

Alberta Labour History Institute (ALHI)

Oral History Interview

Interviewee: Walter Mackowecki

Interviewer: Winston Gereluk

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Index: Ukrainian immigrants –internment camps – United Labour Farmer Temple Association - Association of United Ukrainian Canadians – social democratic movement – 1947 Farmers’ Strike – public health care - Municipal Hospital Plan - Labour Progressive Party - the Cold War - Communist Party - the CPSU - Party organizing - perpetual war - the peace movement - co-op farming

My grandfather came to Canada in 1907 from the village of Kotschubinchi in Western Ukraine. He borrowed money from his brother in law, the village priest, Stefan Babey. Leaving his young wife and two sons behind, he came to Winnipeg with his brother, who unfortunately drowned going to an Easter party across the Red River. He then moved to Camrose, and in 1912, was able to bring his wife and two children to Canada; my father Joe was one, and his brother Harry was the other. They were raised as Catholics. There was no radicalism in the family, and my father was the altar boy in the church for his uncle, the priest.

However, there was already some inkling of social unrest in the village amongst the social democrats and revolutionaries; ‘social revolutionary’, I think they called themselves. My dad never could forget as a young boy that when a man from that district and a 14 year old boy who had distributed progressive literature came to church, he priest said, “Take that devil off the balcony. This is what he did; he is a danger to our community.” The man's name was Nicola Dushnitsky, and dad never actually saw him until 1942, when our organization was outlawed and they were forming the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians in Winnipeg. Dushnitsky came from the United States and was in Canada at that time.

Loyalty of Ukrainian Canadians in WWI

That incident must've played some role with my father, but the real problem, I think, was what the Canadian government did to the enemy aliens, to the Ukrainians, during the First World War, which took place only two years after father came to Canada. My grandfather had been laid off because he worked on the rail gangs, and being an enemy alien with an Austrian passport, when the British empire was at war with the Austro-Hungarian Empire meant that he could not work on the railroads. He was banished and given a choice; either a concentration camp or to move in northern Alberta, where he would have to report to the closest RCMP barracks, which was in Mannville 30 miles

away, every 30 days. My dad, meanwhile, started working with the railway on extra gangs, and then he went to work with the bridge builders.

The Austrian passport is what put Ukrainians into that position. There was a a lot of internal discussion within the Ukrainian Canadian community at that time about whether Bishop Budka should support Austrian Catholicism, or whether they should be loyal to the British empire. In his book, *Ukrainians in Canada , The formative years, 1891 – 1924*) Orest Martynowych does a whole chapter on that schism within the Ukrainian Catholics. Dad came out of that with a very progressive outlook; it was quite a break, he told me. Just to give you a bit of background information, when we went to work on the extra gang around Mannville, they slept in bunkhouses. He was so indoctrinated with his Catholicism that he couldn't fall asleep if he didn't say his prayers, and since he was ashamed to say his prayers inside the bunkhouse, he would go outside and kneel down wherever it was and say his prayers and go to bed. It must've been a very traumatic period for him.

My father went to school in Camrose for two years, after coming to Canada in 1912. Then his education was broken off by the circumstances around the War. My father always blamed Prime Minister Borden for cheating him out of his education, because after that, he had to learn everything on his own on the homestead. When the family came there, there was no cemetery, no school, nothing - it was the worst of land. As well, 1919 was a very dry year. My grandfather had some cattle, but it was such a dry year that they had to buy straw and hay, and things like that at premium prices – all at that time when cattle prices were depressed. He went to the bank to sell his cattle, and the banker advised him that he had a gold mine in those cattle. So he borrowed some money, around \$800, to buy feed, and eventually lost his homestead and everything else in 1926, the year I was born.

There were a lot of problems. The thing to focus on is that there were quite a number of progressive thinking people in the area around then. In the Myrnam district, which was 13 miles away from grandfather's homestead, there were three families that came with an indoctrination in socialism from the old country. The Huculak family and the Phillip Kitt family, and one more that slips my mind at the moment; they already came in with socialist ideas into the district. These were the people from whom a socialist party was formed in Leduc and Two Hills, where a prominent teacher and later President of the progressive Ukrainians, William Teresio came. They held discussion groups in the community. There wasn't much to do in the wintertime except to get the wood in the daytime, but at night they read and argued, and discussed the pros and cons of Marxism. Bill Boratynech who at ninety years of age was still here at the Beverly Lodge and used to debate with my father over the barbed wire telephones in the 1930s - the colder it got, the better the sound came over those telephones. The next thing was to build a community, for which you had to get involved in local politics. In the municipality, education for the children was a very big issue, and a school was the first thing that was built in our district. Regardless of what persuasion you were, the school was a vital part of a community. The same thing happened when a baby died and there was no place to bury them, they formed the St. Michael's cemetery after my grandfather's name, Michael. This brought the community together. Whatever differences they may have had, religious or whatever it was, were put aside. In the district in which I grew up there were no churches.

The priest that came in used to hold the church services in my other grandparents home, the Bertishensky family. My uncle Bill in Myrnam was an elder of the Catholic church, and it was his parents home where I used to stay there when I went to school. On a Friday, I'd come home from school; I couldn't stay there because they were going to have a church service.

When Grandfather Michael Makowecki came to Canada in 1907, my dad was only 10 years old, so he didn't have much say. One of the biggest concerns of the people who came over was that they did not want to get drafted into the Austrian army. That was one of the things that many of the young people said, even my uncle Bill, who came here that same years as a 15 year-old boy. His parents sent him to Canada to avoid the draft and to find a better life. I always said that these were the Catholics I lived with, and that we respect each other very much. We worked together all of our lives and accepted each other. However, I said to my cousins at a reunion a year ago, imagine a mother sending her 15 year old son into a land far away, with the language and knowing nothing. After 5 years of working at the Round Hill coalmine and for farmers in the fall, he was able to make enough money to bring over his brother and two sisters. My mother was one of those. Grandfather didn't want to come to Canada, but grandmother said, "Well you can stay here, I'm going to a better country. I'm looking for a better life than what we have here." So that was the kind of thinking that brought them there.

The reason grandfather Bertishinski didn't want to come to Canada was that he was educated. He was a policeman and said to grandmother, "You wanted Canada; you go and work. You go and brush the land and clear and plough. He wouldn't lift a finger. My other grandfather, my dad's father, was a hardworking proud man, but he died young from all the indignities that came later in life.

The leaders of our community were very astute. Everything was discussed. My dad was a municipal councillor from 1929 to 1948, when we moved out of the district. If there was a road to be built, some way of getting a way to work off your taxes that you couldn't pay during the '30s, they'd call a meeting at the Ukrainian Labour Centre, where they'd discuss it. It was a tough time in the schools. There was a teacher, Bill Parayko, who came from Royal Park to teach at the Henley school in 1929. In the first year he started teaching, his total salary was \$250 a year. The following year it went up to \$275, the year after that it was \$325, and the fourth year, it went up to \$350. When he left the district, it owed him \$650 after those four years. The community made it work, however, Firstly, he was a hunter. Secondly, people would bring food from their chickens and eggs; that's how they supported their teachers. There was the Henley School in Lake Bellevue, which used to be a French district, but was taken over by Ukrainians because the land was so poor. At Lake Bellevue where my uncle lived, they couldn't afford a teacher for more than three months a year, in spite of the fact that in the one room school there were 40 students. We'd still accept students at Lake Bellevue School. Lake Canard north of that also had problems financing the teacher, and it wasn't until 1937, when William Aberhart, the newly elected social credit government, went on the program to establish the large school districts. We were able to join that and then we could go into 2nd rooms in 1939 and things like that. In 1940, we could go to Myrnam, to the high school.

The local community operated mostly through volunteer labour; if somebody had a sawmill or something, they built the schools. It was a struggle, but times were such that

the community really worked together for the sake of their children. Those who wanted to worship used to go once a month to the Catholic church in Myrnam; there was no orthodox church until 1942. Whether they were Seventh-Day Adventists or whatever, it didn't matter. The school was at the centre; our community hall. From 1922, the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association Hall was the centre of it all, and today, it's their cultural society, bought from Association of United Ukrainian Canadians. Today it's a modern hall half way between St. Paul and Myrnam, with a bridge and paved road all the way, and with running water and everything.

Politics was of great concern to Ukrainians, regardless of what was happening in the Ukraine, the socialist revolution, and what it is going to bring. In 1917, the defeat of Kerensky, following the abdication of the tsar in Russia, then secondly, the abdication of Kerensky - the government falling and being taken over during the October revolution in 1917. It was an accident of history; everything was chaos. The war brought on chaos, which resulted in the tsars and even Kerensky with his government being removed. They sent soldiers out without weapons or anything against the Germans and Austrians. It was just out of that chaos that people got to think that anything else was better than nothing. Lenin didn't think that Russia was ready for socialist revolution, but he recognised that he had to put some order and discipline into what was happening. He wrote an article in 1916, while he was still in Switzerland and before he went back to Russia in time for the Revolution. In that article, he referred to "the Junker bourgeoisie", the new German bourgeoisie, and the example they were setting in the capitalist mode of production. This, he said, would build the base for socialism, because we cannot build socialism without capitalism first building the infrastructure for socialism. It wasn't published until 1970, but I could've used it in early years, and maybe it would've straightened me out. It had an effect on all those who were associated with social democratic movement's and the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party.(RSDLP) ., following the Russian social democratic labour party. The Bolsheviks were a Russian phenomenon, but in the Ukraine, it was a question of who was the worst landlord; the Polish or the Austrians?

History is now beginning to show these those were the real problems that people were running away from. The times also created in Canada for Ukrainians, as the Ukrainians that came to Canada were seen by the newly-arising trade union movement as scab labour. They didn't use the word 'scab', there was another word they used as a labour force that was undermining the struggle of the trade union movement to improve the conditions of work and the living standard of the organized trade union movement, especially in places like Ontario, where industrialization took place, especially in places like the railways and Shatul'skys. The iron and Shatul'skys were the place that cheap immigrant labour could be used against organized labour, and in the early stages, my people were seen as a threat to organized labour. How were they supposed to know? - they were poor peasants. However, there were a social element within, that came along with that first wave of immigration. A fellow like Matthew Popowich conceived of a Ukrainian Labour Temple and drama groups. He must've been someplace in or come from a richer family, because he had an idea of theatre. He was already a student of Marxism, and had enunciated the idea of an independent Ukraine within a community of nations, before Lenin even had raised the question of one state within a confederation. Matthew Popowich was one of the prime movers of the ideology, with support from people like Ivan Naviziwsky, Matthew Shatul'sky and Sawiak. But Matthew Shatul'sky

went to Winnipeg from Edmonton in 1920 and wasn't part of our original group. People like Genyk, Stechyshyn, Holovatsky and Krat and others who were in the early socialist movement of Canada had by 1918 become oriented with which way the world was going. He was editor of the Red Banner, (Chervoniy Prapor) as early as 1907, so there were socialist ideology that was brought in by the immigrants from their homelands.

The United Labour Farmer Temple Association

By 1922, there was already a Labour Temple in Lake Bellevue. It didn't come into Myrnam until 1928, because the CPR came in 1927. It was only after the CPR went through in 1927 that Myrnam became a village. There were little house meetings in somebody's place, but the labour temple in Myrnam came in 1928.

In his book, Power has a chapter on the ULFTA in Alberta, in which he states – and he's not fully accurate - that of the 109 Ukrainian labour temples across Canada, 33 were in Alberta. I know 40 in Alberta; that's the whole thing. In the 1930s, they existed mainly in this area, but also in Sunset House, Valleyview, and all through the Peace River. They were also in the coalmining towns like East Coolie, Drumheller, Rosedale, Coaldale, Coalhurst. All the Shatulskying towns had a labour temple in the 1920s and '30s. In Alberta there was another connection. My uncle worked at a coalmine in Roundhill. That's where the Ukrainians from Galicia, Ternopil and Bukovina founded their churches, and that's where they worked.

Many of the farmers, who by the '20s and '30s had already cultivated the land, would leave their wives and children on the homesteads and go off to the mines to make some extra money. Drumheller had a whole slew of these, and so did the Crowsnest Pass, Coaldale, Coalhurst and around in the Lethbridge district. These were part time miners and part time farmers, with a close connection between the two. In these farming communities, a farmer who worked at the mines and brought cash home became a little bit better off financially and was able invest into better machinery, more tractors or more horses. In my time, the railway system depended on coal until 1952, so the coal mines were a very valuable, a 'must' industry, whether it was in Estevan, Saskatchewan, Alberta or BC. I don't know if there were any Shatulskys in Manitoba, I'm not sure about that. But my history knows that Estevan Saskatchewan knows the history of it, the strikers that were shot at the strike. They also became the focus of militancy, because of the dangers in the mines, the low pay, the long hours, and the lack of proper facilities. For health reasons and everything else. In 1942 during the 2nd World War, one of the biggest coalmining strikes was held in Drumheller and Crowsnest Pass. The miners supported the war effort, but they also saw their chance to improve their economic situation in the communities.

So, there was this annual migrations to the mines and other industries to work and earn extra money. In some areas, not everybody wanted to be a miner. So they became packinghouse workers in Edmonton and sometimes worked on the railway gangs, extra gangs on the railway which were being built and improved on. Farmers had some flexibility in that they choose to go out working, then come back and during the summertime plough a few extra acres of new land and fix the house, then go back to work. It's interesting that some of the most militant unions of the 20s and 30s and into the 40s was the railway union, the miners union, and the packinghouse unions in Alberta.

Just for a figure that I remember distinctly, the highest minimum wage in Canada in 1936 was in Alberta at \$2.36 an hour. This was due mainly to the militancy of the miners union, with leaders like John Stokoluk, who was a Ukrainian leader of the United Mine Workers of America. These were the kind of people that helped the Ukrainians understand how to work in the unions. They became shop stewards and everything else, and were good workers - but they were militant. They had to be, because life dictated it. You can't make somebody militant who is well off, who grows up with a silver spoon from the cradle to the grave. Perhaps the militancy of the part time farmer miner can be credited to the fact that they were not totally dependent upon their job for their families' livelihood. Perhaps that bolstered their independence to some degree. People understood hard times and especially those who suffered because inability to pay for medical assistance in times of need. Health assistance was their main concern.

But the people who had to start with nothing, who had hard times, and suffered from a lack of medical assistance, lack of education for their children. I distinctly remember the 30s and 40s, talking to people in Myrnam in Zaborowsky's restaurant, who had just come back from the mines. I was a student, and farmers like John. Kostiuk, Nick Daviduik, Delawsky and many others would be at the farm. Badduke wandered all over with the cooperatives. You had mixed people like that who tried to supplement their income from the farm, forming the basis of an organization that did not grow until into the 60s.

Some of these people may be gone, and some of the communities have disappeared. Everyplace they moved, they always found their own type of people. They looked for the press from the early stages, it was the thing that united and told people what was going on. We received letters from Ferney, B.C., which meant that somebody there read the Ukrainian press. So the press played a very important role.

The Farmers Life..., The Workers News..., these were the papers. Farmers Life was very popular among the farmers.. "Robitnychya" (The Working Woman) which was a special publication in the Ukrainian language for women.. Dr. Francis Swyropa did research and spoke to a symposium of the WBA 6 years ago. She congratulated the ULFTA for being one of the first organizations to develop women's branches, because as early as 1926, women's branches were formed within the Ukrainian Labour Temple halls. She compared it to the Catholic Women's Association, which was not founded until 1942 during the War years. These people had a vision, which is why women were given their rightful place in these Ukrainian labour temples. Then there were the youth federations which formed the Ukrainian Canadian Youth Federation, of which I became a member in 1939. It was the forerunner of the English speaking branches later. I joined in 1939; today it is 64 years since I joined the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association. I was 13 years old, so I joined it through the youth. Bill Philipovich was a young man who was quite artistic, had a lot of talent. He went to study in the Soviet Union in 1934; Myrnam sponsored him. He laughed at the kind of language we already spoke at that time, our Ukrainian-Canadian language. I remember him coming back from Ukraine and he was invited to speak to us. I must've been 10 years old. He said, "I thought I understood how to speak Ukrainian. But he said, just listen to what I'm going to tell you. I spoke Ukrainian this way we speak it here. Of what I said only two words were Ukrainianthe rest was not understandable". Listen to what I am saying., " (John... 'bere hammer ... peede v konnor ... pofixsooy fence" The two Ukrainian words in sentence were ...bere and

peede. (translated meaning take and go) The other words were totally anglicized e.g, John., hammer; ; v konnor; pofixsooy fence... – in other words, he spoke a Ukrainian that we had a hard time understanding. Bill was very talented. He passed away a year or two ago.

I'll start again with why I joined the Communist Youth Federation. Bill Philipovich came out to Lake Bellevue. It was a beach, it was a squatters rights. He organized a group of what we call 'brush hookers', people who worked in the summertime cutting trees, clearing land with brush hooks. He organized a group of about 23 of these young men. They were unemployed but the farmers gave them a little bit of work here and there, and they got 50 cents an hour or whatever else they could get. There was nobody to chair the meeting, nobody knew how to chair a meeting, so I got elected, co-opted into the branch of the Communist Youth to chair the meeting and to write out agenda, which I had learned from my father.

Lac Canard school, Henley school and the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple, Association were within six miles of each other. They were part and parcel of each others activities. The squatters on the beach of Lac Bellevue were an added attraction where summer picnics were held annually in which the entire community participated. The school boards in each of these school districts were also AUUC members, or UFTLA members. They hired teachers and explained to the teachers what type of work was expected. You have eight grades, and you will be required or we would like you to do a concert at x-mas time and handle a competition between Lake Bellevue, Lake Canard, and Henley school. So Henley school would have a concert one week, Lake Canard the next, and so on. This was all gratis on the teachers parts; they didn't get paid anything extra. There was a little bit of Ukrainian dancing, also a little bit of choir singing. There's pictures of my dad trying to play a mandolin in 1925, in an orchestra conducted by Nicola Buck, from Two Hills, Lanuke district. He graduated from University as an engineer but couldn't find work as an engineer, so he taught school at Lac Canard.

That's the man that was associated with Teresio Family ... They came out of that Lanuke district, south of Two Hills. Which was never a Ukrainian labour temple hall, but the Ukrainian labour temple hall branch existed there from 1920s. Hall was built in 1909 to support (Red Banner) and they had a Ukrainian Socialist Party in Lanuke. That's who built the hall. So there's many halls like that. The Plain Lake Hall, for example, was not a ULFTA hall; it was just a ULFTA branch that managed the hall, and across the street was the National Hall. So you see, these are the kind of things that led to the history of our current organization.

I learned Ukrainian language because I was always chosen to play a part in a play at Easter time, for concerts, etc. So I was an actor in those days as a young man, and I learned Ukrainian language to read Ukrainian parts and to memorize them. There were schools and courses at the hall to learn how to read for the senior citizens who were illiterate. They used to have reading during evenings at the homes. As soon as the papers would come on a Saturday - Saturday was mail day in our district, once a week – and as soon as the Ukrainian paper came, these old babushka's would gather in somebody's house, and one of our people would read to them, the news. That's the role these branches played at the local level. They took part in everything that was community, and it didn't matter, because everybody came. So the role of a teacher was

also an pivotal role, and in those two districts they hired teachers who had at least a normal school. They didn't get the other teachers until late into the '40s.

There was another community from which Lobay came, but something happened in 1935 and he was accused of becoming a nationalist. Yet he was a very progressive person. He was accused of not following the progressive party line, of deserting the progressive community, and the people who are associated with socialism or social changes. Socialism itself was also another thing that was misinterpreted by many, but it was not the fault of the people who misinterpreted it, because their knowledge of the situation was in many cases quite Utopian. We're doing some research at this moment about this issue. Differences in the community in 1935, were caused not by conditions in Canada, but also conditions in the Soviet Union. Rumours of famine, for example, would not be confirmed by any of the leadership; everybody said, "no that's not true". There were also the trials that Stalin conducted against Bukharin, Zinoviev, the death of Kirov, who probably more on the ball than Stalin. They were discussed here, and divisions were created. There was disbelief of anybody who accused Stalin of manipulating these purges, but history shows that there was room for doubt. So these are the things that perturbed the community. The 2nd World War ended these discussion; the main thing was to defeat fascism. All of a sudden everything else went by the wayside.

Branches of the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association played a key role in every district. In order for them to exist, they had to become part of the district. There could've been other venues, but in most of these farming communities, they couldn't afford any more than one. In our community, there was one community hall, two schools, and that was it. If there was a farm union meeting, everybody came to the Ukrainian Labour Temple Hall. If there was a strike meeting, like the farmers had in 1946, my uncle the Catholic, John Zucharko and his son Bill - Highway 28 Transport nowadays - would come with their truck and pick up the picketers at the Ukrainian Labour Temple, drive 15 miles to St. Paul, and picket to see that the farmers didn't ship the cream to Smoky Lake or wherever on the trains. What was interesting is that the picketers would picket on one side, and there'd be another set of picketers on the other side. The railway guys would open up the doors in the rail cars, and the cream can would go through this door. The farmer thinks his cream has gone to market, but it went out on the other side. When the train was gone, his cream would be sitting on the other side of the train. The Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple could not have existed if it had not found a way to become an integral part of the community. Regardless what fictitious people say that it is imported from Moscow or wherever, they were all local initiatives.

Public Health Care

Health care became a very important issue in our communities. For example, in 1929 my mother had appendicitis attack, and it was 30 some miles through farms and gates to Elk Point Hospital from where they lived. Louis Halina had a car, but it took them 9 hours through the farms and fields to get mother to the hospital in Elk Point; there was no hospital in Myrnam. Leading people in the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association were able to unite a community around the building of the Myrnam hospital in 1937. They built it, the whole community and formed the board. My father was on the board. They had a mortgage of \$8,000 after the hospital was built, it was only a 16 room hospital, but by 1939 they were able to burn the mortgage on it. The community worked

hard, they had picnics, they put on a two mill rate on submarginal assessments or low assessments on submarginal land. They were able to pay it all off.

By 1942 that same group in Myrnam organized the first functional municipal health care plan for the whole district, including Lake Eliza Lake Bellevue. Pathfinder and all the way up into Derwent, almost reaching Mannville; the 'Municipal Hospital Plan' it was called. My father was on that board, with Bill Halina who was the secretary. He lost the federal election by 232 votes against Anthony Hlynka, as a candidate for the Labour Progressive Party of that time. John Huculak and William Teresio, a highly respected school principal who also at one point was a communist candidate. Lloyd Lesnik, the hardware store merchant, a devout Catholic but also a very good community man; a person like Kotyshyn, of the orthodox church. My uncle Basil Berezanski was on the board. The elder of the Catholic church; also Peter Makohonyk from Pathfinder, and Paul Youzwyshyn from Bohdan; they all worked together. They had a hospital plan than when my sister went to have her appendix taken out; it cost U.S. \$18. Nine days in hospital at \$2 a day included all medicine, all care, and the fees for the doctor. The doctor was Dr. Kay - Kershowsky was his name - and he worked for \$8,000 a year. He agreed to work for that. He hated bookkeeping. He said, you pay me a salary. He liked fishing, he liked his chickens, but he delivered good health care for you.

Our Municipal Hospital plan functioned until Medicare came in in 1968; national Medicare. There was talk about how we could do it in such a poor district; but it was the willingness of the people, the cooperation. I think it's a feather in our hat that it happened. There was an attempt in Lamont by Dr. Archer to form a similar thing to give good services. He was associated with that institute in the United States, and used to be very famous, but they couldn't make it function. There wasn't a leading body within that community like there was in Myrnam; the ULFTA, the members of the Ukrainian progressive community. The left wing provided the leadership.

Then the school districts were also very important. Hats off to a man like Aberhart, who did something for these people, and the social credit that he handed over to Manning after he died. These are the things that we have to take into consideration, but it was very interesting that our people on May Day celebrations, a left wing sort of celebration, the minister of Municipal Affairs always came to speak with W.A. Fallow from Vermillion, Minister of Municipal Affairs. He met with my dad because he was on many council divisions. People we knew worked together with the Aberhart administration. We couldn't do that with the Manning administration after he took over. Within three years or so his government was totally changed from what Aberhart had in mind.

There was very little opposition to our health plan. On the vote for the plebiscite that took place in 1941 to accept the municipal hospital plan, there were only three votes against in a district of about 2000 voters. One was a person who had transportation to ferry patients to the Vegreville hospital. He saw a personal loss in it (I don't want to mention the name; it's water under the bridge.) It was accepted; it was done in such a way that the left wing, the so-called communists, were not suspected of doing anything wrong. They were accepted. The same thing happened with the co-op stores in these districts, and the livestock shipping associations. My father was on the Myrnam Livestock Shipping Association, and my uncle Basil Berezansky was a competitor with Carl Bodnar; the two cattle buyers were in competition with the co-op, but they got along. I recall my uncle

Bill who was already in his late 90s and died after he reached 100 years. This guy who came in as a 15 year-old to Canada and lived a hard life of working, drinking and everything, lived to be over 100, but choked on a piece of lettuce. The respect that we had for each other - I always remind everybody of the bravery of that 15 year-old lad, and the sacrifice the mother made her son, like sending him to an unknown army or known death. Many didn't come from those immigrations, but their communities were well run. You had to build a consensus of what was best for the community. Our people, the leaders at that time of the Ukrainian Labour, developed into very astute diplomats in their own communities. Where that happened, the community was better off for it.

During the period in Myrnam, I went to high school in 1941, '42, and became associated with a person like John Huculak. The Huculak family, as I mentioned earlier, was one of those that came to Canada with progressive ideas, socialist ideas and became very prosperous farmers in the Myrnam district. When the Village of Myrnam was incorporated in 1928, Huculak became a businessman, trucker, Huculak and Sons. Peter Huculak was the father, and Badduke's brother in law, and John, the oldest son, and another one, William, went to Ontario. John became a public worker at the sacrifice of everything, including his own family and was the first to supply electricity to the village of Myrnam, with a small power plant. Every night at 12 o'clock sharp, the power plant would be closed off, and started again at 6 o'clock in the morning, long before power lines came to Myrnam about 1944. John was the John Deere dealer in town and was the secretary of the livestock shipping association. He was the public school trustee for the Two Hills school district and even acted as mayor of Myrnam at the same time. He had a Plymouth dealership - he was a jack of all trades, had certificates of mechanic, electrician, anything you wanted, a real self-taught man. This man gave all his life to the public, the type that was the core, the base of the community, with a group of people like Teresio, Bill Halina, Philip Kitt and others in management ideas, people with know-how, providing the support for him. Not very many people appreciate how the man sacrificed his family, his own health and everything else for the good of the community.

By the time we get into the '40s, my high school days were over. I quit at grade 11. and joined the air cadets, with two weeks at an RAF camp in North Battleford on British rations. It was an interesting experience, but I went back to the farms. I didn't get called to the army until three months before the end of the war, so I missed it anyway. Back at the farms, we became active in the social aspect of the district. By this time, the schools were looked after by the two large school districts, and the health care issue was more or less resolved. So what was left for an organization like the ULFTA, which became the AUUC, the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians in 1946? It was cultural work; weddings, improving the hall, running the bazaars.

This was when the rural areas began weakening; there was a transition going on, as people began modern methods of agriculture. In our district it happened sooner than most districts, because it was a very submarginal district with hills and rocks and grey wooded soil. We began moving around and the leadership of our community moved to other areas. That happened to our family. In 1948 we had the opportunity to sell our farms at Lake Bellevue, and transplanted ourselves into the Innisfree/Ranfurly district. We arrived in the spring of '48 and by August, I was elected secretary treasurer of the farm union local in the district. There was no Ukrainian organization there, it was a mixed

community of English, German, Irish, and Scottish, all good people. And, U.S. Ukrainians, who later took over the whole district. I got involved in the Aplomb Farmers Union, and there was another local just south of us in the U.S. at Lornedale where the Chilibecks and Petruks were active members. We started local discussions in the Birch Hill School during the winter months. There was a program on CBC radio called Farm Radio Forum, and they would always bring up an issue; e.g., why don't we have any markets? The biggest problem for farmers was to find markets for our grain. A full two hours of discussion by farm families would be summarized and sent back to CBC Radio in Edmonton. Those comments would then be chosen and played back on next week's program. The participation was about 75 % of the families in the district .

The Cold War

1947 was the year that Winston Churchill declared the Cold War in Fulton Missouri. I believe it was March 1947 that he made the famous Fulton Missouri speech; "the Iron Curtain, we shall blast it." This created another emphasis on what we needed to do, the basis for a campaign for banning the bomb. AUUC women were especially active in the cities, and at the localities U.S. younger guys like Johnny Petruk and myself, would go out to dances and get signatures to ban the bomb. Peace became the big question, sponsoring meetings for Dr. Endicott of the Canadian Peace Congress, people who had come back from visits to the Ukraine to report on progress that was being made in rebuilding of a war-shattered country. Therefore, we became the peaceniks - anybody who talked peace was called a communist. This was the beginning of the really desperate Cold War, because peace was not on the mind of the U.S. or Great Britain. Winston Churchill only lasted a few more years. So the whole question of what was the Cold War all about. Our attention turned from finding markets for agricultural products through our farm union of Alberta attending conventions and meetings and campaigning all over. We added the peace question, the fight for peace - those were our main concerns in the '50s.

At that time, there was checking of the mail at the post office by the RCMP, who watched any movements of ourselves, where we're leading people. Are we dangerous? Why did we move into this district? My father went to the Bank of Montreal in Vegreville, and opened up an account. We always spelt our name with a cki at the end, but for some reason, he decided to change it to 'ski' - probably because the English people couldn't pronounce it. The next thing we knew, the RCMP were in our yard, "How's things, we were in the neighbourhood, thought we'd drop in. You're a newcomer here. How are things going? Do you know about this neighbour has some kind of trouble with his wife?" Dad would say that he didn't know, that he was new here. But then the RCMP says, "Oh yes, by the way, why did you change the spelling of your name? How do you spell your name?" Dad told him that it was to accommodate you Englishmen.

The same thing happened over and over again. In 1953 a friend of mine, Dan Sharun from Innisfree, was at the Provincial Committee meeting of the AUUC in Edmonton. At that time the Ukrainian organization had found another activity, summer camps, to keep the young people interested in the organization. In Winnipeg, the Workers Benevolent Association, which is a fraternal insurance organization of the AUUC, bought some 28 acres of land on Lake Winnipeg at Gimli. In Palermo, close to Toronto, we directed construction of monument to Taras Shevchenko in 1951 and also developed a large quarter section of land into a park known as Taras Shevchenko Memorial Park at

Oakville, Ontario. (Taras Shevchenko is Ukraine's Bard and is often compared to William Shakespeare, the bard of Britain) It was a place for a children's camp, youth seminars.

So, in Polar Yoshuchenko Park in Alberta - we were looking for a place, but had to be careful not to show undue interest. So Walter Makowecki, Joe Halyna and Dan Sharun went to see Mr. Molchan, who had this section of land for sale. On April 29, 1953 we had bought a section of land in February just across the a lake from with my uncle. So we bought this other section of land on Gordon's Lake, today known as Wapasu Park. We would not part with this property until the Minburn property decided it was a valuable piece of property and took it over. So it's owned by the Minburn county now.

I went to a youth convention of the AUUC in Toronto in July 1953. You think the police didn't get wind of that? Not that I was hiding anything, but they came to my dad's place again to talk about the neighbours. They would say, "You're on quite a good farm here, and your son bought some more land. Y What's he going to do with all that land?" My father told him that we have a lot of cattle, we're gonna run our cattle on that property - some 350 head. Between my farm and my uncle's farm and my dad's farm, we had about 200 head, but he exaggerated it. You can see how they were watching us. Those were the tense days of the trials of the Rosenbergs - a complete falsification, frame up, which is now a fact. Their sons are suing now for getting the record straight, and the brother of Ethel confessed before he died that he had told lies. Greenspan or something like that. As I talk today about how desperate the U.S. government or authorities were in the Cold War, to stem the tide of popularity. The execution went on anyway. I was active in that campaign, but it was hard to work in districts like ours. You had all kinds of people who didn't know, didn't have the background that we had in our community. What was right was right and what was wrong was wrong! I left the farm in 1956 and came to Edmonton to start a service station with my uncle.

Then, the opportunity came to see the Soviet Union, the land of my dreams - an opportunity that I didn't want to miss. I went to the youth festival in 1957 with people from here, which included people from the Russian orthodox church as part of the delegation as well as from the United Jewish People's Order; the Finnish organization of Canada; the Doukhobors; and many others.. There was 200 Canadians out of 120,000 people in Moscow for two weeks. Ted Chudyk, I and a few others, we got permission for about 15 of U.S. to visit our villages in the Ukraine, which was a 'no-no' at that time. Even if it was just overnight, it was still worth it. I got to see my aunt who had just come out of jail, who wouldn't speak at that time. She was accused of harbouring the guys (Banderivtsi) who were the bandits in the Ukraine, and killing off managers of collective farms and party secretaries. It was chaos in the '50s. I got to see my auntie again in 1960, after my year of sojourn, and I asked her if she could now talk. She told me what happened, that a group of roving anarchists or terrorists had a fight with the militia in the village, and one of them was wounded. My auntie owned a little acreage, with a barn and a granary. They brought this wounded person into the granary and ordered the family not to anybody, "because we'll get you." When the militia came looking, she didn't tell. They went and looked in the barn and = found this wounded guerrilla - and she got 6 years for it. She says, I was scared - I was damned if I did and damned if I didn't. Terrible things can happen in society if there is mistrust.

Communist Party Organizer

In 1958 I decided the service station business was too hard for too short a life, 14 hrs a day 7 days a week just to pay Shell the rent. I got out of it and my uncle took over. I roamed around for four months, when the Communist Party of Alberta came to me and asked whether I would consider becoming the party organizer, for the farm communities which I knew so well. At that time there were party clubs in all parts of Alberta, so I came onstream in October. In January, it was proposed to me that I take one year to attend the Academy of Social Sciences Institute of Social Sciences in Moscow under the auspices of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, as a student. It was one of the best experiences, one of those things that if you don't take that opportunity you'll never get it again. I wanted to know more about socialism, but because I was so busy in unions and working for a living for that period of time, that I couldn't take time off to learn. It was the biggest eye-opener of my life. I was fortunate that I had dabbled in private enterprise (farming), that I had dabbled in the service station business - even real estate for three months. I was able to ask questions. How are the collective farms run and managed, who does what? I learned the basics of capitalism in Moscow; about the theory of surplus value. Where does surplus value come from? I hunted high and low for this book, because Marx based his political economy on this book, *The Theory of Surplus Value* which he wrote in 1771, when he was with a Scottish bishop. It was reprinted in 1937 in New York.

There was other material, philosophy and the like, which really opens up your eyes. It would still be abstract if you weren't involved in some of earlier stages of your life in management, in trying to do things, working in the community, being part of the community and its infrastructures. I think I got probably the most of the 12 people that were there. I just ate it all up; it was the first time in my life that I saw a factory in Dnepropetrovsk and spent 30 days in the industrial region, which was not available for any foreigners except us. We went into a steel mill and saw a big nugget of steel, maybe two tons which was white hot. A lady sitting up above in a crane punches a whole through that ingot. Once it's punched through, it goes on an axle and starts rolling out, and you have maybe 100 meters of seamless pipe. My question to them was how does a lady survive in that smoke and dust. I was concerned about her health. I saw stainless steel, all automated. I saw the automotive factories that I never saw before, 'stubble jumper from Myrnam', where would I get an opportunity to see things like that? I saw during that year an experimental nuclear power plant in Omsk; - just a small one and went through all the cultural museums I ever want visit in my life. Even five days at the Hermitage in Leningrad. I'd never seen museums in my life; such an eye opener. I stayed in hospital for one month from exertion; in Stalin's old spa, 15 km out of Moscow. It was September, and it was nice, free of charge.

In 1959 we didn't have Medicare; I didn't know what it was. That's when I realized after 6 months - the difference. For the first 6 months I had a hard time figuring out the difference between capitalism and a socialist state? Medicare was the first thing I enjoyed and education was the second, because it was free of charge to people who qualified. You don't have the hocus pocus that somebody who doesn't have the aptitude was going to become a musician. On my return to Canada I worked with people here, spent hours and hours, wore out two cars, but got an experience of my lifetime. Life has to go on, and I

did not have enough capital to survive without working or having an income. The Communist Party in '67 could not pay me anymore; they had no money. So I kept working at the bookstore for a year, then got married and had children. After we had the family. I decided I'd go back to university and spent two semesters at the University of Alberta studying social questions. My aim, or at my dream was that I would teach in vocational schools, - I didn't think I could teach young children. It wasn't my aptitude.

I came back in May 1960 from the Soviet Union and my first job was to move a hall onto Communist Party property at Sylvan Lake, which was now the AUUC property. It wasn't Communist Party property, it belonged to the Finnish organization of Canada. I set up a camp there, which was for YCL and for party seminars. I was moving around a lot in the country and I noticed the RCMP following me. For example, if I went to Innisfree to a party meeting, I'd notice RCMP car following me all the way to Elk Island. At Elk Island they'd make a u-turn and there'd be another one pulling out from Elk Island Park and following me all the way to Innisfree. Perhaps the most obvious time was during the Cuban missile crisis, 1961 or '62. I was told by the National Central Committee of the Communist Party that we may have to go underground. I wasn't going to go underground, though because I didn't care; I wasn't doing anything unlawful. But I did take off from Edmonton, and I went to Southern Alberta, followed wherever I stayed. There were demonstrations in Calgary at the American consulate against attacking Cuba, but I didn't go to much to the chagrin of one my comrades who was at me. I told him that I was ordered not to appear in places that weren't necessary. I was followed regularly but never confronted.

I built a house in 1964 and was still single. So I had four or 5 party guys living with me. It was known as the Moscow House. The RCMP used to sit around and watch who was coming or going into my house. They're obvious, always two to a car. I never ran into any problems per se. I have often said that I should feel very important. In the Soviet Union the Secret Service (KGB) looked out for me. In Canada the RCMP and plain clothes personnel also did the same. Whatever it was, I can say that I got a lot of protection from the police surveillance and what it must have cost the taxpayers for my protection must add up to quite a figure, but it was embarrassing at times, especially if we had people visiting who wanted to contact businesses in Edmonton or Calgary, and were of Jewish descent. These were prominent business people, and were the ones who would either refuse to have one of these visitors come to their house, or they'd arrange to meet someplace else so they would be very casual when they walked in. It was very difficult to work, and it did intimidate people. Secondly, it intimidated young students who hoped to become professionals, and were getting educated. They were afraid to be associated with the likes of me in case it would affect their future careers. That became a real problem, and stymied the growth of progressive organizations. It created a situation where support wasn't coming for the party or the Ukrainian or Hungarian or Finnish organization - and today, they're all gone.

Fortunately, our farm locals of the AUUC were not as scared about their future or whatever it was. They were independent people, and the businessmen were not necessarily as worried about it, as long as they weren't known. Businessmen still support the progressive organizations, but students who were not allowed visas to travel to the U.S. to complete their doctorates. My professor, Marshal Nay, was one of those who was

not allowed into the U.S. until after 1988; he had to get his doctorate in England. There's more people like that all over the country. It was a deliberate attempt at intimidation, not of people like myself or other functionaries of the movement, but of would-be supporters. There were even problems in my family, who found the openness of my convictions a problem to their business or personal fortunes. If they were in business they said that people didn't support them because of our politics. I used to have to tell my sisters, you're not the one that's the member; my business is my business, and I have the freedom to do my thing. You're not responsible for my actions, I'm an adult. I have my freedoms, and you don't necessarily have to be a copy of me. The most annoying problems involved hurting families and stuff like that. People who were involved in other organizations weren't as scared of me.

It's interesting that after I became a businessman I was able to talk to horticultural societies, and to talk business on TV, 'developing the Alberta advantage.' So, in a way, I must say that it didn't hurt me personally. I ran for alderman, the last election was in 1968 and I garnered 15,000 votes. I lost by 400 votes and Julian Kinisky told me that if I had joined him, I would've won. He won at 15,700 and I was 15,300. One of the Ukrainian Catholics, prominent in the church, told me, Walter how many members of the Communist Party are in Edmonton? How many members does the AUUC have? I said, maybe 2000. He said, who do you think voted for you? We did, because we trusted you. Those people are still my friends. That's why when they go to a place like Toronto where our people didn't learn to work with governments as Alberta AUUC leadership did, they say, you people in Edmonton get together and get things done. There's communist guys and old vendetta guys in it, yet you people get together. I'm proud to say I was part of what brought these together, on the basis of the relationships that people like George Solomon, Nick Alexiewich, Peter Kyforuk and others had established relations with leading people of the provincial government during the Cold War.

For example, in the '65 '66 campaign in Alberta to establish Ukrainian language as a credit subject at University led by people like Peter Severin and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and others was supported by the Ukrainian Canadian community in Edmonton as a whole. I think it became part of the curriculum for making Ukrainian a credit subject at the University of Alberta. We supported it. Peter Severin talks to me today. He says, hey, we were together on that and we've got it now. We have one of the biggest Ukrainian institutes at the UofA, thanks to the cooperation and not people who says, no we're not going to work with these people. Because if it's our culture and if the Ukrainian Canadian community is going to play a positive role within the Canadian mosaic, it must work together as a community and not at each other. One of the greatest things we had in Alberta was that we worked together as a community, regardless of our religious, political or other beliefs, to get the Alberta Ukrainian Heritage Village as a public institution that belongs to all of us. That's the way our community should be working.

Speaking about the advent of McCarthyism after the Fulton speech of Churchill's, we need to go back slightly to the '30s. The fear of imperialist countries like Britain, France, Portugal, Spain of losing their colonial empires, when it became evident that the struggle would be there. Whether it was Ukrainian or Slovak or Hungarians, there were 13 progressive organizations in Canada like the AUUC. We were all against war in Spain. Most of the Mac Pap's Canadian Battalion in the fight against Franco in Spain came from

the progressive left. About 400 Canadians lost their lives in the Spanish civil war, amongst them there were Ukrainians who got hurt; people such as Mike Hayduk from Hillock, etc. I remember when they came back defeated in 1938, and how badly they felt about the fascist bombers from Germany and Italy - and none of the other allies would do anything to stop them. The rehearsal for the 2nd World War took place in Spain while Britain and the others coalesced and were surrendering to Hitler - until Poland came on. Their actions probably pushed the Soviet Union and Stalin into a corner, which is why he signed a non-aggression treat with Germany. That took the west off side. Meanwhile, the U.S. did not join either the 1st or 2nd World War until very late. It was coming, but the repression of its own working class had to take a back seat to the victory against the Nazi axis, the Japan, Italy and German axis, as it was known by that time.

The Peace Movement

I don't mean to say that the class struggle didn't exist during the 2nd World War, but it had to be put on the back burner. There were activities, such as the massive miners strike in 1942 in Drumheller and Crowsnest Pass; a massive strike, and they won. The railroad and industry needed the coal, so this assured the victory - but that didn't necessarily take precedence over the war effort. There were signs, they say now, towards the end of the 2nd World War, as the Soviet armies rolled toward Berlin, when the Americans, the British and the French (although the French weren't as prominent in that coalition, something like we have nowadays in Iraq), that there would be some problems, especially with the attitude of Stalin and his groups on the whole question of setting up governments in all of eastern Europe – Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Czech. Those were the things that annoyed the British. The division of Germany and Berlin into East and West in the middle of all this was a sign of the incongruity of the final peace. There we started the question of the fight against the A-bomb, against nuclear bomb, which was the main task of the peace movement. Some of the highlights of that were annoying, but the world peace movement was very strong.

The World Peace Congress was to hold its world meeting in Sheffield, England, but the British authorities in '49 disallowed it, and it was moved over to Warsaw, so it became the Warsaw Peace Congress meeting in 1950. Already we saw signs that there was disharmony. In our case, in the rural areas, the question was why doesn't Canada sell grain to the Soviet Union or to China, until John Deifenbaker was elected in 1957. I'm a displaced farmer. I left the farm in 1956 because I had full bins of wheat; the only way we could sell it was through feeding our hogs and cattle. It was a hard way to make a living; you had all kinds of grain, but you didn't have \$5 to take a girl to a dance. At 30 years of age, I said that farming was no good for me, so looked for something different.

One other thing should be mentioned; i.e., that McCarthyism was fully aware of what was happening. There was a book written by John Gunther back in 1951 on the unrest within Latin America, a classic that described how all countries wanted to increase their living standard and become less dependent upon U.S. control. Guatemala was later an example of how the U.S. government forced it to go along, without any uprising or public demands - not much different than what's happened in the last year in Venezuela and the strikes that are taking place now in Latin America. However, Latin America was just the tip of it; it was also happening in Asia and in China in 1949, when the Koumintang was removed from China and the Communist Party led the revolution against hunger. The

Chinese government of Shang Kai Shek's did not resist Japanese aggression in Manchuria. One of my first speeches that I ever did in my life was in 1937 when Japan attacked Manchuria. I got up on the stage and choked up, but I told them to boycott Japanese goods. That's the kind of stuff we did. From there on, I became more and more involved in it.

McCarthyism is a problem that has tortured the capitalist countries throughout their life. I should mention that I was born in 1926, the year of the general strike in Great Britain. That was a momentous moment. It was a challenge to have a general strike of a highly industrial nation like Britain, just recuperating from the 1st World War. The Americans and all the capitalist countries took notice of it. There was also the fact that the Soviet Union was formed. The revolution in Russia took place in 1917. The Soviet Union did not become a reality until 1924, as a constitutional federation of these countries. These are the things that were building up towards McCarthyism. The forms were different because of the challenges that challenged what the priorities were. Even though there was this alliance against Nazism, it was an uneasy alliance. I read a book in the library in Moscow, where Stalin wrote a letter to FDR that the land lease equipment that they supplied to the Russians could not be used in battles. The tanks were on high octane gasoline and were explosive as ever. Here Stalin wrote a whole document that the only thing we can use these tanks for, we thank you for them, is for training. So this was part of that uneasy relationship.

Veterans who returned, who were volunteers in the Canadian army, expected that they had won democratic rights and they were demanding these rights and social reforms, commensurate with what they sacrificed their time and lives to win, so they could have a better social economic position in the works of the country. I think the veterans played a very important role on the question of Canada pension, on Medicare, on the question of educating the return soldiers from war to go into industry. The veterans demanded and did get help in getting re-educated after the war to fit into the domestic life. So there was a social consciousness. We have to remember that many of the volunteers who fought in the 2nd World War, and it was a volunteer army. Although we had conscription, it did not allow U.S. to send conscripted people overseas without their permission. So they had to volunteer even after they were trained. They were on the home guard. These veterans were mainly from the progressive side, those were in tune with what democracy was all about. Whatever political persuasion they were, they believed in democracy and they were against Nazism and the control of Nazis over the rest of the world. These people who came back after they volunteered became activists. The children of those volunteers are what we call today the 'boomers' who are aging already. But we did win Medicare in 1966, and we got the Canada pension plan instituted in 1967. Many of the younger people today don't even know it; they think it was always there. So, these are the things people demanded, and they used in many ways some of the social introductions of reforms in the eastern block of Europe. The Medicare systems of those countries, and the pensions, meagre as they were, were better than nothing. So this is what we fought for. These are the things that happened.

Meanwhile, McCarthyism operated to get something on a person, something to discredit him. There is a recent film on how the CIA disregarded any Canadian law and just run on their own; even to the point of talking about assassinating Prime Minister Lester B.

Pearson. Nothing has changed. If we understand the United States, they are still against social programs. They are still way behind Europe and Canada. And Canada to them is socialist country. In fact, when they were going to give a new logo for Edmonton, one that was suggested was Edmonton, next step to Moscow. I have that in my clippings. Calgary was suggesting these things, because it is very highly influenced by the Americans. About 80,000 Americans live in Calgary.

I remember most of it. I know that in 1944 Tommy Douglas was elected, but others were talking about medicare too. When Tommy Douglas decided that health care would be instituted in 1948, '49, the local doctors went on strike against him. So he had to import doctors and nurses from England. So, it was instituted on a Saskatchewan provincial basis, and became an example that later on caught fire, when everybody began to point, look at Saskatchewan and what they were doing. I mentioned earlier the municipal thing in the small municipalities of Ukraina and Myrnam; but the Saskatchewan experiment was a provincial. It took U.S. till 1966 to get a Medicare system in Canada based on the experiences of Saskatchewan, Great Britain, and Sweden. I know that Britain was used as an example. In Canada, there were strikes and people who were going to boycott it. There was all kinds of 'anti' - something like what the Klein Bill 11 debate created in Alberta? I wrote a full page editorial in the Ukrainian Press, in English of course, and I wrote about it. That the Bill 11 debate in Alberta is just the beginning of the Medicare debate. I'm not so sure at this moment how this new agreement between the federal and provincial government is going to affirm itself. Already I'm reading Klein's program is totally different from the question of how to reduce the waiting lines than what was intended by that summit meeting on Medicare. In BC the same thing is true, and in Ontario. But let's ask ourselves; if today we are speaking in a period of epidemic, of SARS, where would Canada be, and where would the people of Canada be if we didn't have a Medicare C

Canadian history

I think Canada is a unique country with its multi-culturalism. The French Canadians have played a very important role in Canada in safeguarding our democratic rights. First of all, they challenged the federal government, British in character, in the 1812 war. Then there was the 1837 uprising against the British, the Family Compact, which was again reiterated in 1917 when the Quebecers refused and challenged conscription to fight an imperialist British war - that's the way they put it. So we have to understand that there's the French Canadian question that has played a tremendous role. Stanley Ryerson wrote a book in 1837, *Birth of Canadian Democracy*. Then there's another book by Stanley Ryerson on Canada, *Two Nations, One Country*, etc. The debate continues between French Canada. Today we were talking on the day of election in Quebec, and we'll see what happens in a few hours, whether the PQs will win again or whether it will be a minority government or whether Charret is going to win. But all these factors, plus you have connections with people like the Ukrainian associations, the Russian federation, the Polish federation that used to be a progressive organization, the Slovaks, the Carpatho Ukrainians from Slovakia - all these people came to Canada and there was this progressive section within them. They all combined in this multicultural country. They do not agree with the melting pot theory. They want to maintain their cultural heritage.

We became a different country than the US. I remember as a young boy listening to the melting pot theory in the US. It's had its problems, because it's not an easy thing to

change colour or anything else. The number of black Americans that are in the U.S. is large, but some of them are beginning to side with the ruling class. Just like everything, the working class is easy to be bought out for concessions. They can sell their souls out. That's what Marx called the 'lumpenproletariat'; the ones who sleep in dugouts and for a handful of crumbs will sell their souls. But otherwise, the British section, which is a large population in Canada, has some socialist backgrounds from the labour party in England and knowledge of the general strikes that came out of the development of the industrial revolution. Their economics are ahead of that. The U.S. of course doesn't have that background. It's hard to wonder what the U.S. does. But as I said to one of my right wing people, I said, "Wellm we used to have colonial imperialism, but now we're into economic imperialism." He said, "Yes Mr. Makowecki you're right; it's an economic imperialism." All through these periods, McCarthyism was a product of a system that exploits its own people; it doesn't care who it steps over. The corporations know no limits to their control, and their wealth is not really the dollars and cents that we think of as lower class people. We think of dollars and cents and what it'll give U.S. in our living. They think of control of people, their hold on the politics and conditions. Everyplace you see, all through the last 20 years now, there's a salient encroachment upon the living standards of working people, through inflation, through longer hours of work, through complete attack upon the trade union movements. And during the McCarthy years we had a fellow by the name of Homer Stevens in BC, a Canadian aboriginal. The top authority of the fisheries of the ocean. He was president of the Fishermans Union in BC. When Canada and the U.S. held talks on sharing the salmon of the Pacific Ocean, the Canadian government demanded that Homer Stevens be at the table in San Francisco. They had to get a special warrant for him and a special dispensation for him to cross the government, because he was a member of the Communist Party and an active trade unionist. And yet they couldn't be without him, because he was an authority. I think he's still living. These are the kind of things that happened.

Speaking of the Communist Party leadership, we have to understand that most of it was of British descent: Tim Buck, Leslie Morris, etc., plus the educated section of the Jewish population. Many of them came from Poland and from the Ukraine. The Jewish progressive leaders were active in the organization of trade unions in the needle trades, which the Jewish entrepreneurs had in Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal. Amongst the rank and file Ukrainians, there were very few people who had any high level of Marxist indoctrination. They believed socialism was an easy thing to accept, because it was a promise, something like religion - you believe in God and heaven and afterlife. If we get socialism, they thought, it's all going to be very easy. They followed the leadership of the Communist Party in this ideology, as long as it was working class. Tim Buck came from the machinist trade. Leslie Morris I don't remember anymore. The Jewish leaders came from the needle trades, from the service industries, entrepreneurs, retailers. Most of the Ukrainians were hardworking, miners and everything, who got their introduction in discussion clubs led by leading comrades; evening study groups, learning. But the main thing that brought them together was that the Communist Party was always campaigning against war; wars were unjust, and they were imperialist wars. In the 1st World War, they campaigned against the socialist parties. There wasn't a Communist Party until 1922 in Canada; we have to remember that.

The comrades in the ULFTA leadership were members of the Communist Party, by and large. They made trips to the Ukraine, saw what was happening there, and came back and reported it. The ULFTA was trying to inform Canadians about what a socialist Ukraine could do for them. They brought back news, usually glowing things. They didn't like to speak about some of the things that they didn't like and hoped they didn't see - their ideals were not in conjunction with it. But the main thing was that there was always the explanation. There were hard times in the Soviet Union, but because the Soviet Union was surrounded by these countries who are planning to wage war on it, and most of their energy is going into developing an army of defence, a military capable of defending themselves. That was the rational explanation of some of the things that were inadequate. There was big concern amongst the Finnish organization, of which there was a big left wing organization, amongst which were leading members of the Communist Party, like Joe Hillstrom in Thunder Bay. People had branches just like the Ukrainian organization had almost, wherever there were Finnish communities. Sylvan Lake, Eckville, Benalto, Thorhild, Hollow Lake were all branches. There was big upset when the Soviet Union attacked Finland before Germany attacked the Soviet Union. The Soviet's explanation for this was that the Finnish government was teasing the Soviets to start a war, and that the Nazis were going to come in through Finland into the Soviet Union. It did create a lot of damage to the progressive Finnish organization.

There were a lot of things like this that happened in the life. Our Association, even though it was banned in 1940 by the liberal government, the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association continued its work with aid to the fatherland, continued its work even before Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. But after Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, we went out on full scale to raise funds for help Russia and the Soviet Union; even though most of our leadership was still in concentration camps at Kananaskis and Hull, the organization still maintained its fight against Nazism. The AUUC was in conflict with another Ukrainian organization also called CUC. It was in 1946 that we incorporated as the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, AUUC. The main thing after the war was to raise funds for orphans, mainly in the areas that most of our Ukrainians came from, such as Tonopil and Bukovena. In the post war period, we raised over \$250,000 of medical aid for orphans in these two cities. That's the capital of Bukovenia. It was presented to them in 1947 by a fellow from Myrnam, William Teresio, who became the first Canadian born Ukrainian president of the AUUC. He died of a heart attack in 1953 at the age of 53, a sad day for us. But we continued with humanitarian aid, and anti-war campaigns, trying to help Ukrainians develop their own knowledge of how to do it.

There were some idealism about socialism, that once we got it, we could live by slogans alone, amongst the amateurs. They thought that once we got socialism, we wouldn't need to work. Well I'm wondering who would produce anything. Even capitalism can't work without workers. So there were some illusions about that. When we spoke or when they came over here, we would always speak to these people as groups, telling them how things were done. People have to work, we have to be fair about the wage structures. The trade union movement sets the standard, whether you're unionized or not. I do, I try to work at the trade union levels in my enterprise. These are the things we learned.

Going back into the '60s, into McCarthyism, just to conclude on those things - there were difficult periods, as I said before. I was barred, and other people like me were barred. But

there were some instances where I snuck in. For example, I took my wife and children to the World's Fair in Spokane in 1974 by car, and wasn't even questioned at the border. In 1977, just to tell you a little story, my wife said we should take our children to Disneyland but I told her that if we fly, we wouldn't get through. It was 1977, and I was a businessman already, out of politics. I got an invitation to attend the packaging show in Chicago, one of the biggest shows of packaging machinery, and I needed packaging, because the business was growing. I said, "You know what Eileen, I'm going to go to Chicago. I'm going to be very open about it, buy my tickets ahead of time. If I get through to Chicago, then we'll go to Disneyland. But it would be very bad if the two small children, Joe was 9 and Leanne was 6, if we came to the airport and their father can't go, what do you do? It's not good for children."

I took Northwest Orient to Chicago, stopped in Minneapolis for changeover. I noticed as we were getting into the country, the black book there on the desk. There was a lady, Mrs. Partridge from Innisfree, musicians who had a dance hall at Innisfree. I said, "Mrs. Partridge, you go ahead, because I know what's going to happen right away". She went ahead, and as soon as I came in they took me out of the line and I was deported back to Winnipeg, with aman in charge of me, a watchman to ensure I didn't skip the country without them noticing me. He came and bought me lunch, and says, "we have a crazy country. You're going to spend money buying equipment in Chicago and our people turn you out." I told him, I'm a businessman now. That was the only time I did that. In 1985 our daughter got married in Hawaii, I couldn't go. I didn't dare go. My wife and the two sisters went. I was in good company. Pierre Trudeau wasn't allowed to go to the U.S. before he became Prime Minister.

I think it was the McCarran Act, if I remember right, which prevented Farley Mowat from going there. My son-in-law, who lives in Portland, his father is Chief of Police in Beaverton. I gave him a book that Farley Mowat wrote about this incident that they didn't let him into the US, and my son-in-law w said that he couldn't believe that America was so undemocratic. He's worried now. The kids are growing up and he's worried whether he should move to Canada. He's afraid that his boys might be conscripted for the U.S. army. They're 12 and 13, they're growing up. Take the Americans who came here during the Vietnam war. We had all these periods of anti-war movements, campaigning - those are the kind of things that compose most of my life.

Amongst the Ukrainian community, there were various trends among the immigrants that came here. Their hope, their aim and desire was to find a better life, a more democratic country than the Austro-Hungarian empire or the Polish ?. When they arrived in Canada with all these hopes and dreams, they began to form social clubs, reading clubs. Many of them were illiterate, but they formed various kinds of organizations, and tried to educate themselves to begin to fit into this new country, and to help each other overcome some of the hardships. Amongst them was the socialist left that brought socialist ideas from the Ukraine, the European trend that debate was going on through the 1800s in Europe, starting with even the 18th century, the discussion of capitalism as opposed to feudalism, serfdom, and all those things.

There was a socialist element and a religious element. The religious element was also divided up into various groupings, even going as high as the London Court of Appeal on which property belonged to which churches, whether they were the Catholic property or

the Orthodox properties from Star and Edna Alberta. Then the war crystallized some of the feelings that the socialist sector had, and from that section arose the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association in 1918, after the Ukrainian socialist democratic party of Canada was outlawed by the Borden government under the War Measures Act, 1917. This group worked very hard within the communities explaining things like self help, how people needed to orient themselves, who they should support. The Liberals were buying votes. My grandfather got his citizenship paper without a court or anything, just so long as he voted Liberal. Under that law, his wife became a citizen and they never had to go through what people who go through in citizenship courts these days. There was a lot of corruption in the Canadian government and Canadian parties. But there were also influences from social democratic countries such as Britain or the socialist thinking of France. There were people who were aware of these trends of thinking that there's a better solution to the problems of the working people. ULFTA had leadership that was leadership based on Marxist theories, as early as 1917, active in the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919. In fact, the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple in Winnipeg became the centre of the strike headquarters in 1919, so it was affiliated to the labour movement.

Its constitution reads in part that the association is a labour-oriented, progressive organization which deals against discrimination, works for the benefit of working people of Canada. From day one, in 1918 when it was organized, that's 85 years ago, it played a very important role in spreading socialist ideas and doctrine. The only solution to the capitalist wars, and the wars to capitalism are a necessity, according to Marx, it to have a socialist world. The old cliché, 'workers of the world unite', it was followed to a 'T' by the leadership of this organization. It had its hard times, however, going through several periods of police surveillance. People who were activists were harassed at times. There is at the National RCMP Archives in Ottawa the room of one trade unionist, Tom Chopowick. In Ontario I think my miner's union organized a Ukrainian, but the superintendent who used to attend my meetings, who was an RCMP stoolie at the meetings, told me that Tom Chopowick's archives are a room on one man bigger than all of the Ukrainian Canadian committee. It's amazing, because these were self taught people, people who believed in the extreme communist dictatorship, no property. Peter Karwchuk, in one of his books on our contribution to victory, quotes a man from Kirkland Lake who was arrested during the 1940s for being a communist. This man asks, "Mr. Judge, how can I be communist, I own a house". That was their thinking, in extremes.

Even in my family, I had arguments when I became a young communist, with my relatives who said that if you people would just stop producing, we would starve the capitalist system. I said, yes, and we would starve also at the same time. It was that simplicity of taking power and doing away with it. I did argue with him, even before I had much knowledge of Marxism, saying that if we had socialism in Canada, this is during 1950s, you wouldn't be a manager because you're a poor manager. That guy who won the Alberta farm family award, he's a manager. They'd appoint him as manager of a collective farm - we were talking at that level yet. I said, because he's an able manager, he's capable of managing a collective farm.

Co-op Farming

There were attempts at co-op farming in Alberta during the war years. But the one they were basing themselves on was the Matador Co-op Farm in Saskatchewan, which was the most famous, popularized and sponsored by the CCF government of Tommy Douglas. I thought perhaps it would work, and it did work for quite a long time, but I don't know where it's at this point. It was a group of VLA veterans who came back from the war and got their veterans land grant to buy land. They all started at an equal position, but families aren't equal; some had more children, some had less. It was almost like a commune, something like the Chinese tried in the Cultural Revolution, communes that equalize everybody. There's no such thing, because people are different, have different needs, different health needs, different things that are not equal.

The main attack came in 1931, when the Communist Party of Canada was outlawed, and Tim Buck was put into jail in Kingston Penitentiary. The Ukrainian Association, together with the Mennonite churches, and a few United Church people, carried on a national campaign to free Tim Buck under the leadership of Rev. A.E. Smith, who was a Methodist preacher from Lloydminster. His son later became the national organizer of the Communist Party. The Communist Party and the leadership of the AUUC had very close ties, as the AUUC leaders were on the Central Committee of the Communist Party. There were moves in the early stages of the Communist Party to make it a Federation. The biggest promoters of that move was the Finnish organization of Canada. We have to understand that the Fins came through the US, from North Dakota; they settled in the U.S. first and moved into Canada. They were very left wing, much more so than the Ukrainians, even though the Ukrainian leadership was quite dedicated. To give you an example, the Finnish organization at Banalto in Sylvan Lake/Eckville country, at a meeting of the United Farmers of Alberta, which was in power in 1929, moved a motion to affiliate with the Communist Party of Canada. I found that information in the Hall that we moved to our camp at Sylvan Lake. It's too bad that those newspapers were not saved.

Many of these people really were Social Democrats, they weren't die-hard communists. They joined the Communist Party because there was nothing else in the '20s. The CCF wasn't formed until 1933, and they wanted a stage from which to pronounce their socialist views. The Communist Party was the only one after 1922 that did it; that's what they were looking for, because they were populists. They formed cooperatives, they formed Ukrainian grain elevator companies in Manitoba, and formed the Wheat Pool and UGG - and after the board let them down they formed wheat pools in Manitoba, Sask, and Alberta. They were very enthused with the election of the UFA in 1921, and the Liberals haven't been in power in Alberta since then. I read in one of the history books of Peter Krawchuk, where Mike Novakowski from Mundare reports at a convention that we have elected a socialist government in Alberta, the United Farmers of Alberta. There was a great feeling for cooperative movements. All of our leading comrades, Ukrainians in the communities, all worked towards the building of cooperative movements; cooperative stores, cooperative livestock shipping associations, all kinds of cooperatives. There was a lack of theoretical explanation on the part of the Communist Party as to what these cooperative movements were, that they were not really socialist, they were forms of private property. This was never explained to people. The people who were opposed to socialist ideas viewed the credit unions and cooperatives as communist institutions, because the directors were usually members of the Communist Party. That's how that label could be put on this. The truth being said, however, cooperatives are not communist

organizations, they're private organizations. But co-ops, like everything else, serve a purpose, the education of people in the ownership of enterprises, how to run them, how to organize them as educational forums to get people together.

One of the other areas of the AUUC mission was to promote education and cultural life of the Ukrainian community. It started in many different ways, as reading clubs, etc., and then into orchestras, dramas. The Vinnichenko Theatre was the thing that initiated the Ukrainian Labour Temple in Winnipeg. Vinnichenko was a playwright in Ukraine, and quite progressive. We had play acting and orchestras, not so many dances in the early years, only in the 50s we got more, because we were able to get people from the Ukraine. In the early years, there was some dancing but there wasn't much professional assistance in that culture. By having these groups, we were able to keep in touch with cultural life in the Ukraine, and get some assistance in the form of musical material and things during the '20s and '30s, although communications weren't as easy as they are now. It wasn't until after the 2nd World War and in the '50s that the real cultural exchanges begin between the AUUC and the Soviets.

I should say that the AUUC was founded and chartered in 1946 as a national organization, as a charter until today. In those days, there was a playwright in Canada who came from Czechoslovakia, by the name of Irchan. He wrote famous two and 3-act plays which have been translated into English by Jars Balan. Jars told me the other day that his mother was the one who got him into the cultural work and drama type of work. He's a professor now at the U of A. He wrote a play called "The Family of Brush Makers". My father was the main actor over the several years that they played this play; a sad story of a Ukrainian family and a son who went to the first World War and came back blind. On stage, we saw how the family was coping with no help from anybody, and he finally committed suicide. He thought that he was a burden to his wife, father and mother - that they were all suffering because of him. This is a classic of Erchan's. Those are the kind of things that were done. Women's branches were formed in the Ukrainian Labour Temple, the ULFTA, from as early as 1926. The Catholic women were not organized until 1942. They had a publication of their own called "The Working Woman", and Irchan was the editor of it. Unfortunately, in 1930, Irchan decided to go back to the Ukraine with his friend Babiuk. Marshall Nay has edited a book in which Peter Krawchuk wrote on Irchan. In it are all the details of Irchan. Yars Balan told me that he did a play on a commune in the Ukraine by a group of miners from the Drumheller valley who sold everything they had in 1924, bought a tractor, and moved there to form a commune. Erchan wrote a play on that commune. That's the first I heard about it.

That play evidently probably is the one that got Erchan into trouble with the Stalinists in 1934. He was put into jail, and while being transferred from one jail to another, was summarily executed. Here was a playwright of renown. I have heard recently that all the men of the Mihayivska Komoona were executed in the 1930,s. How true that is remains to be verified. "Why was Ircan killed by the communists?" was asked by many of our people. So those are some of the setbacks we've had. Not everybody wanted to admit that the communists kill Erchan. It was said, that he had become an enemy of the socialist revolution, and in the 1934, '35, '36 purges in the Soviet Union, these were a great big concern to every member of our organization. I remember my father weekly reading what

was happening in there, and questioning it. It also created a division within the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association at that time.

There was some questioning by a member of the National Committee from Spedden, Alberta, a man by the name of Lobay. I don't know the details, but I know that Lobay was disenfranchised and removed from the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association, because he was asking questions that some of the leadership did not want to admit, or they accused him of listening to the lies of our adversaries. That yet has to come out, but not in our book now, because we're not doing that period. Our book covers 1940 to 1990, and there were differences, such as the difference between the ULFTA with the Communist Party in 1939 on which side of the war effort, when the war broke out. Some of the Communist Party leadership went along with the Molotov-Ribbentrop non-aggression treaty. The Ukrainians had an editorial in the Ukrainian Life against the view of the Communist Party that we must fight fascism, because it is a continuation of the Spanish Civil War. The Ukrainians took a more positive stand, and we're doing research now on a book of our organization and leading comrades. Maybe we'll find some of this in the archives. If not, we'll have to go to the National Archives, where we know it is. We know that the U o fA has tapes. Major events that happened outside Canada many times affected the unity of the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association, and later the Association of Ukrainian Canadians. There was a big debate in 1956 over the Hungarian events. At that time I wasn't part of it as, while I was a member of the party, I wasn't a delegate to the convention. I remember one of the comrades who came to my service station that I operated at that time said, boy we sure fixed those eastern bastards. That's your own comrades you're talking about. That's the time that the people like Steve Endicott, the Penner brothers, and a lot of other good young peace workers were removed from the Communist Party, such as Stewart Smith, the son of Rev A. E. Smith, who resigned from the Communist Party as its national organizer. There were problems from following the party line or not following the party line. There were instances of both, on behalf of the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association and the Ukrainian leadership of the Party.

In general principle, they followed the CPSU, and later on, it got even worse. The next big disagreement between the Ukrainian leadership in 1968 was over the march of the Warsaw pact armies into Prague. It took the leadership by surprise; it definitely took me by surprise. At 5 o'clock in the morning a Lethbridge radio station phoned me at my house to ask if I agree with what happened in Prague. I asked, what happened, because I didn't even know. Well do you agree? I replied that I certainly cannot agree on anybody marching into anybody's country. That's my position. There was a big split again amongst the top leadership which also had an effect on my resignation as Provincial chairman of the Alberta Communist Party in 1969, and just being a member at large for that period until the party disintegrated of its own will in 1991. In didn't leave the Communist Party; for the record, the Communist Party left me. They never asked me about anything, and I was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party from 1961 to 1969. Not to be asked, not even come to speak to the local communists of what's going to happen, I felt it was very disruptive. For the donations that I made to the party, which were hefty, not even a thank you, and using that money to fight the battles amongst themselves. I could no longer even ask. They didn't even say, hey come down to the

convention. They didn't even call a convention. This is symptomatic of how things went since 1969.

Within the AUUC there was a disagreement, as the hard liners such as the AUUCers who were Central Committee members of the Communist Party, went along with the stupidity of going to court. Then they finally called it off after spending \$200,000 of membership money, badly-needed money. I think that's symptomatic. Later on it showed itself in the lack of leadership with the AUUC, after the '70s. In the '70s, there were splits in the AUUC. The first major split in 1971 was with the Shevchenko Ensemble, which was the musical end of AUUC - its public face.. It split away, cutting the membership in half in the centre in Toronto. The AUUC was weakened by that split.

The second thing that weakened the AUUC was that in 1972, the AUUC had organized two private companies, which were service companies to serve the Ukrainian Canadian community in assisting it to transfer assistance to their relatives and family in the Ukraine. It wasn't books, but it was a parcel service. It was a franchise deal by internal parcel service. It serviced single men who left their wives and children in the Ukraine and came to Canada, never went back, but who upon their death wanted to transfer their estates to their family. The majority of the customers were non-AUUC members, but rather people who came to Canada after the 2nd World War, not supporters of the AUUC but wanting to help their families in the Ukraine - sent over gift parcels that the family sold there. Later on bought cars for their family, because they made some money here. It was a service organization. It was attacked by members of parliament in Ottawa as a company that financed the communist movement in 1950s. It started in '53 in Toronto, and we had branches across Canada. It was owned by shareholders, and it donated money to the shareholders. When they got their dividends from the company, they donated some of those dividends to the AUUC and wherever they wanted. If they were Communist Party members, it was their personal business. It was a private company. We had many audits by internal revenue, and everything was kosher with our books. Our leadership of that time has to be congratulated for doing a superb job, not being businessmen, but learning how to run a company and do it properly within laws of Canadian incorporation.

Another company that was set up in Winnipeg was Globe Trade and Travel, operating travel agencies. Again it came out that no other travel agency wanted to do any of the arrangements for travel of groups or private citizens to the Soviet Union, so it was formed in 1958, and became a big thing. Unfortunately, management didn't grow along with and until 1972, Globe Trade and Travel was quite a prosperous travel agency. It satisfied the needs of groups that nobody else wanted. In 1971/'72, managers of the branches who were underpaid, that was one of the fallacies and can be related to what happened in the Soviet Union, that the people lost the faith of the leadership of the USSR. The same thing happened here. These managers were underpaid and expected to do work that called for sacrifices on their part. There was a protest of managers and a walk-out in 1972, after which, they formed their own travel organization. They formed in Vancouver, in Regina, in Winnipeg, and this hurt Globe Tours. Therefore, everybody had two loyalties, because there were two travel agencies, both claiming to be friends of the Soviet Union. They divided the thing. I think that for hockey tournament in Moscow in October 1972, Globe Tours had organized two plane loads of people to go to the hockey games in Moscow. It was chartered. All of a sudden, Sears was interested in travel to the USSR, other

companies were interested. The governors gave them franchises and gone were the days of monopoly for Globe Tours after that.. That was the beginning of the end, and the AUUC struggled along. That's when I got involved in these companies, besides running my own company that I started in '72. I took on the responsibilities as a volunteer. I wasn't a shareholder in the company, my wife was. I was a shareholder in Globe Tours, so we managed. But it was no longer well managed companies. It weakened AUUC, because the source of income, the directors didn't have any more income to pass on donations to the AUUC. When you have no other income, this is what we relied on. There was already division within the companies, and within our membership there was divisions, against another group of so-called private guys. These things brought up some turmoil.

In the end, private intrigues begin to develop, and became a sore spot in the organization. You couldn't mix business and the leadership of the organization, or divide yourself into two or three parts. There are ambitions amongst people, and those who tried, even with the travel business, tried to go in competition with Globe Tours. They didn't succeed either, so somebody else got it. People who never wanted to do business with the former Soviet Union, after 1991 became the travel agents through which we travel to the Ukraine now.

Publishing was a big educator and organizer for the association. Through its publishing company, Kobzar Publishing Ltd., the AUUC published 3 or 4 different types of newspapers in the '20s and '30s. After the war, two Ukrainian papers – Ukrainian Life and Ukrainian Word – one in Winnipeg and one in Toronto, were published. They were amalgamated into one, Life and Word, in the 1970's.

Also in 1946 after the convention, chartering the association of Ukrainian Canadians, there was a decision at the convention to launch English speaking branches across Canada. In those days we had the men's branch, we had the women's branch, but there was nothing for people in the early teens and 20s and 30s. The language became English, and so the English speaking branches were formed. In 1948 the Ukrainian Canadian newspaper was launched with editor John Weir, who was one of the 1930s graduates of the Communist Party schools in Moscow, one of the theoreticians of the Communist Party. John Weir was a Ukrainian guy. His real name was Vivuski, but during the illegality in the '30s, he changed his name to John Franks and Frank Johns. Then he became John Weir. He later ended his life in the Soviet Union, being a correspondent for the Canadian Tribune. The Ukrainian Canadian magazine was very popular amongst my age. It was very well written, and had some good editors, and served a purpose amongst the Canadian born.

There was an incongruity within the AUUC. By tradition, the men's branch was the boss of the hall; they were the ones who controlled all the finances and the ones who decided what was going to happen at the hall. The women's branch did the cooking, did the sewing of costumes for dancers, for the choirs. They sang in the choir, and worked; that was their role. They collected subscriptions, collected signatures for peace petitions against the bomb. Women had their responsibilities, but men were the bosses. The English speaking branch was an afterthought. They had their branches, they'd get together, they tried to get the ball game in the summertime. They'd have an Xmas

celebration. Liquor was illegal at that time, so you'd bring your bottle to the hall and put it under the table. Until after Manning was gone, we got liquor licenses in Alberta. Other places probably had different things, but the English speaking branch was sort of left on its own. Then in the '60s, with the advent of bingos, in order to finance the branches, the bingos became the activity of the English speaking branch, and especially of the younger people who could fill out forms for applications. Later on in the '70s, casinos came along, and the English speaking branch began to be the workhorse, producing all the finances, yet didn't have much to say about improving the hall, about the programs at the Ukrainian Temple.

In 1986, I was chairman of the branch, and Bill Chomyn and I proposed that all three branches amalgamate into one. There was resistance to it, but after 6 months of debate, we finally agreed, and today, there's only one branch with no more individual branches. Some like it, some don't, but for the younger people, that's the only solution. The press was one of the important things that kept the people going, but in 1991 another financial crisis as a result of the divisions I was talking about occurred. We couldn't afford to publish an English-Ukrainian Canadian Magazine, and we couldn't afford to publish the two, so it became the Ukrainian Canadian Herald, part English and part Ukrainian. That's the newspaper presently. There's a lot of criticism about the content. I thought we had it going well until two years ago, but I see it dying now. The future will decide what the fate of the Ukrainian Canadian Herald will be. I'm not involved in that anymore.

The main acts or campaign against these Ukrainian cultural centres (they're still under the jurisdiction of the AUUC), occurred during the cold war in the '50s, with the coming of the so-called Displaced Persons. There were many attacks, with broken windows in members' homes. Rocks were thrown through the windows of George Solomon's home, who was provincial secretary, especially when he was away. There were hammer and sickles painted in the dead of night on the stucco of the Ukrainian Labour Temples. There was a bomb placed in Toronto at 300 Bathurst St in 1955, during a concert, a bomb of nails and spikes that exploded and went over the stage and narrowly missed the dancers. There was fights at Speddon Alberta, when Tonasio Kanuk came out to speak about the gift of humanitarian aid. People who came out of the war were very bitter, and there were lots of threatening phone calls during that period. Our leaders lived through a lot of fear in those days, and it affected people coming to the halls, to the labour temples. From a membership at the height in 1946 of over 5,000, the membership dwindled to about 500 at this moment. In the Cold War, there was a musician who played in the ensemble orchestra, and he also played in the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He lost his job in the symphony, and also, under pressure from the U.S.A. and CIA, was not allowed to enter the U.S., just because he played in an orchestra; there was no political activity or anything. Those are the kind of things that happened in those years.

The day the Warsaw Pact armies marched into Prague, my brother-in-law George phoned me at 6 in the morning and said, "we have to go to the bookstore". I was running the bookstore at that time. They had splashed red paint all over the windows. George and I washed it. We took wood alcohol to wash the paint. By the time I got home the Journal had a picture on the front page of the bookstore and the red paint. That was the same day the Lethbridge radio called me about it. This happened many times. I don't know all of the things, but there were threats, some of them deserved. Some of our leaders engaged in

tactics that sort of asked them, 'c'mon show me what you can do.' It didn't help, but the antagonisms were there.

Relations with the CCF and Trade Unions

You asked about the relations between the CCF and the Communist Party. There was never a formal association between the CCF and the Communist Party, but in the early days of the CCF, the CCF in its founding convention in 1933 had based itself on Marxist theory. It used Marxism as the basis for its socialist thinking. In the '50s, because of the cold war, the CCF began to distance itself from the Communist Party and the American intimidation, McCarthyism and everything else. And, there was definitely intimidation; CCFers who were not allowed to go into the U.S., etc. So I have a feeling it was the reason why the CCF decided to change its name and go on a program that wasn't as left wing, sort of a social democratic program to the New Democratic Party in '61.

We had good relationships through the '30s and '50s. In fact, the AUUC, when I was in charge of the children's camps at Sylvan Lake, I picked up Bill Irvine, an old time CCF'er and a former MLA and provincial leader of the CCF in Alberta. We drove out to the camp where I introduced him to the teenagers. I asked him to speak to them about the history of the growth of Alberta and the role of working people in the development of our province. I had a team camp there. That was in '64, '65. So between some of us, there was no difference. There were mutually on economic problems, on local problems, on labour problems, the CCF and the Communist Party even spoke from the same platform. Not only the CCF and the Communist Party, but ministers of Aberhart's government before 1942 spoke at May Day meetings with Irvine. Bill Irvine used to have a saying, that the only paved roads in Alberta are to the jail in Ft. Saskatchewan and to the Ponoka mental institution. The rest of U.S. have no paved roads. He was very close to Leslie Morris, and they used to exchange ideas, support each other, even if they were on the same platform. When I ran for city council, it was amazing. That's in the '60s, and in those days you could run every year, because we didn't have ward system, which I think was even better for us. He got as much as 15,000 votes, quite a bit in Edmonton, as an open Communist. But I found in question period at these joint meetings of candidates that if people attacked me, are you the guy who has the bookstore? They used to ask how I could, and I'd tell them that I ran a successful farm, a successful service station business, and I think I know what I'm doing. I'd have people like Dr. Weinlos, who if somebody poked the question directly at me at my politics, he'd get up and answer to say, we don't have political parties in this city election campaign, and you have no right to ask that type of question.

I was aware of that, especially in the early years. First of all, the Seaman's Union destroyed with the Canadian merchant fleet on the Great Lakes. There was a big battle in Ontario, and the 2nd one was the United Electrical Workers. The IBEW, the national brotherhood of electrical workers came in and raided in Ontario; first in BC, where there were several people who were United Electrical Workers functionaries who were fired. George Guy was one of those, and he came later to Alberta because there was a UE union at the Camrose Pipe Plant. He was one of our people, but he could never go to the US. Bill Berezowsky, a Ukrainian merit fighter plane pilot in the war in Asia in Thailand and other places, but he couldn't work for the Steelworkers Union, because he was Mine Mill Workers, which was still the union in Sudbury, in northern Alberta, and he was stationed

here. Those are the kind of people that I knew about, the union people. I told you about Homer Stevens, Harold Pritchette. Craig Pritchette, another one of the unionists in BC. There were many in BC, the International Brotherhood of Workers people were not allowed to go into the U.S. unless they were smuggled in. But that was taking a risk.

I wasn't personally involved with trade unions, except the ones that were here in Edmonton. They were the Mine and Mill Workers, who were not working with U.S. affiliated unions, and the United Electrical workers across Canada. The IBEW, of course was a U.S. affiliated union, but wasn't my area. I was never an employee; I was always an entrepreneur in my life. So I couldn't be a trade union member, but I did attend meetings where discussions were held. John Rawluck was a Hotel Worker but he wasn't affiliated to the international, so it didn't affect him. Doug Tomlinson was also a Hotel Workers Union member, but they were a local Canadian type union. As to the miners. I knew Art Harvey from Coleman and the Crowsnest Pass, a big miner's union. He somehow was able to travel and I met him in Toronto and various other meetings.

A summary of his life as a advocate for peace

Can I conclude with an epilogue of my life, the whole thing? I can give you half an hour of what I think it should be.

The Communist Party in Alberta, after the '56 convention and the crippling that occurred after Ben Swankey moved to BC to take on his labour relations work needed, but had a hard time finding a replacement. It was not a good period for people. Orapana who was the YCL leader, got sick and left, and there was nobody left to carry on the work amongst farmers. It happened that I was on the loose after I disposed of my service station, which was worse than a penitentiary with little returns. But it was an exciting period, learning what the life of people's cars was like. So I was approached by the Communist Party, because I was a member going back to '48, and had a reputation as an organizer and leader. I was asked whether I would consider it, and much to the dismay of my parents, I said yes. I was a bit surprised, because my father had dedicated his life to the building of the party, yet he knew all the pitfalls. I was so intense after the '57 trip to the World Youth Festival; it was the first time I had ventured out of Edmonton by plane. In fact my mother and father came out to see me take off on a plane, because I was the first Makowecki to fly to Toronto and then across the ocean on a North Star.

It was an adventure, the adventure of being amongst 120,000 young people in Lenin Stadium just captured my emotional destiny. I always was an activist, but I was the regular everyday type of member. I agreed that I would take the job in October 1958. In February 1958, John Weir was the organizer of the Communist Party, who I told you was an early editor of the first Ukrainian Canadian magazine, came to me and said, "Walter, how would you like to go to Moscow for a year?" I asked what was it all about, and he told me that I needed to get more theory. "We know your work, you have a good track record with us", he said. I guess my brother in law, George Solomon - well he wasn't my brother-in-law at that time; I didn't get married until '67 - told me that I'd better straighten myself up. I was on the Provincial Committee of the AUUC also, and the party. I mentioned to George, who was a member of the Provincial Committee of the party, that John Weir had asked me whether I would take a year's sabbatical to go to the Soviet Union to study. He tried to convince me that I shouldn't go, because I was not that

cultural a person that I was so imbued with Ukrainian culture. I knew the language, but I wasn't going to be a violin player or an orchestra conductor or anything like that, it wasn't my field. Politics was my field.

So I agreed to go. It was the best year of my life, and I saw things that I never could've seen in Canada. It opened my vision of our world, of what the possibilities are, the potentials. To go to Dnepropetrovsk, the industrial centre of the whole Soviet Union, with the rocketry and everything else that already had put Gagarin into space. We were the privileged few, because it was a closed city to foreigners. To go through the mills, the factories, many of which had been transplanted as reparations for the war from Germany, and were high technology. To work on the farm, drive a Soviet combine - imagine, a guy in a suit driving a combine. They didn't think a party organizer was able to drive a combine. It gave me that inspiration, so when I came back, what would I do? I did the housekeeping. I attended meetings, organized meetings, attended executive meetings, attending meetings of farmers in different localities in preparation for farm union financials. I had an assignment to go up into the Fairview district where guys had talked about organizing a co-op farm. They sent me out in September 1960. I came back in May, and moved a hall up to the campgrounds, had a WCL school there that summer, and off to Fairview. I told them the pitfalls of co-op farms, because I had experience during the war years of co-op farms in the St. Paul district that didn't work. They went ahead anyway.

To understand what it was like, you'd have to go to a party club meeting in, for example, Calgary. Most of it was with Art Roberts and other guys who were on the Communist Party Provincial Committee. We'd have meetings on trade union matters, even though I wasn't very much aware of trade union matters, but sitting with them I was able to take in what the problems are and relate them back to the Provincial Executive. Then we'd call a meeting of something else of some other people. To organize farmers in their farm union debates against liquidating the farm union of Alberta, because at that time, Paul Levy was bought out to destroy the farm union of Alberta. Those are the kind of things I'd go out to try and organize. I even tried to organize farmers to put crops in to try and finance the Communist Party, because we were broke. Then you'd have to make trips to Toronto to Central Committee meetings. There were three conventions in the time I was in there, because, every three years we had a convention. I didn't go to the 1969 convention, because by that time, I decided I wouldn't run. I had given my notice of resignation as Provincial chairman, but not resignation from the party, but as Provincial Chairman. Because of my family life, I had to find a living. They couldn't pay me. I wore out two cars of my own and nobody gave me 5 cents or said thank you. So as a volunteer activist, I spent 10 years working on different questions, talking about the peace movement, what we should do, what the campaigns we were on. It was the work of a party organizer.

Looking back, I probably could've done things differently. At one convention, I put forward that we should have a party bulletin on Alberta questions. So I was given the task of organizing a bulletin. We had an offset branch and with it, I organized the Alberta Roundup. Every two or three months we'd issue it, four times a year. We'd find ways to get finances. It was free to readers. We developed a mailing list of 2,500 people; e.g., Wheat Pool members, Co-op members, anybody that would be partly working class, for whom we had names. We were quite proud of it, Bill Tuomi and I. I wasn't the editor of

it, but I was the make-up man. I'd compose the type on an old typewriter. It was one that you punched it in here, and then to get a straight even column, you'd re-type it a second time. I organized people to volunteer for mailing. We had labels. We didn't have copiers in those days, so I printed them on this offset machine. We'd have to put stickers on these things. We were very happy. We did an article on rural electrification and told people what was happening, that the Alberta government and utilities were trying to take over the power lines that the farmers had built with their own hard labour and their own cash - exactly what's happening today. We issued 9 issues of it for over three years. That's when I got quite discouraged, not only with the Czech events, but somebody in national office decreed that the Alberta Roundup was in competition with the Canadian Tribune, and more or less, ensured that it died on its own. They couldn't pay me, so I went to manage a bookstore, working for four squares. So at least they gave me some wages, and I did it for 10 years, during which we went to a conference on the future of socialism in 1965 at Banff School of Fine Arts, organized by the Woodworth-Irvine Fellowship; Tony Mardiros and company. I took my books there, and one of the speakers, Ryerson, presented a thesis on socialism with humanism, but he then got pushed out of Communist Party after 35 years. Dr. Stanley Ryerson, a man who could have had a life at any university; in fact after he got pushed out, he became professor at University of Montreal until his death a few years ago.

I've been warned that I'd be giving away our history, if I talked to you about the AUUC. I said, no, it's part of the labour history. Recording one's life in activism is probably a thing that every person who has been an activist should do. I think we're all reluctant to do it, but on the other hand, as I've often said, a worthy life is an examined life. An epilogue should be an examination of one's self, one's life, what drove you, what were the circumstances under which a person commits to certain values, and how he or she would carry them out.

As I said, I was born during the Great Strike of Britain. Maybe that was something of a premonition of where I would go. My father was an activist; in fact, both my parents both were activists, when mother wasn't pregnant. But after eight children, you know how much time there was left. Still she acted on stage and did everything else in between, in the area of cultural work. I think that what really tempered my feelings and thoughts was my dad's speaking to the neighbours about the terrors of the 1st World War, a war of mass sacrifice, mass demolition, mass killings. He talked about what the world was confronted with during the rise of fascism in 1933, and as I kept getting older, I listened to this constant discussion of war, anti-war, and the useless destruction of people during these times. I remember the Spanish Civil War and the descriptions of it. There wasn't TV at that time, so it wasn't visible, but it was in the press, and I remember the readings, the sympathies, and the radio. Fortunately we had access to a radio once in a while, when we could afford the batteries. The Spanish Civil War, the aggression in Austria, the storm clouds brewing over Czechoslovakia - the storm clouds of 1939. Dad would be glued to the radio, to find out what was happening, listening to reports on the war on Poland, expressing dismay at what was happening with the Soviet Molotov-Ribentrop treaty. Not knowing what was happening probably hurt more than anything else.

Dad was worried that I was getting of age that I may be drafted into the army, and I remember the sending off of people who were conscripted into the army, the parties we

had. Then the victory, VE-Day, the end of the War to end all wars, the mass demonstration, without radio, without telephones, when 500 people were massing in a little village like Myrnam without any call. Everybody knew there would be a demonstration in Myrnam. We spent the whole day, and there were only two soldiers from Myrnam that were killed, and their parents. Still, the whole community was united in the joy of victory, in the stories of victory. Then came the Fulton speech, almost declaring the Cold War; that's what he did with the Iron Curtain idea, saying that we shall push 'them' back. Then came the Korean War, and then the Civil War in Vietnam escalating, and the U.S. taking it upon itself. They had massacred the Turks, there wasn't a Turk left. They massacred the Canadians that were there, 1000 of them; the massacred anybody except themselves. During the Vietnam war the partners wouldn't participate, and then, in the aftermath of the Vietnam war, we had Grenada, a new form of McCarthyism, with the lack of freedom to travel. Then, all of a sudden, the march into Prague, and I should've also mentioned the Hungarian events in 1956, and the aftermath, the disruption of a friendly world. Then, when I was in Moscow in January 1979 on business, the Soviet Army was marching into Afghanistan, and we saw the aftermath; 150,000 Ukrainians and Russians killed in that war, and achieving nothing. Then we come to the 1990's bombings, in '91 - Bosnia and other places, all of these things that happened in one lifetime.

Sixty years of war, war and war - is it any wonder that my whole life was dedicated to doing anything and everything towards a peaceful world? How could it have been any other way? Why, somebody always asks me, would a man like you work for the Communist Party? It's because, when we talked about peace and campaigned to save Julius and Ethel Rosenberg from being executed in the U.S. in 1952/'53. You were a communist or you were a peacenik; 'peacenik' was synonymous with Communist. What else was a person supposed to do if he abhorred war, if he had a fear of war? And I do have a fear of war. I was such a gentle guy, I couldn't stand the butchering of a chicken or hog on the farm until I was 22 years old. I never watched it. My brother laughed at me, but I couldn't do it. I never owned a gun in my life, so where was I supposed to go? When I saw what could be achieved, and when I began to understand the dialectics of our developing society, which I gained at the Academy of Sciences in Moscow during that one year where I at least got an introduction to it, I began to equate those two things. What else could I be but a peace activist? That's my epilogue.