests...We represent...the working classes of Canada--the farmers and laborers. We must remember when we find a case of misery in Canada we find dynamite--and the Communists will light it and blow up the whole structure.²⁵

After 1962, the National Social Credit Party became practically synonymous with Caouette's organization. No western Social Credit member was elected to Parliament after 1965, and the national party was crippled by a split between Caouette's group and the Western Social Credit organizations, which lasted from 1963 to 1971. As A. Train noted, "although the two wings were officially reunited in 1971, the western wing is only a shadow of what it once was."²⁶

Yet the Alberta Social Credit party remained strong throughout the 1960s, up until Manning's retirement as premier in 1968. During this period, Social Credit's traditional enemies remained unaltered. Perhaps the most important event was that involving the University of Alberta bookstore and the notorious *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*.

In February 1965, Wallace Klinck, a thirty-year-old University of Alberta student and campus chairman for the Party, was ousted for distributing copies of the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* at the University of Alberta bookstore. After Klinck had chosen a number of books and pamphlets on Social Credit (which included several copies of the *Protocols*), these books were approved by the political science department and then brought to bookstore manager N. S. Howe. Klinck's actions became known to Premier Manning, Social Credit League president Orvis Kennedy, and university campus leader Owen Anderson, who convened a meeting and decided to cancel Klinck's party

membership. "[The *Protocols*] is scurrilous, anti-Semitic writing, a forgery, which has never been part of the Social Credit literature," Kennedy stated to the *Edmonton Journal*.²⁷ However, Klinck denied that the *Protocols* was anti-Semitic and he stated that it was an integral part of Social Credit theory originated by Douglas.²⁸ Klinck stated: "The book is a terrible outline for world conquest...The events that have occurred in the world since it was written would make any thinking person incapable of dismissing it without serious consideration."²⁹ With respect to the charges of anti-Semitism, Klinck remarked that "[t]he nucleus of international financiers has its share of Jews in it...Many records suggest there are a substantial number of Jews involved but this does not in any way involve the entire Jewish people."³⁰ Denying that he or any other Social Crediter was anti-Semitic, Klinck stated "[i]t is unfortunate that when a reform movement becomes a political party, freedom of thought is somewhat restricted."³¹ Klinck further commented that although the Party may not officially believe in Douglas Social Credit, many members in Alberta did.³² It is worth noting that all six copies of the *Protocols* brought in by Klinck had been sold by the time his membership was revoked.³³

L. Hertzma, in a provocative article on "Alberta and the Intellectuals," noted Manning's reaction upon being questioned about the University campus incident. "It was interesting to watch the Premier repudiate the anti-Semitic past of the Social Credit movement," writes Hertzma.³⁴ With his "deft side-stepping and restrained answers,"³⁵ Manning was apparently able to explain away the unfortunate occurrence. Yet as Hertzma notes, "The anti-Semitic line has now been quietly relegated to the inner circles of the Social Credit Party, where the conspiracy theory of history is far from dead."³⁶

Social Credit's "conspiracy theory of history" would continue to haunt the Party and its reputation. After Manning's retirement in 1968, the Alberta Social Credit Party floundered, deteriorated, and was subsequently swept aside by Peter Lougheed's election victory in 1971. The party continued to function into the 1980s, when it experienced a

resurgence in media attention because of another Social Crediter, a man named James Keegstra.

The Keegstra story is a long and convoluted one,³⁷ and its discussion here will be limited to its relationship to the Social Credit Party and the subsequent effects on Alberta's political culture. James Keegstra, mayor of Eckville (a small town in Central Alberta), and social studies teacher at the Eckville High School, was also second Alberta vice-president of the national Social Credit Party. In December 1982, Keegstra was dismissed from his teaching position for alleging the existence of a world Zionist conspiracy. In testimony given at the trial in 1985, in which Keegstra was convicted for wilfully promoting hatred against Jews, the following excerpt from a grade twelve student's social studies exam was recorded:

Moles only come out of the dark when no one is watching...Jews only do their deeds when no one is watching. A mole when mad, will strike back and have no mercy if disturbed. Jews strike at any time and have NO mercy. No one knows the Jews are there until they strike.³⁸

Mr. Keegstra had penned in the words "when cornered are dangerous" and gave this student's answer full marks.³⁹

In May 1983, J. Martin Hattersley, Social Credit's national party president, fired Keegstra from his position as second Alberta vice-president of the Social Credit national party. However, two party executives, Thomas Erhart and James Green, opposed Hattersley's actions. Eleven sympathizers met in Calgary and signed a written protest to Hattersley for his abrupt dismissal of Keegstra. Hattersley responded by summoning a provincial executive meeting in Edmonton on May 7, where in a four-to-three vote in favour of suspension, Hattersley cancelled the memberships of Keegstra, Erhart (second national vice-president), and Green (regional director from Bentley, Alberta). The expulsions were effective for sixty days, to be ratified or repealed at the Alberta wing's national annual convention in June 1983.⁴⁰

It is noteworthy that Erhart and Green publicly defended Keegstra and, as the *Calgary Herald* noted, "subscribed to his belief that the Holocaust was a hoax perpetrated by Jewish bankers intent on subverting society and taking over the world."⁴¹ Erhart, stating that he was considering challenging the leadership of national party president Hattersley, declared: "The party executive crucified three patriotic Canadians [when they suspended Keegstra, Erhart, and Green]...The Zionist bankers want [the alleged conspiracy] covered up. They don't want it exposed. Well, I say the provincial executive have caused a holocaust of their own. They've given themselves a death blow by getting rid of us."⁴² In another statement, Erhart remarked: "We're tired of listening to this Holocaust--six million Jews who never were...It was totally impossible for six million Jews to die in the concentration camps."⁴³

Ted Byfield's *Alberta Report*, a widely read right-wing newsmagazine, provided further insight into Erhart's views. Wrote the *Report*:

Mr. Erhart vowed afterward that Mr. Hattersley would discover the trio are far from alone. Many, he says, agree that a compact of 150,000 non-Semitic Khazar Jews control finance, education and governments throughout the world. Just because they don't profess this belief at Socred meetings, says Mr. Erhart, doesn't mean that a lot of Socreds don't think it.⁴⁴

National president Hattersley defended his actions by comparing his actions to Manning's purge of 1948. As *Alberta Report* noted, Hattersley was attempting to effect at the national level what he believed Manning achieved at the provincial level. The *Report* stated:

The cabinet expulsions nipped anti-Semitism for good in the provincial party, says national leader Hattersley. He now hopes to do the same at the federal level, although he admits that in practice the two strata heavily coincide. Conspiracy theories of any kind are irrelevant to Social Credit policy, he insists. The original Douglas thesis was that an abundance of goods is physically possible for society to achieve and should be economically possible too. The means have changed, the goal has not.⁴⁵

Hattersley's interpretation of Social Credit history proved as tenuous as his stand against the conspiracy theorists. On June 18, 1983, at the Alberta wing's annual general meeting, the Alberta membership (after a five-hour heated dispute) voted 33 to 31 in favour of reinstating Keegstra, Erhart and Green. As *Alberta Report* noted, "Mr. Hattersley thereupon pronounced Social Credit a hopeless case and quit."⁴⁶

The right to free speech was the fulcrum upon which hung the balance of these men's fates in the Social Credit party. As Hattersley noted, he believed the Alberta members, in reinstating the conspiracy theorists, doomed the party to the role of "a sort of racist movement."⁴⁷ *Alberta Report* further stated that "Mr. Hattersley feels it safe to assume that most of [Keegstra's, Erhart's, and Green's] Socred supporters harbour similar sentiments, whatever they may say about free speech."⁴⁸

Martin Hattersley attempted to effect a purge similar to that executed by Manning. Interestingly, he embraced many of the same ideas Manning, the Douglasites, and the Keegstra supporters held. At the Macdonald Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Union, which visited Alberta in November 1983, Hattersley expounded the traditional Social Credit ideology. Referring to Hattersley as one of those "steadfast advocates of monetary revolution whose economic gospel swept the province in the cash-hungry Dirty Thirties," the *Alberta Report* stated:

The Socreds have argued all along that banking, as distinct from capitalism in general, is the cause of the world's economic woes. Since the end of the Middle Ages, Mr. Hattersley told the commission, bankers have been allowed to expand the money supply of nations as they see fit.⁴⁹

The rhetoric had not changed; the enemy remained unaltered. Hattersley was following Social Credit tradition to the letter--from conspiracy theorizing to attempting to proscribe the ideological culmination of those conspiracy theories. It proved as difficult for Hattersley as it had been for Manning to expunge from the Party the very essence of its ideology.

Keegstra's fate in the Social Credit Party eventually ended in defeat. Before this occurred, however, Keegstra was nominated as the Social Credit candidate for Red Deer in the 1984 federal election.⁵⁰ Although he was not elected, Keegstra was still able to garner a discernible amount of support. As David Elliott notes: "It also bears noting that even after all of the adverse publicity which Keegstra had received because of his views, he obtained 691 votes when he ran as a Social Credit candidate for the Red Deer constituency in the 1984 federal election."⁵¹

Keegstra then ran for the national leadership of the Party in July 1986. Losing to Reverend Harvey Lainson in a vote of 67 to 38, Keegstra stated that he lost because the convention was held in the East (Toronto), and because his opponents played up his "hate-monger label" with the media.⁵² Referring to his 1985 conviction for spreading hatred against Jews, Keegstra stated: "They said I was prejudiced...But in my trial, it was never proven that what I taught those kids was false."⁵³ "[Lainson] is a racist," stated Keegstra, contending that the evangelical preacher believes that God values Jews above other peoples. "I'm not a racist...I don't place one group of people above another."⁵⁴

The Keegstra saga continued in the courts, but his involvement in the Social Credit Party ended after his 1986 defeat for the party leadership. Assessments of Keegstra's effect on the Social Credit Party and Alberta's political culture are worthy of examination. One Dorothy Joss of Calgary, who signed the Keegstra protest letter in 1983, had been a Social Crediter since 1945. After signing the protest, Joss stated that she soon regretted it. "I thought he'd [Keegstra] been smeared until I saw him explain his anti-Jewish views on television. Our Lord was a Jew, and the Jews are his chosen people. This party musn't become anti-Jewish."⁵⁵ Former national leader Robert Thompson, commenting on the Keegstra affair, recalled Manning's purge of the "anti-Jewish element" in the 1940s and 1950s. Thompson similarly stated: "Christians can't be anti-Jews. Christ was a Jew. How can I be against a man I call my saviour."⁵⁶ In reference to Keegstra's campaign in

the 1984 federal election, departed leader Hattersley stated, "Jim Keegstra's bid to become an Alberta MP makes me glad I got out when I did."⁵⁷

It is apparent from these comments that Keegstra was a blot on the reputation of the Social Credit Party, and that his anti-Semitic views were not ideologically acceptable. However, it must be emphasized that these comments came after much negative media attention. It cannot be ignored that James Keegstra taught a Jewish conspiracy theory in his social studies classes for fourteen years before being dismissed. Once the media held up his views to public scrutiny, Keegstra became a liability to the Party and to his home town. The town of Eckville became the focus of national disparagement, and its inhabitants unwilling objects of attention. The Social Credit Party, already weakened to the point of internal collapse, took a final beating which expedited its demise. Yet James Keegstra was espousing views which were not out of sync with traditional Social Credit ideology. Conspiracy theories and anti-Semitism were the stock in trade of Social Credit ideology. Keegstra was simply an avid adherent.

Yet scholarly interpretations of the Keegstra affair marginalize Keegstra and label him an anomaly. The consequence is an unfortunate obscurity of the history of Social Credit thought and its consequent manifestations. Commenting on the purge of Erhart, Green, and Keegstra in 1983, University of Calgary political science professor Roger Gibbins stated that the Jim Keegstra affair did not signal a resurgence of anti-Semitic Social Credit ideas in Alberta. Rather, stated Gibbins, Keegstra represented one of the last vestiges of a "dying strain" of Social Credit thought that "doesn't pose any major threat of revival...As the party dies, the hard core ideologists are left."⁵⁸ Alvin Finkel, in his book on the Social Credit Movement, similarly states in reference to the "1980s Social Credit racists:"

[they] should not, however, obscure the fact that Social Credit, in office, whatever the conspiratorial views of its leaders, had been authoritarian and right wing but never fascist and genocidal...It was only the departure of the respected party

leaders and most of the members that left the party shell available to kooks and fascists.⁵⁹

Strong issue must be taken with these interpretations. James Keegstra, with his denial of the Holocaust and other anti-Semitic sentiments, was in no way a Social Credit anomaly. 1980s Social Credit anti-Semitism came from the same roots as the anti-Semitism of the 1930s Movement. Keegstra did not represent a resurgence of a very small "crank faction," nor did he represent the last gasps of a dying breed. Rather, as a Social Credit ideologue, Keegstra represented the culmination of the conspiratorial and anti-Semitic ideology which imbued Social Credit doctrines from their inception.

Alvin Finkel argues that right wing extremists claimed Social Credit for their own in the 1980s and thereby sealed Social Credit's doom.⁶⁰ Rather, these "right wing extremists" provided an ideological continuity which, not surprisingly, adapted itself to changing historical circumstances. In the 1930s and 1940s, Norman Jaques railed against the Jewish bankers and their Zionist "pink fellow travellers" who were bent on world domination. Forty years later, when the Holocaust had slipped into "historical memory," ideologically loyal Social Crediters like Keegstra were railing against the "hoax" of the Holocaust. Anti-Semitism was an integral element in Social Credit ideology, and Social Crediters of the 1980s were no more extreme than their predecessors.

A further obscurance of the history of Social Credit ideology pertains to what I have called the "heroic purger" syndrome. Ernest Manning has been historically vindicated as the honourable purger of anti-Semites from the Social Credit Party. The same might be said of J. Martin Hattersley's attempts in the 1980s. As David Elliott notes in reference to the Keegstra affair:

That Keegstra was able to teach his views in the Eckville High School for fourteen years with almost no opposition raises some pertinent questions about the acceptance of anti-Semitism in central Alberta. For many years the riding of Red Deer, which included Eckville, was a stronghold for the federal Social Credit Party. During the 1960s it was the seat of Robert N. Thompson, leader of the federal Socreds... While Thompson, like Aberhart, denounced anti-Semitism, it is

interesting to note that in his speeches as Socred leader, he too accepted and praised Douglas's economic analysis and spoke "of interests which in many ways had complete economic and financial world control, interests which would be...difficult to dislodge from their position as unseen masters of the world." The conspiratorial views of Douglas, Aberhart, Hooke, and Thompson may have helped foster a climate of public opinion in the Red Deer constituency which could make possible a denial of the Holocaust.⁶¹

What Elliott consistently omits is a comparison of Manning's views with those of other leading Social Credit members. Manning equally embraced Social Credit's conspiracy theories without naming the "enemy," yet Elliott holds up Manning as the heroic purger of anti-Semitism from the Social Credit Party. He writes: "While Ernest Manning tried to purge the party of anti-Semitism in 1947, the party and many of its members retained the conspiracy theories which fostered that anti-Semitism. Those poisonous roots, never fully eradicated, bore their bitter fruit for fourteen years in the Eckville High School."⁶² Such an interpretation not only diminishes Manning's role in perpetuating Social Credit ideology, but it also obscures the essence of that ideology. Social Credit ideology embodied religious, economic, and political values which fomented anti-Semitism: values which Manning fully embraced, but without invoking the label "Jew." If Ernest Manning can be historically vindicated, it would be for his refusal to state that which was already assumed.

Moreover, Elliott's interpretation does not take into account Social Credit's influence on Alberta's broader political culture. In ascribing only to the Red Deer constituency a predilection for anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial, Elliott overlooks larger forces which informed the province's political culture: a self-protective, community-oriented province where people take care of their own, where there is a traditional respect for God and authority, and an aversion to community rupture. Specifically, the fact that Keegstra was the mayor of the town and a respected high school teacher; that he was an executive member of a long-standing political party; that he was perceived as a well-respected, church-going member of the community, all contributed to

a hesitancy to "make waves." These are elements which exceed political constituency boundaries; rather, they are the "guts" of political cultural history--about everyday people's perceptions of their world and their local leaders. It was not overt Jew-hatred which enabled James Keegstra to teach anti-Semitism in the Eckville High School for fourteen years. However, thirty-six years of Social Credit rule had created a political culture with a great tolerance for intolerance. The result was a culmination of Social Credit's anti-Semitic ideology in the figure of James Keegstra.

The story of anti-Semitism in the Alberta Social Credit Party could be said to end with the Keegstra affair. Social Credit's legacy of intolerance, however, continues in Alberta's present political culture. The new political vehicle for such sentiments rests in the Reform Party of Canada, whose leader is Ernest Manning's son, Preston Manning. A brief examination of the tenets of the Reform Party will reveal striking ideological continuities between the two movements. This postscript, so to speak, will also reinforce the idea that anti-Semitism, however pervasive in the earlier movement, was only one possible manifestation of this kind of political culture--a culture with social, economic, and political values that, when these values are perceived to be threatened by outside forces, create ideologically acceptable enemies.

The Reform Party of Canada was established in 1987, in the hopes of creating a new federal party of the right. As Murray Dobbin remarks, "[i]t began in the rich men's clubs in Calgary and Edmonton, was financed by a right-wing millionaire and founded by a tightly controlled convention."⁶³ Performing a delicate balancing act between promoting itself as a western-based regional party as well as a national party with national clout, the Party endorsed the slogan "The West Wants In," and under Preston Manning's effective leadership, it gained over 100,000 members within four years. Preston Manning skillfully

advocated that "[a] new federal party representing the West should have 'room to grow' into a truly national party...nothing should be done in the early stages to...preclude it from eventually gaining support all across the country."⁶⁴

The idea of a federal party that would have western interests first was very appealing to many Albertans, as well as to other westerners. As Ian Pearson notes, the Reform Party was playing to the same sense of alienation that created the Progressives in the 1920s and Social Credit in the 1930s. He writes:

In the eyes of Reformers, central Canada has never stopped putting the boot to the prairies. But beyond that, the Reformers are feeding off a frustration with politicians in general, a feeling that the party system has atrophied and needs substantial reform to revive it. Previous western populist movements appealed to different sectors of the disfranchised: the poor, farmers, labour. When Preston Manning pitches his message, he's speaking not only to a core of farmers and disgruntled retirees but also to a potentially huge group that feels abandoned by the established political parties: the middle class. (The disaffected rich also seem more than happy to go along for the ride.)⁶⁵

Pearson points out that the Progressive Conservative party had "owned the Albertan middle class for the last two decades."⁶⁶ However, Conservative Albertans had grown increasingly dissatisfied with Mulroney's government: "The belief in Alberta is that Mulroney's Conservatives have done nothing but take from the western provinces and give to central Canada."⁶⁷ Pearson further argues that Reform Party members shared similar sentiments: "the government is an obstacle to the way [they] want to run [their] affairs. Worse than that, they feel they have no representation in Parliament, that Tory MPs have become Ottawa MPs, not spokesmen for the West."⁶⁸ Other commentators also have noted that "one of the reasons the party even exists is the widespread perception that western Tory MPs are subjected to party discipline so rigid it turns them into marionettes controlled by the Quebec caucus."⁶⁹ Accordingly, a federal party which would represent the West and not pander to the provinces that had the most "electoral clout"⁷⁰ was very welcomed.

Along with its appeal to a sense of political alienation, the Reform Party, in true populist fashion, appealed to other socio-economic values. It is these other values which helped shape and reflect a new national party with a reputation for right-wing extremism. Specifically, the Reform Party's platform included opposition to the Meech Lake accord, with its recognition of Quebec's "distinct society."⁷¹ Stated Preston Manning: "Either all Canadians make a clear commitment to Canada as one nation...or Quebec and the rest of Canada should explore whether there exists a better but more separate relationship."⁷² Murray Dobbin, examining the Party's confrontational approach to Canadian federalism, notes that "[t]he Reform Party is the only national party in Canadian history to explicitly exclude Quebec."⁷³ He argues that the Party's policy of negotiating the terms by which Quebec would stay in Confederation was destined for failure, because of the inflexibility of the Party's position and its demand that Quebec nationalists come up with a negotiable proposition. The consequence of such a strategy was to make successful negotiations impossible.⁷⁴ Moreover, states Dobbin, the Party's stance contained a discernible element of intolerance. Referring to Preston Manning, Dobbin writes:

His position on Quebec, like so many of the Reform Party's policies, is full of calculated ambiguity. He has alluded to the possibility of violence and, while careful not to be tied down, hints at a position voiced by the party's soul mate on Quebec, the Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada (APEC). APEC's position on Quebec calls for partition of the province if it decides to separate. But lurking in the background is the threat of violence. Says APEC's chairman, James Morrison, "Quebec belongs to Canada; it's not just Quebec's. It should not be allowed to separate...The use of force in the defence of the Constitution is legitimate self-defence."⁷⁵

Whether the Reform Party and APEC were "soul-mates" is open to debate; however, it cannot be disputed that the Party's position *vis à vis* Quebec was neither flexible nor amiable. A related plank in the Party's platform was its stand on bilingualism. The Party opposed the bilingual policies of the federal government; specifically, it opposed bilingualism outside Quebec.⁷⁶

Other planks included the Party's opposition to Canada's multiculturalism policy, which "encourages ethnic groups to maintain their distinct traditions."⁷⁷ Instead, the Party proposed that the federal government withdraw much of its funding from multicultural programmes.⁷⁸ The Reform Party also opposed the current federal immigration policy. The Party argued that immigration policy should judge applicants on economic, not ethnic, criteria.⁷⁹ Its manifesto stated that immigration policy should not be "explicitly designed to radically or suddenly alter the ethnic makeup of Canada, as it increasingly seems to be."⁸⁰

Responses to the Reform Party's platform were extremely varied. Unsurprisingly, the Party appealed to "people opposed to multiculturalism and bilingualism and to the [former] Mulroney government's alleged toadying to Quebec..."⁸¹ Yet its appeal included broader sentiments which resonated with many disgruntled supporters. As Pearson notes, Stan Waters, Reform's sole elected Senator, castigated Mulroney's government for spending "\$239-million in hand-outs to the so-called arts community through the Canada Council."⁸² "As you know[,] " railed Waters, "many of those hand-outs are to publish books that should never have been published, to mount paintings that should never have been painted, to compose music that should never be listened to."⁸³ After "thunderous applause," writes Pearson, Waters attacked "the 186-million for scholarly research, such as the social value of lawn ornaments."⁸⁴

Preston Manning also espoused opinions which garnered broad support. Like his father, Preston Manning was an avowed Christian, and he made no apology for espousing his Christian values in his politics. An excerpt from his book, *The New Canada*, reveals Preston Manning's religious philosophy:

When I am asked for a definition of my most deeply held values (that is, for a statement of faith), I could respond by reciting the Apostles' Creed or the statement of faith of any of the various churches (Baptist, and Christian and Missionary Alliance) that my family and I have attended...Such a statement would

not be very meaningful, however, to Canadians who have abandoned or who have never subscribed to **this country's Christian heritage** [emphasis mine].⁸⁵

Laurence Decore, leader of the provincial Liberal party in Alberta and former mayor of Edmonton, commented on Preston Manning's religious appeal; what Decore called his "evangelical mystique." Stated Decore:

There's something captivating about a preacher and the way a preacher can get his message across. His father had it and it's all wound up in a western twang. It's wound up in the use of biblical images. It's very populist. And Preston's got it down to the kind of perfection his father had. It makes him very appealing, and makes him sound very honest and forthright. I think it's easy to like what he says.⁸⁶

The Reform Party also possessed a propaganda organ which acted as its political cheerleader.⁸⁷ The *Alberta Report* offers an insightful glimpse of the role of media within a political culture. In an editorial entitled "The Media Will Have a Hard Time Painting Preston Manning as a Religious Crank," editor Link Byfield disengaged *Alberta Report* from the "media label" at the same time as he used his magazine to propagandize the Party's views. He wrote:

Most media pundits detest religion...Most assume that religion is by definition contrary to reason; as sentiment it serves the occasional sociological purpose, but as a reasoned conviction it amounts to wilful self-delusion. And they think that the average man on the street shares this peculiarly ignorant attitude. Thus they assume that if they represent Mr. Manning often and at length as genuinely religious, people will reject him as a sanctimonious, irrational bigot...But in this they are deluding themselves. True, the common man detests the self-righteous...But he sees far, far more sanctimonious fanatics among the media and their think-alike friends--the feminists, the socialists, the environmentalists, the multiculturalists and all the political toadies in the other parties who suck up to them. It is they who have smothered public discourse in Canada to the point where only media-approved banalities are safe to utter. And there is a plain and growing public gratitude that Mr. Manning and 100,000 Reform party members are restoring our freedom to think and speak as we want.⁸⁸

The views expressed by leaders of the Reform Party and by media such as the *Alberta Report* both reflected and shaped the political culture from which they came.

Reform Party supporters, plagued by the same insecurities as their populist predecessors, saw a kind of salvation in this new national party of the West. As Murray Dobbin states, Preston Manning "promised to give legitimacy and credibility to their concerns, their issues, their yearning for the way things had been."⁸⁹ Dobbin further notes:

And that was who turned out to buy Reform Party memberships--those for whom the modernization of Canada, as characterized by non-white immigration, multiculturalism, metrification, women's right to abortion and an awakened Quebec nationalism made them feel alien in their own country.⁹⁰

Yet not all responses to the Reform Party were positive. Critics of the Party's platform argued that the Party's stance on "immigration, bilingualism, multiculturalism, the RCMP uniform and other issues revealed a mean-spirited and intolerant membership."⁹¹ Other critics "detected an unsavory edge of intolerance in the Reform's opposition to multiculturalism and the Meech Lake accord."⁹² Pearson notes how "some of the party's positions seem to belong to a previous age,"⁹³ and British Columbia's local Liberal Riding Association president John Kenny referred to Reform Party members as "white Anglo-Saxon men with 18th-century views."⁹⁴ Chief government whip and Calgary M.P. James Hawkes more explicitly branded the Reformers as "separatists and bigots."⁹⁵

Perhaps the most vocal critic of the Reform Party, however, was deputy Liberal leader Sheila Copps. In November 1991, shortly after ex-neo-Nazi and former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke lost the race for governor of Louisiana, Copps created an uproar in the House of Commons by comparing Preston Manning with David Duke and declaring much of the Party's platform "racist."⁹⁶ Copps also assembled a briefing book on the Reform Party and distributed it to fellow Members of Parliament and Liberal constituency presidents across Canada.⁹⁷ Reporting on Copps' negative interest in the Reform Party, Brian Bergman writes:

Copps insisted in an interview...that Reform policies on immigration and multiculturalism smack of intolerance and that the party is attracting members by

"hitting a lot [sic] of the same buttons" that Duke pushed. She also said that a few of the letters that she has received from self-described Reform supporters since her original statements suggest that the party has attracted some extremist elements. Claimed one letter-writer from Hamilton [Ontario]: "I don't like troublemakers, and Quebecers, native Indians, blacks and Asians are all troublemakers and a problem for this country."⁹⁸

Copps further asserted that unless Preston Manning unequivocally accepted the separation of church and state, his religious views--specifically, his belief that women should be submissive to men and that homosexual acts are sinful--could help promote policies that discriminated against women and gays.⁹⁹

Such criticisms were not merely shrewd diatribes in the game of political one-upmanship. In March 1992 the Reform Party expelled five party members who were current or former members of anti-immigration and neo-Nazi groups.¹⁰⁰ Commenting how the Party "noisily expelled" these radicals from its circle, *Alberta Report* stated:

The RPC [Reform Party of Canada] has launched an investigation of far-right groups so it can determine whether any other extremists have joined the party. As further protection, it will require all new constituency associations to subscribe to the principle of racial equality before extending official recognition. RPC officials have feared an infiltration effort by the extreme right from the outset...Stephen Harper, the RPC's chief policy officer, thinks the extreme right was "testing" the RPC to determine whether it would be receptive to joining forces or was vulnerable to infiltration. Mr. Harper believes the expulsions will send a clear signal. He fully expects the extreme right to begin denouncing the RPC, and will be greatly relieved when they do.¹⁰¹

Preston Manning's response to the extremist tendencies of his party and the concomitant criticism was what could be called "defensive pussyfooting." As Pearson notes, Preston Manning used an aphorism of his father's: "If you turn on a light, you're going to attract bugs."¹⁰² Preston Manning further declared:

When Canadians see something new coming along and there's a mixture in it--there are some things we like and some things we don't like--there's a tendency to withdraw from it. We shrink back. This is particularly true of middle- and upper-class people more than the rank and file. What I say to those people is, 'Don't tell me that you think I'm sane and responsible and that maybe I can keep all these wild guys in line.' If you want change, remember that change is messy. It will bring

modern ideas and it will bring extreme ideas. It will bring contradictory ideas. If you want change then you've got to get involved. Just because there are some factors you don't like, don't make that the reason for not doing it.¹⁰³

Without delving into the limited logic of his argument, it is important to note Preston Manning's emphasis on the "common man"--the rank and file who are not afraid to get their hands dirty in order to return their world to its proper order. With reference to the populist thrust of the Movement, Manning stated that "the conventional wisdom is not to let people express their opinions for fear that they might embarrass a political party. Our policy is different."¹⁰⁴ Further, Manning argued that "no reasonable person could consider as racist"¹⁰⁵ his party's stance on multiculturalism and immigration. "[A] party that challenges the status quo in any of these areas--be it immigration, language policy, the Constitution--automatically risks accusations of racism and extremism."¹⁰⁶ As Pearson aptly notes, "[Preston] Manning is careful to present moderate, general policies, even though the...members of the Reform Party are clamouring for severe action on fiscal matters, multiculturalism, immigration, language legislation, and Quebec's status within Confederation."¹⁰⁷

Preston Manning's policy chief, Stephen Harper, was less subtle in his pronouncements on the tendency of the rank and file toward extremism. Stated Harper:

There's always the concern with a grass-roots party that there'll be extreme and radical and highly ideological ideas...We haven't found that generally. The bigger problem is that when you seek input from the bottom up, often the ideas are simple and low quality, or just slogans. They need a lot [sic] of fleshing out. But if people feel you're listening to them, they'll have faith in you, and they they'll be very open to what you're trying to sell them.¹⁰⁸

C. B. Macpherson's theory of plebiscitarian democracy could not be put more succinctly. The people will place their faith in a trusted leader and leave the results up to the "experts." All that is required is massive support of previously-selected choices. As Braid and Sharpe note in *Storming Babylon*, the Reform Party was not so much a true populist movement as "a massive delegation of trust" by voters to a revered leader.

Further, Preston Manning's "bond with the party runs so deep that members accept inconsistencies from him that they simply would not tolerate in another politician."¹⁰⁹ These inconsistencies included an about-face on opposition to the Goods and Services Tax (implemented by the Mulroney government), and more broadly, the establishment of the Party as a western protest movement which later attempted to gain national support. Such a programme involved great political manoeuvring; as Pearson notes, "as a regional movement with national aspirations, the party eventually has to defuse the massive resentment of central Canada among its members."¹¹⁰ The result was an ideological contradiction in the Party's *raison d'être*.

The Reform Party of Canada shows great ideological continuities with the earlier Social Credit Movement. The enemy has changed over the years--from the international socialist Jewish-Zionist banker to the political interest group--feminists, socialists, environmentalists, multiculturalists, Quebecois nationalists, and other "political toadies." However, the sentiments which informed Social Credit ideology and which inform the Reform Party of Canada's platform are strikingly similar. Threatened social, political, and economic values act as strong impetuses for a political ideology which views external opposition in terms of "the enemy." Manicheanism is far from dead in Alberta, and it has proven to be extremely useful in defining this political culture's identity. Alberta may have a reputation as a hotbed for intolerance, but it is one which has been cultivated over several decades. The Social Credit ideologues of Manning's era have been succeeded by Reform Party supporters under the new Manning regime. Therein lies an intriguing political continuity: a resurrection of the ideologically faithful.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

¹John Irving, "Evolution of the Social Credit Movement," Canadian Journal of Economics 14 (August 1948), 580.

²John J. Barr, The Dynasty: The Rise and Fall of Social Credit in Alberta (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), 130.

³C. B. Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta: Social Credit and the Party System (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 12.

⁴Bob Hesketh, "From Crusaders to Missionaries to Wives: Alberta Social Credit Women, 1932-1935," Prairie Forum 18(1) (Spring 1993), 64.

Hesketh's argument regarding women Douglasites' altered role after 1948 is weak because it lacks sufficient supporting evidence. There is no documentation offered to support the thesis that Social Credit women shifted from activists to the more domestic role of "wound-healers." Further, Social Credit women are examined in a vacuum: there is no discussion of the post-war, Cold War, conformity and its effect on social morals. Hesketh argues that Social Credit women became less important in the Movement after 1948, but he fails to examine broader social trends which could account for women's changed role. Unfortunately, what could have been a valuable contribution to Social Credit historiography resulted in a rather static interpretation of Social Credit women into three roles--crusaders, missionaries, and wives. The interpretive framework is intriguing, but there is not enough supporting evidence, especially as it pertains to women Douglasites and their activities after 1948.

⁵Walter Young, Democracy and Discontent: Progressivism, Socialism and Social Credit in the Canadian West (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1969), 106.

⁶A. E. Carlsen, "Evolution of Social Credit Economic Thought," Queen's Quarterly 70 (Autumn 1963), 385.

⁷Howard Palmer, "Ethnic Relations and the Paranoid Style: Nativism, Nationalism and Populism in Alberta, 1945-1950," Canadian Ethnic Studies 23(3) (1991), 24.

⁸Edmonton Bulletin, 25 November 1948, cover.

⁹Edmonton Bulletin, 24 November 1948, cover.

¹⁰L. Hertzma, "Alberta and the Intellectuals," Culture 27 (June 1966), 174.

¹¹M. Barkway, "Will Canucks Swallow Social Credit 'Utopia Pill'?", Financial Post 49 (23 July 1955), 17.

¹²Blair Fraser, "How the Sacred Blitzkrieg Failed," Maclean's Magazine 69 (4 August 1956), 51.

¹³Blair Fraser, "Social Credit Feels its Oats," Maclean's Magazine 66 (15 April 1953), 95.

¹⁴"Rebel Social Crediters Embarrass Mr. Manning," Ottawa Journal, 21 March 1950.

¹⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁶Letter to the Editor of the Edmonton Journal, from Norman James, 22 April 1950, Norman James Papers, Box M574, File 5, Glenbow-Archives Institute, Calgary, Alberta.

¹⁷W. Eggleston, "SC Still Harps on One String," Saturday Night 66 (31 October 1950), 3.

¹⁸Richard Needham, "Party Puts the Heat on Saskatchewan," Saturday Night 66 (9 January 1951), 11.

¹⁹Fraser, "How the Sacred Blitzkrieg Failed," 51.

²⁰Hesketh, 70.

²¹*Ibid.*, 68.

²²F. M. Arnim, "Political Scene in Alberta," Canadian Comment 5 (March 1961), 24.

²³"Party's Over," Maclean's Magazine 89 (1 November 1976), 24.

²⁴"These Men Hold Key to Power," Financial Post 56 (23 June 1962), 1.

²⁵A. Edinborough, "Social Credit: A Party on the Move," Saturday Night 76 (5 August 1961), 14.

²⁶A. Train, "Old Rhetoric Trotted Out Again," Last Post 5 (December 1976), 19.

²⁷"Social Crediters Expel Member over Anti-Semitic Literature," Edmonton Journal, 9 February 1965.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹*Ibid.*

³²*Ibid.*

³³*Ibid.*

³⁴Hertzma, 174.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶*Ibid.*, 175.

³⁷See David Bercuson and Douglas Wertheimer, A Trust Betrayed: The Keegstra Affair (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1985), and Steve Merl and John Ward, Keegstra: The Trial, The Issues, The Consequences (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1985).

³⁸Robert Mason Lee, "Keegstra's Children," Saturday Night 100 (May 1985), 38.

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰Link Byfield, "Socred's Legacy of Racism," Alberta Report (16 May 1983), 8, and "3 Dumped For Stand on Jews," Calgary Herald, 9 May 1983.

⁴¹"3 Dumped For Stand on Jews," Calgary Herald, 9 May 1983.

⁴²*Ibid.*

⁴³"The Knife Edge of Hate," Canada and the World (February 1984), 24.

⁴⁴Link Byfield, "Socred's Legacy of Racism," 8.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶"Bitter Exit of Socred Leader Hattersley," Alberta Report (4 July 1983), 8.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 9.

⁴⁹Link Byfield, "Howl Against Banking is Raised Again," Alberta Report (28 November 1983), 7.

⁵⁰B. Teeter and S. Weatherbe, "From Dignity to Quackery: Socreds Nominate Keegstra," Alberta Report (27 August 1984), 7.

⁵¹David R. Elliott, "Anti-Semitism and the Social Credit Movement: The Intellectual Roots of the Keegstra Affair," Canadian Ethnic Studies 17(1) (1985), 86.

⁵²Donald Campbell and Fay Orr, "Keegstra's Loss," Alberta Report (7 July 1986), 4.

⁵³*Ibid.*

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁵Link Byfield, "Socred's Legacy of Racism," 8.

⁵⁶Teeter and Weatherbe, 7.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*

⁵⁸"Anti-Semitism is Relic of Socred History," Calgary Herald, 3 June 1983.

⁵⁹Alvin Finkel, The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 200.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, xii.

⁶¹Elliott, "Anti-Semitism and the Social Credit Movement," 85-86.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 86.

⁶³Murray Dobbin, "Clandestine World of Preston Manning," Canadian Forum 70(804) (November 1991), 10.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ian Pearson, "Thou Shalt Not Ignore the West: Preston Manning's Reform Party," Saturday Night 105(10) (December 1990), 37-38.

⁶⁶Ibid., 38.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Peter Taylor, "Frustration on the First Plateau," Alberta Report (16 December 1991), 12.

⁷⁰Dobbin, "Clandestine World of Preston Manning," 10.

⁷¹John Howse, "From Alberta With Ire: Populist Protest Fuels Reform Ambitions," Maclean's Magazine 102(46) (13 November 1989), 24.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Dobbin, "Clandestine World of Preston Manning," 11.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Howse, 24, and Pearson, 43.

⁷⁷Howse, 24.

⁷⁸Pearson, 43.

⁷⁹Brian Bergman, "Judgment Day: Reform Party Leader Preston Manning runs into a Barrage of Criticism--and Scrutiny," Maclean's Magazine 104(50) (16 December 1991), 13.

⁸⁰Pearson, 43.

⁸¹Dobbin, "Clandestine World of Preston Manning," 10.

⁸²Pearson, 43.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵"Reform Not a Religious Party: Excerpt from The New Canada," Preston Manning Financial Post 86(3) (20 January 1992), S2.

⁸⁶Pearson, 40.

⁸⁷Dobbin, "Clandestine World of Preston Manning," 9.

⁸⁸Link Byfield, "The Media Will Have a Hard Time Painting Preston Manning as a Religious Crank," Alberta Report (16 December 1991), 2.

⁸⁹Dobbin, "Clandestine World of Preston Manning," 10.

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid., 11.

⁹²Howse, 24.

⁹³Pearson, 43.

⁹⁴Howse, 25.

⁹⁵Ibid., 24.

⁹⁶Bergman, "Judgment Day," 12.

⁹⁷Ibid., 13.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Ibid., 14.

¹⁰⁰George Koch, "Reform Party Heave-Hos Five More Radicals," Alberta Report (23 March 1992), 12.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 13.

¹⁰²Pearson, 74.

¹⁰³Ibid.

¹⁰⁴Howse, 24.

¹⁰⁵Bergman, "Judgment Day," 13.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

¹⁰⁷Pearson, 40.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 43.

¹⁰⁹Bergman, "Judgment Day," 14.

¹¹⁰Pearson, 38.

CONCLUSION

Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of mine enemies;
thou annoitest my head with oil,
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy
shall follow me
all the days of my life;
and I will dwell in the House of the
Lord
for ever.

(Psalm 23:5-6.)¹

The purpose of this thesis has been to examine anti-Semitism within the Alberta Social Credit Party; to define its parameters; gauge its prevalence; and determine its implications on Alberta's political culture. Throughout this thesis, it was argued that anti-Semitism within the Social Credit movement was almost entirely ideological; very little evidence points to overt anti-Semitic acts. However, the idea of an ideological enemy was at the base of Social Credit's economic, political, and religious doctrines. Consequently, Social Credit ideology was inherently anti-Semitic. The extent to which Social Crediters espoused anti-Semitism depended on the degree to which they embraced Social Credit ideology.

It has been shown that both Premiers Aberhart and Manning embraced Social Credit conspiracy theories, and that they both publicly opposed anti-Semitism while they simultaneously fomented Social Credit's anti-Semitic ideology. It was shown also that the Douglasites, or purists of Social Credit ideology, publicly expressed anti-Semitism. This paper concludes that the pervasiveness of these sentiments had palpable effects on

Alberta's political culture. Manning's purge of the Douglasites in 1948 did not purge those values which Social Credit ideology reflected and shaped; hence, subsequent resurgences of anti-Semitism should not be viewed as a kind of last valiant effort by ideological fanatics. Rather, such expressions of intolerance are evidence of the continuity of economic, political, and social values, values which shaped this political culture's identity. When Reform Party supporters disparage multiculturalists, environmentalists, feminists, Quebec nationalists, and their "think-alike friends," one is reminded of Norman Jaques's diatribes against the international communist Jewish financiers and their "pink fellow travellers."

Alberta in the 1990s is a far different province than the Alberta of the 1930s, and the Leduc oil strike of 1947 is perhaps the largest reason for this change. But the set of values which informed Alberta's political culture in the 1930s and which continues to inform Albertan politics today is strikingly similar. It has been said that the oil went with the faith, and the faith went with the oil.² If that is true, Alberta's cup may not be overflowing as in past years, but it is not because Albertans' faith in the righteousness of their crusade has waned. The "enemies" of Reform Party supporters are as real and sinister to them as the "international communist Jewish financier" was to Alberta Social Crediters. What effect the Reform Party will have on Alberta's future political culture is not yet history.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

¹The Holy Bible, Authorized King James Version (New York: New American Library, 1974), Psalm 23: 5-6.

²Richard Needham, "Party Puts Heat on Saskatchewan," Saturday Night 66 (9 January 1951), 11.

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