

CITY IN DEPRESSION

The Impact of the Years 1929-1939 on
Greater Victoria, British Columbia

by

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We accept this thesis as conforming
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on Greater Victoria, British Columbia

ABSTRACT

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This M.A. thesis written at the University of Victoria during 1968-69 seeks to determine the causes, nature and effects of the Great Depression of 1929-1939 on the important Western Canadian metropolitan centre of Greater Victoria, British Columbia. Comprised of four municipalities - Victoria City, Esquimalt, Oak Bay and Saanich - Greater Victoria had an image of itself as an affluent, conservative, geographically isolated urban centre. Furthermore, the capital city region had, from the turn of the century, become less and less important in relation to its larger, burgeoning sister, Greater Vancouver; which in turn provided a perfect opportunity for life in the Island community to become even more insular than it had before.

As the critical decade of the 1930's began, however, events forced Victorians to discard their protective cocoon in order to survive as a city. Compounding their difficulties, the city's overall economic decline was broad and swift; while recovery, when it finally did occur between 1933 and 1939, was

slow and sporadic. In the early years of the Depression, however, many citizens in the area still tended to regard their fundamental economic and social problems as local ones; and therefore, attempted to marshal local resources in the forms of charities, municipal governments, and service organizations so as to bring a measure of relief to everyone. Yet their efforts were not enough. Sometimes, as in the case of Victoria City for example, there were insufficient economic and financial resources on hand.

Thus Victorians, together with their neighbours elsewhere in British Columbia, turned towards higher levels of government for immediate assistance and an overall solution to the economic crisis. In the 1933 provincial election and in the 1935 Canadian general election, the pattern of their voting shifted to the left. Nor were the voters to be disappointed, for, the new provincial government, under the capable and imaginative leadership of T. D. Pattullo, pressed forward with a series of social and economic reforms as well as major employment-creating programmes, which, coupled with the general upswing in the provincial economy, ultimately brought Greater Victoria and other centres out of the worst levels of depression by 1938.

But the activities of the provincial government were to have an even more profound effect on the capital city region: as government grew in importance and strength in the Thirties, so did Greater Victoria grow in its influence as a metropolitan centre. Moreover, because the 1930's were in reality the

beginning of what was to become the phenomenal presence of government in the lives of British Columbians through the next three decades, Victoria forever left behind its position as a relatively weak and minor urban centre when contrasted to Vancouver. Still, the Depression had hurt the capital city region - despite its obvious windfall shown above. Ten years of underdeveloped municipal growth combined with untold social misery had to have a severe effect. Yet of all the larger urban centres in Western Canada, Greater Victoria probably suffered least in this instance too.

A subject such as this one was relatively easy to research in that a remarkable amount of primary source material was available through the British Columbia Provincial Library and Archives; the four municipal halls, offices of local institutions, and through the writer personally interviewing a score of persons who had lived through the Depression in the area. Organizing the thesis, however, presented a few difficulties since it was to be both a socio-economic study of an important urban centre in a time of its greatest crisis which extended over a full decade, as well as an attempt to discover the significance that the lowest level of government - the municipality - had in the events of that time. Basically this has been accomplished by dividing the thesis into two major time periods: decline, 1929-1932; and recovery, 1933-1939. In each of these, three chapters are devoted to the economics, the politics and the social effects on the area.

music

Extensive statistical tables, an outline of the city's historical growth, a discussion of the Depression in Canada, and a comparison of Vancouver and Victoria in 1929 are provided in four appendices.

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INTRODUCTION

In his history, Canadians in the Making, Arthur Lower has thus conveniently differentiated economic from social history. To him, economic history is the story of how men have affected their environment, whereas social history is concerned with how their environment has influenced them. Although these categories may not be fully applicable to the following study, they have served as basic guidelines in what largely constitutes a socio-economic history of a metropolitan centre in Western Canada during the Great Depression of 1929-1939. More specifically, this thesis is an examination of the economic, political and social impacts of that depression on Greater Victoria between the years 1929 and 1933; as well as an analysis of the area's economic recovery and the political realignments and social upheavals it underwent from 1933 to 1939.

Among the reasons for choosing this subject as a thesis, several stand out, all of relatively equal importance. First, a cursory examination of the source material available indicated that it should be more than adequate. In addition, there were individuals accessible in the area who had held places of significance during the Depression years, whose knowledge could be tapped in interviews, and used to cross-check or amplify data discovered. Second, as part of the important task of assessing the effects of the Depression on the major Province of British Columbia, Greater Victoria,

the second largest urban centre in the province with a population of over 60,000 during the 1930's, warranted a detailed examination of its own. Third, Victoria's unique status as the capital city meant at least two things: that the level of political activity tended to be quite high; and that the city occupied a special position at the focus of governmental attempts to deal with the Depression. And finally, there was the fact that Victoria was a distinctive community in its own right, with its own natural and economic environment, its own social structure and outlook - not to mention its own image of itself as a conservative and somewhat favoured centre. Investigations were to show, indeed, that that image began to turn sour as the Thirties passed, though it was not to be wholly discarded.

But investigations into what many have called, "the critical decade of the 1930's", also disclosed that somehow, Canadian historians had tended to ignore a most important feature of the period: the role of the cities in relation to the aspirations and problems of their citizens. Moreover, works that dealt primarily with national or provincial aspects - on this leader or on that policy - usually interpreted the flow of events as going from top to bottom; that is, from the legislature to the city hall, and ultimately, down to the individual citizen. In truth, however, a reverse flow was more often the case; and as a consequence, the municipalities became very important intermediaries in the relations between the people and their

leaders in Victoria and Ottawa. To leave unexamined this central position that the cities already held in the life of the nation during the Thirties would be tantamount to misunderstanding the extent and nature of the Great Depression in Canada. Furthermore, as will be seen, more and more of the burdens imposed by the economic and social impacts of the Depression's early years fell upon the municipalities; and it was largely the efforts put forth by civic as well as provincial authorities which enabled the people of the capital city region to survive the worst disaster in its history. Hence this thesis is designed in large part to provide an insight into the importance of municipal functions and civic affairs in Greater Victoria during the long period of crisis.

In order to accomplish this task, and to give as comprehensive an analysis as possible of the causes and effects of significant events in the area during that time, the thesis has been divided into two major time periods. The period of decline, 1929-1932, constitutes the first half; while the second, 1933-1939, focuses broadly speaking, on the period of recovery. In both instances the economic, political and social developments in the city have been dealt with in that order. These divisions, of course, are artificial and they naturally overlap, but it is hoped that the reader will perceive the convenience of this form of organization for himself as he proceeds. For now, it is sufficient to say that economic events are largely taken

first as basic and social responses as flowing therefrom. The chapters on politics, moreover, provide links to bridge the two - just as politics were increasingly used during the Depression in Greater Victoria to organize the economic resources at hand in order to meet the social needs of the people at large.

The methods employed in researching and writing this thesis were those customarily used by most students of history. Nothing really out of the ordinary was encountered; except perhaps for the fact that there were not one but four municipalities to deal with in the capital city region: Victoria, Esquimalt, Oak Bay, and Saanich. This necessitated a quadrupling of effort in covering Greater Victoria, in the examination of city reports, financial statements, council minutes, correspondence, and the like. A few difficulties were experienced, moreover, in attempts to fathom the meaning of certain financial statements, particularly with regard to determining exactly how much money was spent in a municipality for a given year on unemployment relief. Indeed, a thesis might well be written in itself on the varied methods followed and the potentialities for confusion in city financial statements.

As for this one, a great deal of primary and secondary source material was readily made available to the writer. Each of the four municipal clerks in Greater Victoria gave complete access to all the material that they held from that period. This equally was true of the Provincial

Library and Archives, as well as the Victoria Law Courts, the City of Victoria Archives, the Victoria Public Library, the Victoria Chamber of Commerce, and several other local institutions. In fact, the bibliography of this thesis does not show by any means the full extent of the sources available to anyone wishing to write upon the Depression in British Columbia; although it is hoped that it is fully adequate for a study on Greater Victoria during that period.

One feature of this study that has caused some technical difficulties bears explanation now. As was mentioned before, Greater Victoria was (and is) made up of four major municipalities. To have singled out the City of Victoria alone for study would have been to ignore some very basic and important features of the effects of those years on what was essentially an interlocking urban area with its own distinct economy and social milieu. There will be times, however, when only Victoria City is being dealt with below, and if so, the terms, "City", "Victoria City", or the "City of Victoria" will be used. Greater Victoria, on the other hand, may be referred to as, "Victoria", "the capital city region", "the city", or "Greater Victoria". The term "municipality" is normally reserved for each of the three outlying communities; although "municipal", when used as an adjective, can be applied to any or all of the four, while "municipalities" can be too. Similarly, when the word "Province" is employed, it means the specific Province of British Columbia in an official or governmental

sense; whereas the term "province", refers to the general life functions extant within the territorial limits.

As a final note, I would like to thank Dr. J. M. S. Careless for his kind assistance and sincere interest in advising me on the preparation of this thesis.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT: 1929-1932

GRADUATE ENGINEER (CIVIL) MARRIED, ENGLISH, 8 YEAR'S experience in extensive engineering works, surveying (land and buildings) seeks work of any kind. Will do anything until better times come. Capable draughtsman. Box 432.

Classified advertisements such as this one listed in the Victoria Daily Times on May 13, 1931 were becoming so common in the third year of the Depression that whoever submitted it hardly matters. Still, it is a useful indicator of job conditions in the Island city, for a cursory analysis might suggest the following circumstances: Professionals could not readily obtain work in their chosen fields. Married men with considerable occupational experience were unemployed in relatively large numbers. One's ethnic background was considered to be important when seeking employment. The construction industry was severely depressed. Finally, men recognized that during those "bad times", any job was better than none which in turn might imply that a long period of stagnation was expected.

Since all of this indeed was true, the Depression's economic impact on Victoria must therefore be seen from various angles. One perspective would lie in examining the wide-ranging financial and trading problems affecting every Canadian city at the time, including Greater Victoria. More to the point perhaps, is an investigation of the business and labour distress in the area. Moreover, what most

differentiated Victoria from other Canadian centres during this period was the economic legacy that it had from the first three decades of this century - an inheritance that came perilously close to providing the coup de grace to Victoria City's finances by 1932. Still further, any study concerning the effect of the Depression on the city must take into account the underlying constitutional and administrative relationships at work between various levels of government in the federal system - particularly those of the provinces with municipalities. In this regard, it is hard to imagine centres like Victoria as being in a worse financial or legal position than they were in 1932, when they had to face severe economic pressures such as high relief costs, widespread unemployment, falling revenues and prohibitive debt charges on the narrow base of authority provided them by the existing constitutional structure.

In 1929, before the Depression came, Victoria could not be regarded as the typical Canadian city any more than was British Columbia a typical Canadian province. Vancouver, five times larger in population than Victoria, could, however, be likened to other major urban industrial centres in Ontario and Quebec. Yet even the Mainland city was more fully dependent upon primary products and commodity trade than Montreal or Toronto, particularly on Prairie wheat and on western mines and forests. Additionally, Vancouver held a central position in the economy of the province, influencing every other centre, including Victoria. But when Prairie

wheat exports slumped in 1932 to thirty-two percent of their 1929 levels, the port of Vancouver's share of the trade dropped correspondingly.¹

The port of Victoria served much lesser ends. Her export share was only 1.7 percent of the provincial total in 1929, though imports constituted 9.4 percent. Obviously this poor import-export ratio in comparison to mainland centres could have been attributed in large part to geography. Victoria was likely to ship only Island products and had to import everything else that she required. In short, Victoria could never have become a serious competitor of Vancouver for the provincial trade in commodities. The same was true in the realms of industry and finance. The 1800 plants operating in Vancouver during 1928 produced goods and services worth \$94,131,608 while those in Victoria (a total of 370) achieved proportionately less production valued at \$13,585,956. Bank clearings for the same year in Victoria were \$151,226,000 or 10.4 percent of the provincial total of \$1,445,640,000. Vancouver, on the other hand, cleared \$1,243,625,000 or a staggering 84.7 percent.²

Both metropolitan centres dominated the economic life of their respective hinterlands although Vancouver's region was much greater than Victoria's and indeed, the Island city in many respects could be regarded as being little more than a satellite of her larger sister. How true this was and how crucial it became when depression struck late in 1929 is not always clear, but various effects could soon be seen.

The Depression itself was world-wide of course, but because nations highly industrialized or dependent to a great degree on external trade proved to be the most vulnerable in a severe economic downswing, Canada found itself in the worst period of national distress in its history. The collapse of world markets during 1929-30 brought immediate effects to Vancouver as a port, and the lack of purchases for provincial resources hit hard at the Mainland city's industry, labour, and capital. Victoria, an integral part of this provincial economy through investments, services, and supplementary industry, quickly experienced a corresponding decline. Within her own hinterland of southern Vancouver Island, coal, timber, and fish production slowed for a lack of local buyers and investors while declines in Mainland sales ruined many Island stockholders and left many more in danger of losing their investments. As demands for goods and services slackened in Vancouver, Island producers lost markets almost overnight that they had come to depend upon. The Greater Victoria area could not fill the gap; the first instances of labour lay-offs occurred in late November, 1929. By December bread lines were beginning to form in both cities and itinerants from smaller centres no longer had any success in finding steady work in the metropolitan areas of British Columbia.

Nor was this all. Included in the initial shock was the reduction of government revenues throughout the province as citizens hesitated before purchasing licences or paying non-mandatory fees. Tax revenues also fell, particularly as the

early months of 1930 approached. Victoria as the seat of provincial government awakened more rapidly to the prospects of what might become a financial crisis in provincial administration. Its civil servants had to devote themselves to an increasing number of queries that passed across their desks from concerned citizens.³

Even if Victorians were attuned more to signs that signalled trouble for their own particular city and might be forgiven if they occasionally tended to ignore those symptoms of economic malaise that were common to all Canadians, there is no doubt that a general feeling of anxiety permeated their thoughts during the winter of 1929-1930. The Victoria daily newspapers maintained front page commentary on the stock market and trade at all levels - national, provincial and municipal. Headlines such as those below show the interest and the warnings that Victorians had in this time of impending crisis.

On Saturday, October 26, 1929, the Victoria Daily Times led with: "STOCKS CLOSE TERRIBLE WEEK AT LOW POINT". Monday's headline read: "STOCKS IN UNITED STATES PLUNGE TO NEW LOW LEVELS". Tuesday and Wednesday respectively showed: "STOCKS IN CANADA SKID AS NEW YORK STEADIES", and, "EXCHANGES CLOSE FOR TWO DAY REST". Adding to the confusion and anxiety, conflicting pronouncements by political and financial leaders assailed Victorians throughout November and December: "B. C. Leads All In Opportunities Says [Prime Minister] King";⁴ or, "Mayor Defends Policy of Reasonable Borrowing".⁵ Editorials such as

"Nothing Wrong With Canada"⁶ and the Imperial Bank of Canada's year end "Review" for 1929 stressed that Canadian business was still sound.⁷

Alarmed citizens might be soothed by encouraging headlines or public statements - certainly they were seeking reassurance from their leaders - but the increasing number of bad reports that the newspapers could not avoid printing seemed to be more based on facts. As a consequence, a worried attitude of wait-and-see took hold in Victoria. By January, 1930 the degree of doubt and confusion was apparent. The federal Minister of Labour claimed that an unemployment conference was not needed as Canada was "in better shape than the United States".⁸ Mayor H. Anscomb of Victoria City was quoted as saying that building increases would allow for a one mill tax reduction in 1930. The chief executive officer of the Canadian Pacific Railway claimed that despite grain problems, industrial and commercial activity in Western Canada were increasing steadily and he could only be optimistic.

But the City of Victoria's mill rate was reduced by only point five and on February 11, the Opposition in British Columbia's legislature strongly criticized the Conservative government of W. F. Tolmie for incurring ten million dollars more of debt in the past eighteen months.⁹ Subsequent articles in the Victoria press during February and March spoke of trouble in all primary industries. Fish packing and forest products appeared the most vulnerable of all. Demonstrations by unemployed men in Vancouver on January 27, 1930, had

followed an unemployment conference in that city; but little hope for direct and immediate action was held.¹⁰ Canadian agricultural declines could not be rationalized away for the extent of failure on the Prairies was patently obvious. Reports from eastern centres began to fit a general pattern and Victorians, by the Spring of 1930, realized that their country was in a serious state.

Furthermore and more disquieting, western areas appeared to be in for the worst time of all. Little consolation could be taken from the view that each city would survive more or less as the basic industries which supported it fared. The initial months of the Depression showed that a decline in one region would ultimately affect all. Indeed, for conditions during the early Thirties in the Dominion, a later statement by W. L. Morton was as meaningful as any:

Although Canadians contributed to the depression by the policies of their government and their own activities, this catastrophe, like all the other crises of Canadian history, had its origins outside Canada. The country was as helpless as a canoe drawn into the current of a rapid.¹¹

If so, British Columbia could be compared to a small log while municipalities such as Victoria, Saanich, Oak Bay and Esquimalt would be but branches or twigs - just as inexorably drawing to the threshold of disaster. The first effects of the Depression on Victoria thus were psychological as much as they were economic. A brief upswing in local sales and employment figures in the summer of 1930 was due primarily to seasonal factors. Any hopes incurred were quickly dispelled

as autumn set in and another Prairie wheat crop went unsold. Victorians, no longer confused as to the scope and nature of the Depression, were as anxious and as discouraged as any others, for even if they suspected that their city was more fortunate than most, the very economic strength of their nation was obviously endangered; the nation that the vast majority of its citizens loved dearly.¹²

As the knowledge of widespread depression took root in the capital city region of British Columbia, a second and perhaps more profound realization began to form. Business and labour difficulties seemed to develop in even the most secure markets and unions. The construction trade (as good an example as any to illustrate the interdependence of resources, labour, and capital in the province) slackened almost immediately. While building permits for Victoria City had reached a high of \$3,862,681 in 1930, it was only \$120,000 more than the 1929 level. In fact for several years running during the late Twenties, the growth of construction industry in the City had been remarkable. Yet in 1931, permits were granted for \$1,898,262 and in 1932, only \$389,673 × or a drop of 90.6 percent in two years!¹³ The same was true of neighbouring municipalities although Saanich, having less restrictions in its building codes, marked a lesser decline.¹⁴

Why was there such a drastic fall? One might expect that a certain amount of building activity would be curtailed, but skilled labour was plentiful; materials were literally over,

the next hill; investment monies and salaries had not altogether evaporated by 1932. Since the answer does not lie in supply, it has to lie in demand. Despite the considerable affluence at hand in Victoria, many people were living before the Depression at a somewhat marginal level. Thus if wages, dividends and profits were cut by only ten percent, savings (or that unused portion of personal income that did not go into immediate consumption and that could be utilized for investment or large down payments) would be reduced severely. In other words, who could afford to build a house, apartment or store when the mortgage moved just beyond one's grasp? Interest rates, prices, labour costs and legal fees did not budge from their 1929 levels. Contractors, more ready to lay men off than cut wages and thereby face a union outcry (or, for that matter, make less profit for equal work done by cutting prices) simply were not flexible enough to meet the downward shift in demand for new units. Consequently the local building industry almost collapsed by 1932. Lamentably, price and wage rigidity was rife in every other industry too throughout the municipalities of the Greater Victoria region.

Psychologically the reasons are clear enough. Who would want to sacrifice any income, real or imagined, when the future was very seriously in doubt? Which sector could act unilaterally and unopposed to bring costs down? Labour leaders? Not likely . . . they might allow a number of lay-offs to slip by, but they would be quick to defend the

wages of the more senior workers. Landlords? Even less chance, because they worked independently and isolated reductions of rents could only hurt the man who chose to cut. Businessmen? Perhaps; at least there existed traditional agencies that could provide leadership for such a venture - the Victoria Chamber of Commerce being the most noteworthy in 1929. Unfortunately the record of this body, along with various city councils, was not a happy one; particularly from 1910 to 1929. The reasons for this will be discussed later since they are important in other connections, but for now it is sufficient to say that Victoria City always had an inordinate number of small businesses and many of the proprietors were undoubtedly too often of the most restless and fanciful type.

For the period 1930 to 1932, the Victoria Chamber of Commerce directed its efforts towards four main goals: acquiring new industries in the area¹⁵; persuading higher levels of government to spend money in the region¹⁶; protecting local commerce from encroachment by non-residents¹⁷; and inspiring "make work" campaigns. Only in the last instance, however, could their attempts be counted as enlightened and to a considerable degree, successful.¹⁸ In any case, at no time during the initial years of the Depression did price cutting become an avowed policy of the Chamber. Certainly its members could be accused of ineptitude or unimaginativeness - but not greed as many of the merchants lived very close to

the margin themselves. A general city-wide price cut of, say, ten percent might in a month or two stimulate trade considerably, but not every shopowner could hold out long enough to benefit from so radical a move. Instead, prices remained as they were and customers bought less and less, until in desperation the merchants, one by one, were forced to cut prices. Ironically it was too late. No real stimulus was provided. People simply accepted lower costs as a lucky break and continued to live at the levels to which they had by then become accustomed. Thus began one of the sorriest chapters of the times, that is, the failure of the small businessman and the closing of a field of opportunity.

A brief glance at the city directory in 1929 would have furnished the most discerning shopper with a lengthy list of speciality shops catering to whatever needs he might have had. Three features stand out. First, since Victoria was a port ^x and many of her citizens involved in the import trade, they _↓ tended to bring in unusual and quality wares in addition to those goods normally in demand. Second - and this is linked to the first point - tourists arriving in large numbers would be interested in novelty and quality items of a relatively small size. This type of demand could be handled easily because large warehouse facilities were not necessary and shopkeepers simply had to keep a reasonably sized stock on their own premises. Third, because Victoria was a favourite ^x retirement area for men of the administrative and military ranks of the British Empire as well as a haven for elderly

Canadians escaping a more severe climate^{*}, the needs and wants of many residents were diverse and very distinctive. Some merchants survived solely on the basis of supplying these elements of the population, and this in part accounts for the large number of retail outlets in the city.

Surprisingly, the speciality merchants appear to have had a most tenacious hold upon their businesses. Comparing the commercial listings in almost all categories between 1929 and 1932 in the various Greater Victoria Directories, one finds that rarely is there a turnover of more than ten percent of proprietor listings in speciality shops or in specific individual trades such as barbers, bakers, druggists, dressmakers, music teachers, and shoe repairmen. People in these categories may have had to close their doors and attempt to find other jobs (either in their trade or out of it) but if at all possible, they would remain where they were, accepting smaller profits from declining sales. Persons owning or leasing a business that was particularly competitive, or where little differentiation existed between themselves and another proprietor across the street, fared less well, however.

Automobile garages, restaurants, grocery stores, contractors and other businesses of a similar nature were likely to have several owners in this four year period. As 1930 passed, more and more of these establishments went under, as their occupants, no longer able to maintain day to day affairs, advertised their shops for sale. Men who might

have bought a small business in more normal times did not relish the prospect of coming to eventual bankruptcy themselves. Hence, a fear of loss together with actual loss combined to cripple the retail trade of Greater Victoria in the earliest years of the Depression.¹⁹

The same was true in the fields of investments, real estate and insurance. The city Directories showed considerable changes in the names of representative agents. Major realtors survived (often because their salesmen worked on a commission basis only) but the small real estate company found the competition very severe and many had to cease operating. While stocks were anathema, bonds, promising long-term growth and an element of stability, were often oversubscribed.²⁰ Victoria stockbrokers, their ranks decimated between 1930 and 1932 by bankruptcies and convictions for fraud,²¹ joined with other agents in the financial arena to service what was by early 1932 the most lucrative market: bonds and guaranteed securities. Federal government bonds were considered best of all by people in Victoria, while provincial and municipal issues found favour in that order. At the other end of the investment scale lay debentures, warrants, common stocks and transactions on the grain market. Mining stocks traded at Vancouver fared somewhat better - especially in golds - for of all British Columbia's primary industries, mineral production suffered least.²²

Money then, was available. The problem was in motivating people to spend it when they most assuredly were loath to do so. Moreover, as discussed above, the fault was not in some parsimonious attitude that had descended gloomily over the capital city; rather it was a genuine fear that money spent would be money lost. Strengthening this assessment of theirs^o were the City's antecedents in its financial life, for if ever a small urban area could be termed a "big spender", Victoria City was it - even when she could ill afford it.

As recently as 1922 the City Fathers had appointed an outstanding Canadian financial and economic expert, Dr. Adam Shortt, to assess the extent of difficulties that the City then was facing and directed him to make specific recommendations on how to solve them. Despite Shortt's accurate, extensive and often brutally frank assessment, very few of his suggestions were applied in the years up to 1930. If anything, those faults he perceived, and which are summarized below, had by the end of the decade, become even more severe for the City of Victoria.

1. Low taxes, heavy expenditures on local improvements, and inadequate fiscal safeguards during the "boom period" of 1909-1912 were at the root of the current (1922) crisis.²³

2. Assessed values of land were seven times market values while tax arrears (including those lost through land acquired in tax sales) were much too high. Further, arrears were increasing as did the number of lots falling to tax sale each year.

3. Any "single tax" on land (such as was Victoria's method) was inadequate and unfair to homeowners.

4. School expenditures were steadily growing thereby causing heavier taxes on land which in turn forced more lots into arrears. Currently the City owned one-eighth of its taxable property and the proportion was increasing making tax sales a "disasterous" policy.

5. The annual finance reports required much improvement and sinking funds had been seriously encroached upon.²⁴

Dr. Shortt's recommendations on these matters were just as succinct, and to most of the city councillors, just as radical since many sacred cows had been singled out for attack.

Fundamentally, Shortt had urged a major revision in the civic tax system. A municipal income tax should replace licencing and personal property taxes. Supplementing this, taxes should be levied on improvements, automobiles, amusements, and land sales profits. Tax arrears should be capitalized and payments extended over fifteen years. Plans had to be formulated to reduce local improvement rates and it behooved the City to avoid acquiring lots at tax sales. Dealings with the provincial government and the handling of the City's finances generally had to become more systematic or the then current problems would only be compounded. Lastly, Shortt claimed that attempts had to be made for "union of Oak Bay, Esquimalt and Saanich with Victoria so that a town planning scheme for the whole area can be implemented."²⁵

To Shortt, "ignorance, neglect and mismanagement" coupled to an "uninterested, unalert citizenry" had caused the City

of Victoria's woes. The city fathers of 1922 accepted the report only with misgivings, however. In the next decade they and subsequent council members effected only the least controversial of Shortt's recommendations. Taxing methods were left unaltered, though attempts were made to gain a stronger position vis-a-vis the provincial government. Similarly, the financial statements were improved upon. But this relative failure to act in the seven years between 1922 and 1929 would come to haunt the City in Depression in a way that few had ever envisioned.

By 1929, the financial conditions of Victoria City and the surrounding municipalities varied considerably one from another. The reasons for this variance, as seen above, was in large part historical, but perhaps equally important were such demographic factors as size of population and the spacial distribution of industries throughout the area as well as the relative affluence of the citizens in each of the four communities. While it is intended to devote considerable attention to these differences and how they affected political and social life in subsequent chapters of this thesis, some mention must be made at this time regarding the various municipal budgetary policies of 1929.

In December of that year, Victoria's Mayor H. Anscorb claimed, "Collections of current taxes amounted to 91% being the highest percentage of collections for many years. It is satisfactory to note that for the first time for many years all sinking funds are up to requirements."²⁶ From this point

he proceeded to applaud construction increases, sales of city-owned properties, and business growth in general. The city councillors genuinely believed that prosperity was there to stay, and increased expenditures on public works and other services were planned for 1930. Anscomb's statement below reflects the optimism felt then by most Victorians.

May the coming year see a continuance of the friendly spirit existing amongst all responsible for the administration of civic affairs and be filled with abundant happiness for all our citizens.²⁷

Similar confidence was prevalent in Oak Bay, Esquimalt, and particularly in Saanich where Reeve W. Couch enthusiastically wrote:

. . . the year just past has been a most outstanding and progressive one. The percentage of taxes has been maintained, also the amount of building permits has been a record. Our financial position is second to none in the Province.²⁸

But 1930 was not so good; and 1931 and 1932 were still worse in terms of civic budgets and public works programmes. The percentage of taxes collected in Saanich fell from 90.72% in 1929 to 82.67% in 1932. Victoria City faced even graver conditions as the drop was from 91.00% to 82.32%. Oak Bay, primarily a residential area, suffered a loss from 93.04% to 87.20%. Percentages for Esquimalt are not available, but where outstanding taxes there in 1929 had totalled \$19,394, by 1932, \$51,428 was owed. Increasing the strain on the taxpayer, mill rates literally "jumped" during these years. Saanich's rates moved from 28 mills to 42. Esquimalt's from 28 to 30.2. The City of Victoria, having

struck an almost prohibitive rate of 41 in 1929, could only edge up slightly to 41.5. Oak Bay alone, with most of her roads paved and sewers in by 1929, experienced a decrease in mill rates. Its lucky residents paid a mill rate of 27.0 in 1929 and 26.5 in 1932.²⁹

Civic revenues fell too, because of decreasing payments in licences and fees, as had those of the provincial government. Completing the other half of the financial picture - expenditures - there can be no doubt that the Depression was a two-edged blade. With commercial decline came unemployment, and this was accompanied by increased expenditures for municipalities on direct and unemployment relief.

Though accustomed to providing generous amounts to local charities and other agencies engaged in alleviating the condition of the destitute and infirm, the Greater Victoria area could not by itself handle all the demands created by large-scale unemployment. In Victoria City alone, unemployment relief work increased from \$69,524 in 1930 to \$164,143 in 1932. When direct relief costs were added to the latter figure the result was an expenditure of \$216,793 or 8.5% of the City's budget.³⁰

Schemes for civic projects and public works were left on the drawing boards. Council members in each city hall held meetings, formed relief committees, and heard representations from a growing list of individuals and organizations seeking aid; but they could promise little.

Charities, agencies, and community minded citizens turned their energies toward the fast growing numbers of unfortunates, but they too had difficulty in providing sufficient assistance. The winter of 1932-1933 was economically the worst on record; a fact compounded by three years of diminishing resources, whether in money, confidence, or hope. Business had failed to solve the crisis. Municipal governments simply could not take the strain, and as a result, demands for relief and reconstruction were increasingly made upon higher levels of government.

CHAPTER I FOOTNOTES

1 The port of Vancouver shipped 73,984,114 bushels of grain in 1929. For the same year 2,759,144 barrels of flour; 1,398,525 cases of canned fish; and 501,463,056 board feet of lumber were exported from the Mainland city. The Panama Canal of course contributed greatly to the importance of Vancouver as a Pacific port. The long tons of freight from British Columbia shipped via the canal in 1929 totalled, 2,846,000 - a figure almost triple that for 1925. B. C. Manual of Provincial Information, Victoria, K. P., 1930, pp. 166-201 and Wrigley's British Columbia Directory, 1930, Vancouver, p. 665. Exports from B. C. reached \$237,584,000 in 1929. Of this, Vancouver contributed \$181,220,000 or 77%. (Loc. cit.) See also appendix "D", Table III.

2 B. C. Manual of Provincial Information, 1930, pp. 260-280. In this instance Victoria's share reflected more closely her proportion of the provincial population. The Canadian Decennial Census of 1921 shows Greater Victoria as having approximately 60,200 souls or 11.58% of 524,582, the Provincial total. By 1931 Victoria's portion was 10.31%. For a more detailed comparison of these two cities see Appendix "B". See also Appendix "D", Tables II, and IV.

3 Mr. E. E. Griffiths, Victoria. Interview with the writer, August 15, 1968.

4 W. L. Mackenzie King, the Canadian Prime Minister, was currently conducting a tour of the western provinces. Below these notes of optimism however, were items such as "U.S. Senate Seeks Higher Farm Duties" (Nov. 16); "Liberal Leader Sees Deficit" (Nov. 29); and, "Worst Break Since Great Smash" (Dec. 12).

5 Victoria Daily Times, December 4, 1929, p. 2.

6 Ibid., December 5, 1929, p. 4.

7 Loc. cit.

8 Ibid., December 17, 1929, p. 2.

9 Ibid., January 7 and February 11, 1929, p. 1.

10 Ibid., January 18, 1930, p. 3. Resolutions resulting from this conference attended by a variety of groups and individuals included: Appeals to the federal and provincial government to co-operate with the municipalities in providing direct and work relief; Suggestions for a public works

programme that would include woodcutting, road building and park maintenance; A demand that immigration be halted. These resolutions and accompanying briefs were distributed widely throughout the western provinces.

11 The Kingdom of Canada, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1963, pp. 456-457. See Appendix "A" for various interpretations of the nature, causes and extent of the Depression per se. For now, the (signal) foreign influence on the Canadian economy in the five years prior to, and during the early Depression years, was the United States. Commonwealth countries from 1931 onward became increasingly important to Canada's recovery as various trade agreements resulting from periodic conferences held in Ottawa, London and elsewhere were put into effect. Yet those agreements always seemed to fall short of expectations (with the notable exception of B. C. lumber trade to Britain after 1932). Each member nation sought to protect its own immediate interests first, then co-operate in realms of freer trade.

12 Victoria's reputation as the "most English" of all Canadian cities is deceptive to a large degree. The traditional presence of Imperial and national troops at Esquimalt together with the high percentage of enlistments from southern Vancouver Island during the Great War left a legacy of patriotism towards Canada and not just the Empire. Lt. Gen. Sir Arthur Currie, the Canadian Corps commander, had been a native of Victoria and as a recent article by Robert England points out, hundreds of Currie's comrades in arms filled the downtown streets of Victoria during the Twenties. Victorians generally regarded their city as a Pacific anchor for the nation. ("A Victoria Real Estate Man - The Empire of Sir Arthur Currie", Queen's Quarterly, 1958, 45:2, pp. 209-211.)

13 City of Victoria, Building Inspector, Annual Reports, 1926-1932.

14 Construction in Oak Bay during 1929 reached a level exceeded only by the peak year of 1913. New units in Esquimalt totalled \$77,810 in 1929 (another peak year) but fell to only \$22,400 by 1932. Both municipalities were primarily residential but the latter on its adjacent waters had a considerable amount of light industry. Oak Bay and Esquimalt, Treasurers', Financial Statements, 1928-1932. See also Appendix "D", Tables XIII, and XXIV.

15 The most striking example of this tactic was seen in the Chamber of Commerce's demand for a seaplane base to be located in the Inner Harbour adjacent to the Empress Hotel. The Chamber expected that an initial investment of \$120,000 and a payroll for fourteen families would result. The C.N.R. and C.P.R. presidents objected ostensibly on the grounds that

aircraft would present a hazard to harbour navigation. It was a scheme that the City would not relinquish even after the Minister of Marine claimed that it was "not in the public interest to lease waterfront lots for such a purpose". (Eventually Victoria did acquire a floating seaplane base but it seems that Chamber efforts during the years 1929-1932 could have been better spent on other projects). Victoria Chamber of Commerce, Minutes of the Board, November 17, 1930, p. 378.

16 In one instance Mr. Beatty, M.L.A., asked the board of directors of the Victoria Chamber to support him in several measures he had recently put before the legislature; namely construction of a new courthouse, beautification of Victoria, completion of the "Ocean Highway" to Ucluelet, and abolition of the succession duties tax. The Board formed committees for the first two appeals. Ibid., March 14, 1930, p. 308.

17 On one occasion a member suggested that "an effort be made to terminate the sale of refreshments commonly known as Hot Dogs on the streets of the City." (Ibid., July 28, 1930, p. 342). This was directed towards a very successful Saanich interloper and it is by no means the only case of this nature. Support of a "Buy Canadian Goods" campaign in mid 1930 was readily subscribed to.

18 In particular the "Emergency Employment Plan" of mid-1932 saw 600 volunteers canvas 14,000 Greater Victoria homes in order to obtain pledges from the homeowners for a general "clean-up" campaign. The response was outstanding and both residents and job-seekers saw the city transformed into brightly painted rows of cottages, trimmed lawns, and clipped hedges.

19 Wrigley's British Columbia Directory and Greater Victoria Directory for the years 1929-1932 and 1933-1934 respectively.

20 On November 23, 1931 a federal "National Service Loan" for \$150,000,000 was, in seven days, oversubscribed by 40%. Encouraged, the government converted \$650,000,000 in its own bonds to a lower interest rate, which according to the Canada Year Book, of 1931, "showed the unshakable faith of Canadians in the future of this country at a time when some manifestation of confidence was most desired." (p. 996).

21 Fraud and later conspiracy charges had become so common in Victoria and other cities by April 1930 that legislation in the form of the "Stock Frauds Act" (B. C. Statutes, 1930-1935) required registration of all stocks

sold. Victoria Daily Times, April 28, 1930, p. 1. Many prominent citizens of Greater Victoria were convicted on these charges and the two daily newspapers in the early months of 1930 seemed to carry at least one item per week on this subject; thereby further reducing the confidence of the public in the stockmarket.

22 Coal mining was one sector that did not escape. The Crow's Nest Pass region was severely depressed and coal producers on Vancouver Island fared little better although markets existed in the Vancouver and Victoria areas for their coal. W. Sloan, "The Crow's Nest Pass Area and the Depression", Victoria, Univ. of Victoria, M.A. thesis, July 1968, (passim) and Canadian Decennial Census, 1941, vol. 1, p. 633.

23 For an indication of the extent of this "boom" and a brief outline of Victoria's growth between 1862 and 1928 see Appendix "C".

24 Dr. Adam Shortt, Report Investigating The Financial Condition of the City of Victoria, B. C., Victoria, 1922, pp. 6-53.

25 Ibid., p. 58.

26 City of Victoria, Mayor, Annual Report, 1929, p. 3.

27 Ibid., p. 5.

28 Municipality of Saanich, Reeve, Annual Report, 1929, p. 1.

29 City of Victoria and Municipalities of Esquimalt, Oak Bay, and Saanich, Financial Statements, 1929-1932. See also Appendix "D", Tables XIX, XXIV, and XXVII.

30 City of Victoria, Treasurer's Reports, 1930-1932. Provincial and federal grants that were designed to defray upwards of two-thirds of the total relief costs to the municipalities are not included in these totals.

Debt charges on bonds issued to provide monies for relief became another serious menace to city finances. The table below indicates the type of trap that Victoria was caught in:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Debt</u>	<u>Extension Securities</u>	<u>Brokerage</u>	<u>Interest</u>
1930	\$487,534	\$230,921	\$6,500	\$19,000
1931	527,541	299,540	5,000	25,000
1932	560,039	314,774	6,500	52,500

CHAPTER TWO

THE POLITICAL IMPACT: 1929-1932.

Business worries, financial depression and other alleged signs of the times were forgotten and Victoria . . . bid farewell to the Old Year with all its memories and welcomed 1931 with traditional revelry and a promising crop of resolutions 1

The revelry passed quickly as January lengthened, but the prospect of resolutions would have for politicians a new and most ironic slant.

One of the most distinct characteristics of pre-Depression politics in Greater Victoria had been the individualistic approach to specific issues. Numerous election campaigns in the area had served as ready transmitters for each single voice. The passing of resolutions assuredly was a common practice of the city's established associations and parties of the day, while public petitions were circulated from time to time; but in the late years of the Twenties, their tone was generally positive, seeking constructive ends to specific and usually local problems. A tradesman in Esquimalt might support a union resolution calling for "beer by the glass", while a retired merchant in Oak Bay would agree to a church resolution demanding stricter liquor control in the province. Both men, however, were likely to sign a petition directed towards the British Columbia Electric Railway Company for increased streetcar service in their respective communities.

By and large such demands were met, although often in a much modified form. Citizens had thus come to believe in the

political methods available to them as individuals, just as they had placed their trust in the business community to safeguard economic growth. Yet when the Depression deepened, it became apparent that individuals, no matter how able, were not equal to the task of halting the decline and alleviating the growing human distress. By early 1930, collective action became more and more favoured in Greater Victoria as a method in provincial and municipal politics.

For those not in office, concerted efforts began with a heavy increase of meetings to draft resolutions; followed later by delegations presenting demands to officials of the provincial government and civic councils in the capital city region.² Demonstrations occurred next - sometimes, as in the City of Vancouver during early 1930, to the extent of lawlessness and violence, until a fear of widespread riots in the streets gripped even the most sanguine political leaders.³

Reactions in ruling circles could have been termed "collective" too - but there the similarity ended. The most obvious and expedient manner for politicians to handle increasing demands for action was to form committees and subcommittees to investigate the needs of those seeking relief. Each of the four municipalities in the capital city region had an unemployment committee by 1930, while council members were as likely as not to be involved in subcommittee work seeking new industries or preparing briefs on civic problems to be presented to the provincial government.⁴ As 1932

approached, however, it was clear that the people and their leaders were drifting further apart in their interpretations of what the role of government should be in the Depression. "Public opinion centered on a desire for direct, imaginative, *! and strong new actions, while politicians attempted to use every traditional (but standstill) means at their command which, if applied, would not risk upsetting the established political and legal structure of the province."

To Victorians, much of the difficulty appeared to stem from a lack of communication between the voters and their leaders. Politicians had never made a determined effort in previous years to educate the public on the constraints inherent in the federal system; instead, each candidate and officeholder assumed a positive stance whenever possible; criticizing other parties and personalities, but only rarely the system of government. As a result of their general ignorance, the citizenry could not be expected to sympathize with leaders who in 1930, blamed structural flaws and claimed to have serious limitations on their own powers. Statements along these lines came to be interpreted as * "buckpassing" or an avoiding of responsibility. Furthermore, occasional scandals involving any provincial or municipal politician, in addition to obvious and abusive uses of patronage, caused many to believe that "all politicians were crooks", which of course further weakened the public's confidence in its representatives.⁵

It might be facetious to claim that Greater Victoria had more politicians per square mile than any other Western Canadian city, but it is not altogether an inaccurate notion. Many of the forty-eight members of the provincial legislative assembly spent as much as one-third of their time in Victoria - some more so. Cabinet ministers resided in the city the year round. The four municipalities each had a mayor or reeve, who in turn presided over a council, as well as various boards and commissions. Each civic government had upwards of sixteen office holders, elected in many cases on a yearly basis. Two senators and one member of parliament claimed Victoria as their home. The customary way to obtain these higher offices was through elections in lesser structures such as chambers of commerce, trade unions, and benevolent societies. It follows then, that during the late Twenties and early Thirties, there was never a lack of elections or a shortage of office-seekers in the capital city - nor did it seem as there ever a paucity of issues, real or imagined.

By December of 1932 public support in Victoria for government leaders and their policies had reached its lowest ebb. Interestingly enough, politicians at the federal and municipal levels had escaped most of the wrath, while members of the legislature, and particularly cabinet ministers in Victoria, were assailed from all sides. The government of British Columbia during the initial years of the Depression, had been the ready target for everyone in the province who demanded change and relief.

In the provincial election of July 18, 1928, voters had brought in a Conservative majority of thirty-five.⁶ Simon Fraser Tolmie, earlier a member of parliament who had represented Saanich, the location of his large farm holdings, became the new Premier of British Columbia. Tolmie could be well pleased, for his party had completely upset the Liberal government elected in 1924. Moreover, provincial parties in the two decades preceding Tolmie's victory, had been notable for their accomplishments in the fields of social and labour legislation. Ranging from the creation of district municipalities in 1906, through such items as minimum wage acts in 1918 and 1925, provincial legislation passed in Victoria had by 1928, developed a basic legal structure to protect workers in the prevailing free enterprise system of the province.⁷ It must have seemed as if British Columbians had but to consolidate their economic growth through a "sensible business-like government", as Tolmie's often claimed itself to be, and the province could coast to glory.

People in Victoria had had special reason to rejoice. Out of the seven seats available to the capital city region in 1928, everyone had been filled by a government member. Furthermore, of these seven, three were cabinet ministers. The backgrounds of these men could be considered significant too. Robert H. Pooley from Esquimalt and Joshua Hinchcliffe of Victoria (the attorney general and minister of education respectively) were both lawyers. Col. Cyrus Peck, V. C., member for The Islands, was a retired army officer.

R. Hayward, Despart Twigg, and J. H. Beatty were all businessmen, and in two instances, had been active in the Victoria Chamber of Commerce. In short, Greater Victoria, and its adjacent communities, with approximately ten percent of the provincial population, had fourteen percent of the members, while its cabinet strength, including the premier, ran to twenty-five percent.

Equally important, its representatives came from almost as narrow segment of the population as possible. Not one man represented fully the interests of labour, civil servants, the poor, youth, or women; and judging from their surnames, they were not likely to be equally disposed towards all ethnic and religious groups.⁸ Nevertheless, the composition of the legislature in Victoria was not markedly different from other Canadian bodies and the members had every justification in believing that they were eminently suited to govern the province.

The first attack from those not sharing this belief was aimed from Vancouver early in 1930. In January labour leaders in that city requested federal legislation to solve the growing problem of unemployment. The provincial government was expected to contribute sufficient support.⁹ Adding to the pressure, a hastily called conference in Vancouver on unemployment, which was attended by members of several interested groups from throughout the province, urged the provincial and federal cabinets to co-operate fully with the municipalities - especially Vancouver and Victoria -

to rescue workers in danger of losing their jobs as well as to assist those out of work in regaining employment.¹⁰

When a large-scale demonstration in Vancouver by unemployed men was followed in two weeks' time by a demand from the Union of British Columbia Municipalities that the province bear the cost of maintaining city jails, many of the M.L.A.'s who had been observing closely the increase in arrests for misdemeanours, might well have been concerned for law and order in the large urban centres.¹¹

As the winter of 1930 melted into spring, the clamour from the Mainland and up-Island centres subsided. Seasonal employment gains took some of the strain and a brief upswing in sales of primary products occurred. The provincial cabinet busied itself with several schemes, all designed to recoup lost incomes and provide immediate (if temporary) relief to the unfortunate. The most successful activities of the cabinet, however, were in the realms of form rather than substance. Before proceeding to rectify problems presented by the continuing depression, the cabinet called for full-scale investigations which, in more normal times, could easily be justified, but in a time of crisis, increasingly less so. Similarly, attendance at various conferences throughout the country by ministers and senior civil servants might help provincial officials to focus on exactly what the difficulties facing the cities were, but mere discussion did not solve the problems.¹²

As early as January 3, 1930, provincial delegates from Victoria attended an Ottawa conference to discuss proposals to have the natural resources transferred to the Provinces per se. Eventually this transfer was accomplished, but it did little to alleviate conditions in that year. On February 28, Tolmie made a statement to the Victoria press concerning studies into the feasibility of health insurance, public utilities, and increased workmens' compensation benefits.¹³ Unfortunately, no follow-up action was taken as the months went by. Later in the spring, inquiries were undertaken into the price of foodstuffs and a "Stock Frauds Act" was designed to protect the consumer. As costs for relief mounted and revenues fell, however, bond issues were believed by the cabinet to be the most sensible method of raising funds to assist the municipalities like those in Greater Victoria; yet there was no subsequent increase in taxes to cover the resulting debt. Nevertheless, such efforts were accepted by Victorians at large as being necessary before positive action could be taken, and the cabinet enjoyed considerable public support.¹⁴

The respite was short lived; and the idea of a "do nothing" provincial government was beginning to take hold * in Victoria as early as July. An editorial in the Victoria Daily Times on July 9 claimed:

As an ex-member of two Conservative governments at Ottawa, as the former organizer of the Conservative party, and as the leader of the party in British Columbia, it is easy to see why Dr. Tolmie is thus politically declaring his position in the present

[federal] campaign. But as Prime Minister of this province, it is not so easy to understand his attitude, and all his powers of argument will be required to explain it.¹⁵

During the autumn and early winter of 1930, unemployment in the province climbed sharply and rumours of a great march on Victoria began to circulate. Labour leaders threatened that their unions would enter politics and form the next government. The mayor of Vancouver claimed that the \$290,000 (which his city had received as its share of the recent \$900,000 provincial grant sent by Ottawa for immediate unemployment relief) was "entirely inadequate". Civic leaders in Greater Victoria, having obtained even less, predicted that "serious consequences" would result from such "parsimony".¹⁶ Mayor Anscomb of Victoria City demanded that the Tolmie government appeal to the federal prime minister for further relief aid.¹⁷ Ten days before, a provincial unemployment registration office had opened in Victoria and another had begun operating in Vancouver. By December 26, when Vancouver officials balked at aiding unemployment transients, it was obvious to all that the Mainland city was going to bear the brunt of the Depression in British Columbia.¹⁸ Moreover, as it will be seen later, it was not going to do so without a fight.

Island communities, usually more tolerant and most often in favour of the provincial government's policies, nevertheless sought to make their own voices heard. The fact that Vancouver's woes dominated the cabinet's attention seemed to be lost on the smaller communities north of Victoria.

Nanaimo, the Albernis and Duncan contained many destitute, or secure but sympathetic persons who demanded that the provincial government take immediate steps to relieve unemployment, provide direct relief, and prevail upon Ottawa to find markets for their timber, coal, fish and minerals. Victorians, normally more familiar with Island industries than Mainland ones, and quite aware of the economic links that those industries had with their own metropolitan centre, paid considerable attention to these demands - particularly in the mid-years of the Depression, when the political climate north of Victoria was becoming unsettled through a rise of new parties and leaders seeking economic relief.¹⁹

Political agitation in these up-Island centres had increased rapidly enough by late 1930, and to the Conservative members, alarmingly so. Any protests made by cabinet ministers that communities would have to accept what little aid there was available on a per capita basis - and that they would also have to wait their turn to receive that aid - simply did not satisfy local leaders. As a consequence, the pressure on the government in Victoria increased day by day.

The capital city itself joined the fray, but with less gusto. Too many ancillary factors were at stake for Victorians to alienate the government in the latter's time of crisis. As was mentioned before, Greater Victoria was over-represented by Conservative members. The fact that the legislature and administrative offices were located in the

City's heart urged further caution. Traditionally, it had been the policy of each government to contribute substantial ^{x 215} amounts to beautify and maintain the capital city region. By late 1932, such endowments were beginning to appear as luxuries. When the civil service received pay-cuts averaging five percent in that year (after a "freeze" on hiring had been in force for several months), it was not difficult for civic leaders to conjure up visions of a desperate cabinet relocating large numbers of its employees in areas harder hit by the Depression.²⁰ Such moves would be senseless in the extreme because of cost alone, but they might buy time for beleaguered politicians who had been accused of more dangerous folly.

Still, Victoria had serious problems of her own, and with considerable justification it could press her claims for more aid. Part of her difficulties were historical in origin - as might be seen from a brief prepared later, in 1946, by the City Treasurer's office, which reviewed the City of Victoria's municipal functions, responsibilities, and finances between 1911 and 1933.

Singled out by the city treasurer of 1946 for the damaging effects on the City of Victoria's financial structure were certain taxing powers that had been "stripped away one by one" by the provincial government up to 1930. Beginning with a loss of licence fees to the cities from fire and other insurance companies in 1911, the provincial government apparently saw fit, in 1917, to remove the City's

revenue from the sale of liquor outlet licences. Designed to ease the strain, grants were given to Victoria City by the province in lieu of these direct receipts; but Victoria, like her sister municipalities, had to assume new duties in the changeover. Parks maintenance, hospitals, agricultural buildings, and other services handled earlier by the province, were to be the responsibility of the cities. The financing of these new burdens under the prevailing land tax system would then have to fall upon local residents - as indeed it did. In 1923, the municipalities lost their share of gasoline and oil taxes, and in 1930, they were limited as to their share of revenues obtained through the sale of automobile licences.

In concluding his remarks, the city treasurer of 1946 was determined to place much of the blame for the City of Victoria's precarious financial condition during the Depression on these specific losses of revenue as well as on politicians in the Thirties. According to the treasurer:

General service, such as education, hospitalization, administration of justice, social welfare, and the like did not rest on the local area alone, but contributed also to the advantage of the country as a whole. The Dominion and Provincial governments should have paid for the latter and it was the duty of the municipalities to draw attention to this fact.²¹

During the Depression's worst year, 1932, the Mayor of Victoria had claimed:

"The City Council of 1932 was confronted with most difficult financial problems as a result of not only reduced incomes from all departments and reduced grants from the Provincial Government, but largely increased

expenditures owing to unemployment relief and added social service responsibilities formerly maintained by the Provincial Government. 22

R. F. Blandy, treasurer for Oak Bay during the Depression, however, was more direct and scathing in his indictment of Tolmie's provincial government.

While the relatively high percentage of 87 was reached in the collection of current taxes, this does not necessarily indicate large "ability to pay". The B. C. system of taxing real property is drastic. If payment is not made in the year of levy, a penalty of 15% is clapped on, and if taxes remain unpaid for three years, the entire property is confiscated even though the tax charge may be some ten percent of the property's value. This fiscal policy is good for the municipalities as corporate bodies, but somewhat harsh for the taxpayers, especially in hard times; it tends to create a false impression that the municipal taxpayer is wealthy and can bear more than his just share of public expenditure.²³

Blaney then outlined the measures that the Oak Bay council had been forced to take in that year: strict economy in all departments; provision of part-time and full-time relief work for over one hundred men; and delays of needed public works programmes, despite the fact that the equipment was available but could not be used to full advantage because of the employment crisis. He concluded his attack on the provincial cabinet with the following statement:

While the debt situation is favourable, Oak Bay in common with other municipalities has witnessed a rapid increase in operating costs. On the other hand land values - on which our revenue system is chiefly based - are much less than twenty years ago. Increasing taxes tend to depreciate or destroy the value of land. The state holds an ever-growing mortgage on real property. This increase in operating costs is due partly to new services and to increase in population, but also in some measure to new obligations thrust upon municipal landowners by provincial legislation and the exigencies of provincial finance.²⁴

The response from Saanich was little different, notwithstanding its support of Tolmie's regime in the 1928 election. On May 27, 1930, the Saanich council passed a resolution demanding that the provincial government meet its obligations on unemployment relief, or the municipality as of June 1 would cancel its own relief list and adjust it so that its budget would not be exceeded. An amendment called for Dr. Tolmie to be so informed.²⁵ By the end of 1931, Reeve Couch voiced grave concern:

The reports that the Provincial Government is considering reducing the so called grants should receive the serious consideration of all. These monies are paid by the people of British Columbia and by far the greater part of the money is paid by people resident in the Municipalities, and I sincerely hope that the residents of municipalities will not stand idle and have additional burdens placed upon them, no matter how cleverly they may be disguised. No Government of British Columbia has made any "grants", they have merely handed back part of their collections, and these collections have all been made in easy places; amusements, liquor profits, pari-mutuels, motor licences. The suggestion of granting a "rental value tax" is another way of tacking additional taxation on real estate, which in many cases is now taxed until it has no value. Taxes on the Roll are of no value if they cannot be collected.²⁶

It was the mayor of Victoria, however, who perhaps without realizing it, focused on the real source of municipal problems in general when he said:

The gravest problem confronting the City at the present time is the question of providing relief for the unemployed. The cost of relief for 1932, including proportions payable by the Dominion and Provincial Governments and including materials, etc. amounted to \$693,723 an average of over \$57,000 per month. In addition to this huge expenditure there were other heavy expenditures on social services, previously carried by the Provincial Government but hereafter

to be borne by the City - Mother's Pensions, \$15,780; Industrial Schools, \$4,161; Mental Home, \$22,933. The total expenditure in 1932 for unemployment relief, special relief, social services and administration amounted to \$761,209. The net cost to the City reached a total of \$374,621.²⁷

Why did civic governments, severely limited in their sources of revenue and restricted greatly in their powers to tax, have to shoulder almost half of the costs mentioned above? Was the position of municipalities so subservient to the provincial government that their responsibilities overwhelmingly outreached their authority? The answer was, most assuredly, yes.²⁸

Before the Depression it was not uncommon for provincial politicians to regard the demands made by civic leaders on the provincial cabinet as being either wasted effort or a continued process of the cities attempting to keep the government constantly aware of municipal problems. Occasionally, specific reforms were thought by cabinet ministers to be desirable and even necessary, but cities were expected to confine their activities and spending within the constitutional framework provided by Confederation. In 1931 that framework had been in force for sixty years and to term it anachronistic was an understatement.

It was widely known that municipalities were creatures of the provinces, just as most of the western provinces fundamentally owed their existence to the federal government.²⁹ The provinces, however, had obviously assumed much greater roles and responsibilities, as the decades passed, than

anyone between 1867 and 1905 had imagined possible. Technological advances, population growth, the rise of cities, and a score of other factors had created stresses on provincial revenues and tax sources in direct proportion to that growth. In several instances, in fact, the provinces had been able to ease the pressures by giving the new cities much of the load. But by 1929, Depression or not, innovation in this sphere had just about reached its limits. The financial crises during 1930 and 1931 had brought home to most thoughtful citizens in Greater Victoria, as elsewhere, the precariousness of both provincial and municipal finance. Thus by early 1932, the federal government of R. B. Bennett began to feel increasing pressure for municipal and unemployment relief from all sectors, whereas it had primarily faced only the demands of provincial leaders before.

Victorians in general had regarded Bennett's initial attempts to reverse the economic decline of the Depression years as being basically sound. Indeed, by electing a Conservative member of parliament for Victoria in the Canadian general election of 1930, the people in the capital city region indicated that they believed that the efforts of the Mackenzie King government had been too cautious, inasmuch as King had earlier dismissed unemployment relief as being solely a problem for the provinces and their municipalities. To Victorians, however, the balancing of trade and the ensuring of employment generally were obviously responsibilities of Ottawa.

During the federal election campaign, Mackenzie King had spoken to a large rally in Victoria on July 8, 1930, at the Royal Theatre. The following day, the Victoria Daily Times, a Liberal-oriented newspaper, printed "King Stirs Big Audience In Empire Trade Appeal", and "Premier [King] States Favourable Policy on Unemployment." The Victoria Daily Colonist, however, usually sympathetic to the Conservatives, and a strong backer of what was to be R. B. Bennett's successful national campaign, acknowledged King's warm welcome by the local Liberals. Still, the Colonist saw fit to lead its own report with, "Dr. Manion Declares Prime Minister Is Greatest Enemy of Workers."³⁰ Judging from the traditional voting patterns of Victorians, it is not hard to guess that the latter view was most favoured in the metropolitan region during mid-1930, and subsequently contributed to the local Conservative victory.

In his first two years as prime minister, Bennett had approached the crisis on a grand scale. To assuage provincial and municipal leaders, several million dollars for unemployment relief were granted immediately - British Columbia, it has been said, obtained \$900,000 as its portion of the total grant - while commitments were made in the form of agreements between all three levels of government whereby each would assume one-third of the costs of relief. Basically, however, Bennett was after improvements in international trade, believing that the nation's path to recovery lay in her ability to sell her goods and resources.³¹

From 1932 onward, indeed economic and political nationalism grew markedly in Canada. The crises - having originated beyond Canadian borders, and since being wholly unlikely to be solved by Canadian efforts alone - had to be minimized somehow at home. But Bennett's programme seemingly had failed; to people in Victoria as elsewhere. From the autumn of 1932, until he was defeated in the election of 1935, his regime became as much a favoured target locally as was the cabinet in Victoria.

According to Professor F. J. Scott of McGill University (who had made a recent speech in Ottawa and which was headlined by the Victoria Daily Times in late 1932 as "BENNETT'S SOCIALISM STAND IS CRITICIZED"), the Prime Minister did not know the difference between socialism and communism. And, "it was the time he found out the differences from any university undergraduate."³² Similar criticisms aimed at the prime minister and his cabinet were becoming a regular feature of the daily news, which the Victoria Times, and particularly the Colonist, duly printed whatever their own political sympathies.

Adding to Bennett's troubles, the federal Minister of Labour, W. A. Gordon, confessed that Canada had 800,000 persons on relief by November 16, 1932. Premier Tolmie, anticipating the coming federal-provincial unemployment conference scheduled for late 1932, said that "no obstacle" would be placed in the way of Ottawa if the latter assumed the full load of unemployment relief. Considering the state

of the Province's finances, and the pressure being put upon his ministry from cities like Victoria for more aid, he would have been foolish to have said otherwise. Similar views were expressed by his counterparts across the nation.³³

Shortly after this statement, Premier Tolmie ruled that all those resident in British Columbia prior to May 1, 1931, were entitled to marginal relief (food, fuel, and electricity) if their municipality had, for such assistance, entered into agreement with the Province. Each of the municipal councils in the capital city region had been quick to do so, but the scales allowed by the Province were meager indeed. A married man with three children to support could expect only \$20.00 per month, whereas in 1929 the average industrial wage for adult males in British Columbia had been \$125.60.³⁴ Such a policy would hardly endear the Tolmie government to the unemployed. Yet for the cabinet the situation was desperate.

True, the provincial Minister of Finance, J. W. Jones, had claimed a balance of assets over liabilities of \$39,718,997 when he introduced his 1932 budget in mid-March of that year. But, on November 1, a more realistic picture emerged when the government spoke of a public debt of \$111,505,087 - \$8,965,000 above the 1931 level. Moreover, revenue was \$1,800,000 less than for the previous year and the total deficit for 1930-1931 had been \$4,800,000. Unemployment costs alone had accounted for \$991,889 in 1931.³⁵ In February of 1932 there were 67,128 registered

unemployed in the province, and the bank overdraft for unemployment relief had reached \$2,393,600.³⁶

Tension mounted when in the same month agitators organized and led a massive march of unemployed men to Victoria. On February 29, the Victoria Daily Times headlined, "MUNICIPAL LEADERS CONDEMN GOVERNMENT METHODS", and added that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities' delegates to an emergency session then being held in Victoria, were attempting to "Seek Audience On Floor [of the legislature] To Register Protests." Mayor David Leeming of Victoria, who voiced the demands of the municipalities was reported as saying, "A prosperous province is impossible without prosperous municipalities."³⁷ The two most important and pressing needs, in the delegates' eyes, were for the federal government to assume all unemployment relief costs and to have the provincial government pass legislation that would eliminate all direct relief, except for those who were aged or infirm.³⁸

Government leaders, confronted on their own doorstep - as they would be increasingly so in the years to come - made some conciliatory remarks as well as several promises, but the wheels had turned too far. Within days certain officials in Victoria were charged with corruption in the dispensing of relief funds, causing the mood of the public to become increasingly restive. This ugly state of affairs led directly to one of the most bizarre chapters of British Columbia history - the "Kidd Report" of 1932.

Apparently, representatives of twenty-two organizations led by H. R. MacMillan, a provincial lumber baron, had coerced the Tolmie government to appoint a committee of business executives in order to make recommendations towards solving the financial crisis of the province. Included in this group were the Vancouver Board of Trade, the Canadian Manufacturer's Association, the Victoria Chamber of Commerce, the Retail Merchants Association, as well as various service clubs. The chairman appointed was George Kidd, a businessman from Vancouver.³⁹

Prepared in April, but not released by the cabinet until August, the Kidd Report contained the following major recommendations: The provincial government should reduce its budget from \$25,000,000 to \$6,000,000 per year. In order to do so, civil-service salaries would have to be cut substantially; while from thirty and fifty percent of the civil servants employed should be released from their jobs. Similarly, the number of M.L.A.s would have to be reduced at least by half, and the Cabinet limited to six ministers instead of twelve. Additional savings could be obtained if the annual university appropriation was eliminated, but more savings would result if the high school curriculum was shortened by a full year. By discontinuing service on the Pacific Great Eastern Railway, hundreds of thousands of dollars would be saved. Yet even if all of these measures were taken, cumulatively they could not equal the predicted

cost that more spending for social services would bring; and, therefore, the Kidd Committee stated that there be no further increases in this area.⁴⁰

According to one historian, the delay incurred in making the report public was obvious: not only was the report politically embarrassing for the Tolmie government, but the whole idea of trusting the business community to find acceptable solutions had obviously become Frankenstein-like, since this report could only be accepted as a loss of faith by provincial businessmen in the Conservatives, the land, and its people.⁴¹

For Tolmie time had run out. The death throes of his government were ignominiously marked by a Vancouver Daily Province editorial which encouraged, in late 1931, a union government between the Conservatives and the Liberals led by T. C. Pattullo.⁴² The plea was rejected and Victorians, like their neighbours throughout British Columbia, prepared themselves for what they knew would be a new provincial regime in 1933. The first three years of the Depression had exposed many faults in the political structure. The federal government appeared to Victorians as a remote and unsympathetic entity; the provincial cabinet inept, floundering, and in debt to an alarming degree. Only municipal leaders found some support, for they appeared as the champions of the people - determined to fight against the chains of an outmoded constitutional framework and the

"blindness" of politicians in both the provincial legislature and federal parliament.

Thus the political impact on the capital city region during the initial years of the Depression was mostly negative. At the higher levels - nationally and provincially - the incumbents appeared to Victorians as having fumbled opportunity after opportunity until those various politicians' efforts no longer were viewed as a matter of seeking economic recovery for the society - rather, it seemed to be more a case of their grasping at political survival. Municipal leaders, having responded to the challenges of almost overwhelming relief costs and rapidly falling civic revenues, enjoyed more public support, but they too could not completely escape the stigma incurred from fighting constantly both up and down the scale. Provincial cabinet ministers in Victoria undoubtedly saw harrassment tactics behind many of the demands from civic officials in Greater Victoria, while frustrated relief seekers often appeared as ungrateful to the hard-pressed municipal leaders.⁴³ The simple fact was that up to the end of 1932, political solutions by themselves could not possibly have alleviated the wide-spread distress in Greater Victoria. Many knew this, and as a consequence, directed their attention towards relief measures that were more of a social nature. ✓

CHAPTER TWO FOOTNOTES

1 Victoria Daily Times, January 2, 1931, p. 9.

2 For a more comprehensive view of these actions, see especially the Minutes of the Victoria Chamber of Commerce Executive Council for the years 1930-1932.

3 The Victoria Daily Times carried an article on February 13, 1930 entitled "Terminal City to Have Report on Crime Wave", in which the Mayor of Vancouver was quoted as saying, "while the situation [mass unemployment] was extraordinary . . . citizens should not stampede themselves into thinking the situation was out of control." (p. 3).

4 See the Minutes of the various municipal councils in the capital city region. Held at their respective city halls, these Minutes provide clues as to where to obtain specific information on the work of the committees in question. See also their Annual Reports for lists of those committees and their overall duties.

5 Mr. E. Jones, Victoria. Interview with the writer, July 12, 1968.

6 35 out of 48 seats. Liberals took twelve and Labour obtained one. B. C. Chief Electoral Officer, Votes and Results 1928.

7 Established between 1906 and 1928 were the following: District municipalities (1906); Factory inspection and workmen's compensation plus the B. C. Federation of Teachers (1916); Department of Labour (1917); Minimum Wage Act (1918); provincial employment service offices (male workers - 1919); Liquor Control Board (1921); Hours of Work Act and Board of Adjustment (1923); Second Minimum Wage Act and health education in schools (1925); Federal Old Age Pension Scheme (B. C. first to join - 1927); Homesite leases introduced and provincial income tax (1928). B. C. Statutes, 1906-1928.

8 Op. cit. and Wrigley's British Columbia Directory, 1928. (Victoria City, Saanich and Sidney sections).

9 The Daily Colonist (Victoria), January 18, 1930, p. 3.

10 Victoria Daily Times, January 18, 1930, p. 3.

11 Ibid., 12 February, 1930, p. 1. See also Chapter 6 of this thesis and Appendix "D", Tables X and XVII for more information on crime and delinquency in the region.

12 Victoria Daily Times, February 28, 1930, p. 1. Conferences, commissions, studies, minor legislation, and increased borrowing were expected by the cabinet to fill the voids left by business and employment declines.

13 Victoria Daily Times, February 28, 1930, p. 1.

14 Ibid., November 13, 1930, p. 1.

15 Ibid., July 9, 1930, p. 4.

16 Daily Colonist, November 14, 1930, p. 1. For civic relief expenditures see Appendix "D".

17 Vancouver Sun, December 27, 1930, p. 1.

18 Vancouver's experience to the end of 1932 was sad indeed. The numbers of local jobless men and unemployed transients increased weekly. The city became the final stop for thousands of Prairie men at first seeking work, but later drifting aimlessly with the westbound freight trains. Relief costs reached over a million dollars a year in the city, and upwards of 10% of her own workers were idle. The Tolmie government could not satisfy the Mainland centre in whatever efforts it put forth. Liberal and Labour politicians had found much of their strength there and criticized the government unceasingly. The two major newspapers, the Vancouver Sun, and the Vancouver Daily Province claimed to be Independent Liberal and Independent respectively (although the latter tended to support Tolmie generally), which left little margin for sympathy in any blunders the cabinet might make.

19 R. Grantham, Some Aspects of the Socialist Movement in British Columbia: 1898-1933, Vancouver, M. A. Thesis, September, 1942 and J. A. Wright, The Winter Years in the Cowichan Valley, Vancouver, U.B.C., M. A. thesis, September, 1967. *Passim.*

20 Centres like North Vancouver, Port Coquitlam, and Burnaby were in serious financial straits. Each of these eventually went bankrupt and commissioners had to be appointed by the government to discharge their respective civic responsibilities British Columbia, Department of Municipal Affairs, Annual Report, 1935, p. M1.

21 City of Victoria, Council, "Powers, Functions and Responsibilities", unpub. mimeo. brief, circa 1946. Another interesting remark in this brief was: "The functions of the Municipality were generally to govern its citizens within its Municipal limits and to provide for their comfort, health and convenience. It functioned as a medium between

its people and the parent legislative governments, but its chief function was to regulate and govern in respect of local affairs which could be dealt with better by the people concerned than by the distant central power. Local service was limited largely to the improvement and enjoyment of community life."

22 City of Victoria, Mayor, Annual Report, 1932, p. 3. According to the mayor the amount to be found for 1932 was \$1,046,612 over that of 1930. (Loc. cit.)

23 Oak Bay, Treasurer, Annual Report, 1932, p. 7.

24 Ibid., p. 8.

25 Corporation of Saanich, Council Minutes, May 27, 1930.

26 Saanich, B. C. Reeve, Annual Report, 1931, p. 2.

27 City of Victoria, Mayor, Annual Report, 1932, p. 6. The extra monies required between 1930 and 1932 for Victoria were met in the following manner:

1. An average reduction of all salaries and wages of 15%.	
2. Reduced expenditures	\$152,156
3. Refunding serial debentures	200,000
4. Borrowing for relief expenditures	500,000
5. Increased tax levy	194,455

28 See Appendix "D", Table XI for an example of Esquimalt B. C.'s revenue sources in 1932.

29 R. MacGregor Dawson and N. Ward, The Government of Canada Toronto, Univ. of Toronto Press, 1963, pp. 80-124. See also any unabridged copy of the B.N.A. Act (1949) especially sections: 22, 37, 58-62, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 109, 110, 118, 125. British Columbia, having entered the Dominion in 1871, had enjoyed more of a voice in determining the conditions of her entry than had Saskatchewan, Alberta, or Manitoba - all three of which could by 1929, claim that because of the nature and time of their inclusion, they were in reality the "poor cousins" of Confederation. The fact that these four provinces did not control their own natural resources was to Westerners, sufficient evidence in this matter.

What was not so completely understood, however, was the intention of the Fathers of Confederation to make the provinces "little more than gloried municipalities". The British North America Act of 1867 clearly delineated the powers of the provinces while granting the federal government virtually all the control over financial and monetary matters as well as the lion's share of residual power. (Loc. cit.)

30 Victoria Daily Times, and The Daily Colonist, July 9, 1930, p. 1. It has been suggested that the Liberals were more or less relieved when Bennett, under a slogan of "Canada First, then the Empire", rode to victory in the 1930 election. (Blair H. Neatby, Willion Lyon Mackenzie King: 1924-1932, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1963, p. 334). By 1934, one writer could go so far as to say, "in 1930 . . . circus ballyhoo [meaning Liberal campaign promises in that year] no longer convinced an electorate eager for the sound business management of the nation." A. D. MacLean, R. B. Bennett, Toronto, Excelsior Pub. Co.; Ltd., 1935, p. 19. Exports from Canada in 1928 were \$1,374,246,233. In 1930, \$905,406,353. Trade balances from 1928 to 1931 were: +\$151,928,317 (1928); - \$90,654,262 (1929); - \$103,019,126 (1930); - \$10,855,363 (1931). Following the London Economic Conference of 1931 and the Ottawa conference in 1932, the picture changed remarkably; +\$49,225,069 (1932); +\$136,569,128 (1933); \$146,432,432 (1934). Canada Year Book for years 1929-1935, sections on "External Trade".

For some of the major ramifications of federal-provincial relations, and what had developed in this sphere by 1937 - especially with regard to cities like Victoria - see Chapter 5 of this thesis.

31 Bennett raised the tariff levels in a punitive move against other nations who had done the same - especially the United States. When this failed to do as he had hoped, to "break into the markets of the world", strong representations were made by the federal government towards other Commonwealth countries with the goal of increasing trade. (The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1931, Toronto, The Canadian Review Co. Ltd.) The contributor of the article went on to say: "At this time the hopes of Canada and the Empire turn to the coming Imperial Economic Conference. Elaborate preparations are under way in Ottawa and no stone is being left unturned to explore thoroughly all avenues by which inter-Imperial trade can be encouraged. It is not too much to believe that the representatives of one quarter of the inhabitants of the world, with much in common and meeting with the determination to work together for the common good, may turn the tide of depression and usher in a new era in Empire and world affairs." (p. 1003).

Judging from the coverage that the Victoria newspapers gave to this conference there can be no doubt that the public was most concerned as to the outcome. But the resulting Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa in 1932 showed that imperial solidarity went only a limited distance (revealed particularly by Canada's protests against imports of New Zealand butter and Australian meat products).

- 32 Victoria Daily Times, November 14, 1932, p. 1.
- 33 Ibid., November 23, 1932, pp. 1-2.
- 34 Margaret A. Ormsby, British Columbia: A History, Toronto, Macmillan, 1958, p. 446.
- 35 As measures to combat the gargantuan growth in provincial debt, the cabinet committed itself to a three-year retrenchment policy at that time. Blaming "lavish borrowing" in the two previous decades, it claimed that serious debt charges "swallowed up" main revenue sources. Secondly, the government made extensive tax revisions which consolidated income and special revenue taxes into one. Income tax was increased as to percentages but exemptions were more generous. Life insurance premiums were taxed and the net profits of business were too. A supertax on lands outside school districts was imposed. Taxes on gasoline, most liquors (except B. C. wines), fuel oil, amusements, and parimutuels were all increased. C.A.R., "British Columbia" pp. 1014-1015.
- 36 Ormsby, op. cit.
- 37 Victoria Daily Times, February 29, 1932, p. 1.
- 38 Loc. cit.
- 39 The Daily Colonist, August 15, 1932, p. 1.
- 40 B. C. Report of the Commission Appointed by the Government to Investigate the Finances of British Columbia. Victoria, B. C., K.P., July 12, 1932. pp. 50-55.
- 41 Ormsby, British Columbia, pp. 447-448.
- 42 Vancouver Daily Province, November 1, 1931, p. 32. (Cited in J. N. Sutherland, T. D. Pattullo As A Party Leader, Vancouver, U.B.C., M. A. thesis, April, 1960, p. 37).
- 43 Mr. I. Foster, Oak Bay. Interview with the writer, January 10, 1969.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOCIAL IMPACT: 1929-1932

City Prosecutor Intimates Charges Against Individual Buyers Possible; Defence Counsel Says It Would Draw Attention of Authorities to Popularity of Sweepstakes; Magistrate Defers Penalty Until Tomorrow.¹

The defence council's shrewd remark would probably have been appreciated by the many people in Greater Victoria who had purchased sweepstake and lottery tickets as often as they could during 1931 - in spite of the prevailing economic conditions. By May of that year, demands for hospital sweepstakes were becoming so common, that Reverend Hugh Dobson of the Victoria Ministerial Association felt obliged to claim that officials who bowed to such demands "would dry-up springs of charity now flowing."²

Dobson was obviously one of those men in metropolitan Victoria who was aware of other avenues of relief open to local citizens during the initial years of the Depression. Since his vocation called for him to make periodic assessments of social needs, and since the Depression was causing social conditions to deteriorate markedly in the area, he could, with some insight, add that United Church of Canada ministers should lead the way in self-denial by accepting salary cuts. Businessmen, if they stressed service before profits, would also contribute towards the Christian concepts of sacrifice and good works; which, according to Dobson, were becoming increasingly necessary in order to relieve

family distress because economic and political solutions were clearly failing for the City in depression.³

A year earlier, Dobson had voiced a desire for unemployment insurance as a means to alleviate family suffering. As to gambling and competitiveness, he said, "Speculative profiteering is wrong on principle. It cannot be right to win personal advantage by causing loss to others."⁴ Sound advice to be sure, but of a type that was not always to have an influence in Victoria homes where a sense of helplessness and anxiety was firmly lodged.

In the most serious cases, unemployment was the main issue. At the other end of the scale, the mere awareness and observance of neighbours in financial difficulty caused sympathetic and often altruistic responses from those whose livelihoods were not immediately threatened.

Certain long-standing charities, agencies, and institutions in the Greater Victoria area had responded quickly to the needs of the new unemployed throughout 1930. Their efforts were considered by residents as a matter of course, since many of the religious groups such as the Salvation Army had earlier provided years of service to the homeless, destitute, and unfortunate. Often working in conjunction with the churches in charitable and other relief efforts, were the "Victoria Children's Aid Society, the Victorian Order of Nurses, the Friendly Help Association, the Saanich Social Welfare Exchange, the Esquimalt Women's Institute, as well as a host of benevolent and protection societies which operated in the capital city region."⁵

But, during the late months of 1929, when it was still not apparent how crippling and deep the Depression was going to be, neither the stricken nor the affluent had devoted much energy to the problem of unemployment. Generally it was regarded as a cyclical phenomenon, perhaps more severe than usual. When the seasonal gains of summer work dissolved in September, 1930, however, "almost everyone in the area began to realize that income loss cut across class lines with impunity, while those enjoying steady employment might within months be seeking a new position themselves. The only defences against such a possibility could, first, have been the protection of existing jobs; second, an attempt to recover lost callings; or third, to create new ones."

But how to ensure that one's work would survive in the face of decreasing demands for goods and services? Older wage and salary earners who were fathers of families, might have some degree of security, since seniority had become recognized as a primary factor in job retention. Yet what of the Victoria family that had young men and women about to enter the labour force in 1930? A father whose own job might ultimately be jeopardized by a lay-off could not risk enrolling his son in the local college or in a technical school on the Mainland if it meant that the son would not be able to contribute something towards his own expenses. Similarly, a young woman could not expect to be financed through a secretarial or other school if the training period was at all lengthy. To add to these worries, as the

lay-offs of the young and semi-skilled began to grow, homes became havens for unproductive members of the family. What had earlier been a nagging concern for the father now tended to irritate and worry the mother as well.

In the worst possible instance, the breadwinner, perhaps a carpenter employed by various contractors throughout Greater Victoria, found he was no longer called upon to perform his skills. He too had to return home (at least initially) and wait by a telephone that never rang. Soon he discovered that his constant presence was worrisome to his wife - or worse still, bothersome. He began to see his sons as indolent; his daughters frivolous. His central role in the family, that is, of provider, had disappeared, causing his pride to suffer and ultimately his whole personality. In better years he, like other citizens in the area, had enjoyed his job, family, community, and activities - believing that success developed from hard work, thrift, and a strong character. To his mind, he had cultivated all the manly virtues and recognized himself and his fellow workers as the backbone of society. Now he was destitute; his savings, ambition, and his way of life were gone. True, he was scarcely to be blamed, and he had still not fallen so far that he had lost all his resourcefulness or ingenuity.⁶

The efforts in fact, of the unemployed in Victoria to secure a living during the early years of the Depression proved that point repeatedly. No scheme was too outrageous,

no proposal was left unmade. What is more, tenacity, resilience and humour found new dimensions in these men as they day by day sought aid in whatever forms might be available. Initially dismayed at having to register as unemployed, and later disgusted with having to accept charity or direct relief from the municipalities, many of the jobless in Victoria and other Canadian cities created a new world of their own - one in which the only criterion for membership was lack of employment. The "hobo jungle", the railroad "rod riders", the streets full of panhandlers and beggars: these phenomena and more became characteristics of unemployed groups of men in British Columbia cities during the Depression.

In the lumber mills of Esquimalt they sat for hours waiting their turn to be called. When a sweat-covered, bare-backed man could no longer lift planks for the large open saw, the foreman had but to beckon, and another without a word would jump from his perch, intent upon causing the feeder no delay.⁷ But the mills, wharves, and machine shops of Greater Victoria could not hope to provide jobs for all. Nor could such traditional employers as the large retail outlets, hotels, and wholesalers. Hospitals, the civil service, and other institutions were forced to cutback on hirings. Even the local telephone agency was caught in a dilemma: automatic dialing had been planned for the Greater Victoria area for months; but what should have been hailed as a technical innovation adding to the convenience of

subscribers, was by then a serious threat to telephone operators, who could not hope to obtain alternate employment in the city. Local citizens, many enraged at the thoughts of machines taking priority over people - young women at that - harassed the company night and day; primarily by use of Mr. Bell's talking device.⁸

Admittedly too, the unemployed might display less admirable - or more desperate - ingenuity in their approach to public officials who had relief or work to offer; although the officials might be hard-pressed in their own way by the limited funds they had available for distribution. Victoria's municipal relief officers, rising to the challenges presented by a cunning public thus resorted to ingenuities of their own. To ferret out those claiming another's dole as well as his own (when claim cards had been obtained by dishonest means) a coded, movable disc, held under the counter and designed to show the rudimentary physical characteristics of all registered claimants, was used by clerks with great effect.⁹

The purposes of the destitute and the officials could meet, however, in such an area as relief work. The City + Engineer's Office would undertake to lay a new wooden plank sidewalk during the day, thereby providing a suitable walkway for residents of the street (by then grateful for any luxury) and at the same time, allow a certain number of men several hours' work. At night those hard-pressed for firewood would liberate as many planks as they needed, and

the public works crew in the morning would carry on as before.¹⁰ But whatever schemes Victorians might invent to ease their plight momentarily, they quickly came to feel the weight of widespread unemployment, with all its attendant ills and evils.

By the winter of 1930-1931, all attempts by business, governments, and the public to shift the responsibilities of finding jobs to someone else had failed. Any politician, official, merchant or citizen who did not indicate ready support for moves designed to stimulate employment in the Greater Victoria area, incurred the ill favour of his neighbours. If he spoke out against such efforts, despite the merits of his arguments, he courted disaster. R. H. Ker, president of the Victoria Chamber of Commerce at that time, recalled 1932 as:

. . . a year filled with frustration and anxiety
it was quite a problem I can tell you, to get people
even to think of constructive things that had any
possibility of materializing People were afraid,
positively afraid to part with what little money they
had. People wanted to conserve what resources they had
until they could see what was going to develop.¹¹

Surely, one of the most dismal features implied in Ker's discouraging assessment was the capital city region's inability to generate sufficient employment between 1930 and 1932. Victorians without work, had by 1932, accustomed themselves to accepting charity - indeed, Reverend Dobson's "springs of charity" flowed on as they had from the Depressions onset. Yet charity alone was not the proper substitute for jobs.

On one side, people had shown themselves to be capable of personal sacrifice and great generosity. Men who would not spend a dollar for a new pair of shoes paid heed to the plea of "Give a job for Christmas."¹² Gardens and orchards in the area were guarded by signs that read "Take Just What You Need". Men who walked the streets of Victoria in search of work could usually obtain a free meal by simply asking the homeowner. If a housewife was anxious to keep strangers away, however, she said so politely and most often with sympathy. Volunteers from the Victoria Friendly Help Association, who, one morning early in January, 1930, opened their doors "to a sea of bewildered faces", did not hesitate to provide immediate assistance to the crowd of men before them.¹³ Rumours of a job sent men rushing to the area. Out of hundreds in line, one or two might be called upon to work; but that did not deter the employer from saying, "Come back tomorrow, perhaps then" Still, on both sides it was known that little chance existed.

The other side of the coin, of course, was that the giving of charity contributed nothing to the city's economy. In fact, by accepting the gifts and donations of others, members of a family could easily slip into a state of lethargy - never wanting to spend what were likely to be many futile hours in an attempt to become part of the city's working force again. If Greater Victoria's charities had been capable of continually supporting all of the unemployed at an adequate level, then this type of danger could have

been a real possibility - but they could not. As early as the spring of 1930, Victorians began to realize that other methods were needed, and it appeared that only flight or extensive government relief could save the city from disaster.

In the case of the former alternative, people in Greater Victoria differed considerably from those in other regions of Western Canada. The inhabitants of the mild south coast and lower Vancouver Island areas had no real desire to move inland to harsher country; whereas one of the signal features of the Depression in the West was the continual emigration of Prairie folk either to Ontario or more especially to British Columbia. Unless there was a reasonable prospect of employment in up-Island centres or camps, men in the Victoria area stayed as did men on the Lower Mainland: flight generally had no appeal for them. For the rural unemployed in British Columbia, however, Vancouver or Victoria became the end of the line. In a strange way the essence of metropolitan growth, that is, radiations from the centre outwards, had reversed itself, bringing unexpected pressures down on the major cities. Farmers, loggers, miners, and fishermen, no longer able to work on the frontiers of Western Canada, drifted into the small towns and villages that had been dependent upon the primary products produced in their respective areas. Suffering declines themselves, the townsfolk could hire none of the new arrivals. Indeed, many of their own youths

joined the exodus towards larger centres, thereby increasing the numbers of migrants converging on cities like Regina, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver and Victoria.

Nevertheless, the Straits of Georgia did offer a natural obstacle to the wanderers. By the time that an Albertan farm-boy reached Vancouver after a tortuous boxcar journey through the mountains of British Columbia, he was unlikely to have funds for sea fare to the Island. Saanich farm-boys by the same token, were forced to remain on Vancouver Island. People in Greater Victoria could be charged with (if not blamed for) feeling they were saved from being overwhelmed by itinerants without funds, jobs, or skills. The increasing in flow of jobless men from up-Island into the capital city region was considered to be serious enough without their having to cope with the hordes^x that descended upon Vancouver.¹⁴

Other factors at work limited the outflow of men from the Saanich Peninsula. Age, education, ambitions, as well as family life, all entered into consideration before moves were made. Assuming that Victoria's young single men would be the most likely of all the area's inhabitants to leave in search of work, and expecting also that married men with children would wish to remain in the municipalities where they lived, then it should have been true that most of the itinerant labour on Vancouver Island was, for the greater part, composed of unskilled or semi-skilled youths out of Greater Victoria and the other urban centres. Events proved this to be so.

As they moved north on the Island, young Victorians sought jobs that first offered wages - then training. Yet the same employment conditions that had caused them to leave the capital city region were prevalent wherever they went, and as a consequence, they drifted from one temporary job to another. When September of 1930 passed, and it was obvious that whatever employment they had enjoyed during the spring and summer was no longer going to be available, only two choices remained open to them: to return home, or enlist in the provincial government's new forestry training camps. "As it will be seen, the camps, because they extracted work for wages, could be rationalized by Islanders as a positive form of relief." The stigma of having to accept the dole was somehow not there for the trainees as it was for those who chose to return home to Victoria and register as being unemployed along with their married fellows.¹⁵

Originally designed to provide forester's training as well as to give immediate relief to young men, the early British Columbia camps were viewed by Islanders as a genuine success. Several camps were established in close proximity to Victoria - at Sooke and Jordan River, for example.¹⁶ It was expected by the provincial Department of Public Works that the men would remain at least as long as it would be necessary for them to earn sufficient money to maintain themselves for two months once they returned to Victoria. The cabinet, ever mindful of the political

problems that thousands of unemployed men in Victoria and Vancouver would present if something was not done to disperse them, had given its strongest support to this venture. Moreover, the cabinet ministers could claim with some justification that the men were acquiring a trade instead of simply loitering on the streets of the cities.¹⁷

The provincial forestry camps remained under the aegis of the Province until late 1932, when they were incorporated into a new scheme modelled on the British Columbia system, but controlled by the federal authorities. Young men who had taken advantage of the camp work between 1930 and 1932 appeared to have benefited, in that they had enjoyed a good diet, regular exercise, few worries, and steady pay. Of all the unemployed men in the Victoria area, these men were the most mobile of all - both by their ability to move and through the upgrading of their personal qualifications. Yet they were the exception that proved the rule, for their counterparts who were forced to remain in the capital city region suffered considerably.¹⁸

Where flight had failed to solve Victoria's unemployment problems - just as had business and charity - governments, with their abilities and powers to perform large social tasks, were expected to succeed where others had not. Fortunately, many of the provincial government's various departments had been operating for years in the areas of social welfare, municipal affairs, public health, and public works. By marshalling the resources of those departments, the cabinet

hoped systematically to alleviate the growing distress in the cities. "The record of medical health officers and public health nurses during the Thirties in Greater Victoria would be outstanding; similarly, the achievements in public works in the province would come to be regarded as one of the most commendable efforts of every level of government. But in the realms of municipal affairs and social welfare, conflicts between citizens, officials and politicians would occur time and time again."

Remembering that the fundamental social problem in Greater Victoria was widespread unemployment, and knowing that by late 1930 government relief was the last possible solution to save the cities from disaster, the provincial government established a rigid system of direct and work relief that was to operate basically through the newly formed municipal relief offices. Furthermore, provincial social workers, by then familiar with the scope and depth of the unemployment crisis (as well as being aware of the limited funds available for relief), attempted as best they could to combat the problems of prolonged unemployment on a whole family basis.

| If no work could be found for the father, then the mother, if unencumbered by the needs of small children, was encouraged to seek temporary employment. | Children still in school and elderly relatives residing in the home were not expected to actively seek a job, however. Nevertheless, it was assumed that these dependents would practice the strictest household

economy, while at the same time, remaining alert to any opportunity that would enhance the income of their family.¹⁹

If these measures failed to bring adequate relief, the local welfare workers could inform charitable organizations in the municipality, causing representatives of those groups to either call on the family in question or arrange for some form of direct and immediate assistance. "The deeper a family appeared to sink into poverty, the more rapidly would churches, charities, and benevolent societies respond. Whenever it became obvious that a family could not bring itself out of its plight, then the provincial social welfare office in the municipality would ensure that the steps required by law to place the breadwinner on the municipal relief list were taken."²⁰

By the second year of the Depression in Greater Victoria, what had earlier been a drawn-out and often humiliating process for relief seekers could then be accomplished within a few days. So many families were applying for direct municipal relief that it was not unusual for a housewife to collect a church food hamper, a clothing donation from the Friendly Help Association, and a relief payment from the City all in the same week.²¹ Saanich officials alone by December, 1932, had listed three hundred and eighty families on direct relief. From figures released later in the Depression, married men in Saanich with families to support accounted for approximately twenty-five percent of the individuals being supported by the municipality.

Judging from these totals, and the composition of the relief rolls, over fifteen hundred people out of twelve * thousand in Saanich during the winter of 1932-1933 were likely to be receiving direct relief.²² Similar conditions existed in the other municipalities, although in one instance the Mayor of Victoria City claimed that over twelve percent of his citizens were receiving direct aid: a situation caused in large part by the very high percentage of elderly people residing in the City, whose meager resources could not be expected to cover the high medical costs normally associated with old age.²³

Work relief, whenever possible, was seen by civic leaders to be preferable to large-scale, direct relief programmes. Not only would men be put towards constructive tasks for the municipalities, but the workers could also take satisfaction in the fact that they were earning their money.¹ It was generally conceded that most of the jobs were of a menial nature, involving at times hard physical labour. Yet road construction, sewer repair, boulevard weeding, and park maintenance were seen as positive projects to which the unemployed and taxpayer alike could agree. As an indication of the emphasis placed on relief work, the City of Victoria spent \$69,524 on wages and equipment in 1930. By 1932 the expenditure for this scheme alone had risen to \$164,143.²⁴ Oak Bay's relief work costs rose from \$1,894 to \$15,172 during the same period while the increase for Saanich was from \$13,136 to \$94,193. When one considers that Saanich

direct relief costs in 1932 were \$25,044, then it must be apparent that work relief took priority whenever possible. The same was true in the other municipalities.²⁵

Both courses of action - the flight of many young men and government relief - had, by late 1932, eased many of the economic and some of the social pressures on Greater Victoria. But people were aware that new factors were at work, factors that appeared to be harmful and even dangerous. One of these factors that was of particular concern to many people in Greater Victoria was a belief in the possibility of widespread pauperism. Several contemporary studies on the subjects of mass unemployment and deep national poverty were on the local bookshelves. Newspaper accounts of human misery seemed grim enough moreover. But when the local metropolitan health officers gave their yearly reports - which indicated more and more a general decline in health, morale, and the availability of proper medical services throughout southern Vancouver Island - citizens in Greater Victoria had much more reason to fear the future.

Up to the end of 1931, Dr. Richard Felton, the medical health officer for Victoria, was reasonably optimistic about the state of public health in the area. On the other hand, he did not hesitate to mention the increasing pressures put upon those responsible for community health. According to Felton:

We have experienced what is probably the lightest year in infectious diseases recorded for over 10 years

and our Isolation Hospital charges are proportionately low. This . . . is an indication of the greater amount of public interest in appreciation of preventative medicine and personal hygiene The increase in the number of deaths from Tuberculosis over previous years (37% increase over the average of the previous five years) gives food for thought. This Province and this City receive an appreciable proportion of chest patients from other parts of the Dominion less favoured by climatic conditions, which would, at any rate, partly account for our higher death rate.²⁶

While Dr. Felton felt assured that the normal problems of public health were being handled as before, he was obviously pessimistic about the new difficulties presented by the City's widespread and prolonged cases of poverty.

The continual unemployment situation has increased the amount of work in this connection very considerably. It is a matter of congratulation that the health of the community remains as good as it is.

The Doctors and Dentists continue to give freely of their services, without which it would be impossible to carry on. The amount expended on free drugs, dressings, etc., and on special dental, eye and other services, during the year was nearly five times that of 1929.

The City Relief Camp at Sooke Lake, opened on May 14th, has been a boon, and served as a model of camp construction for the Provincial authorities in regard to sanitary equipment and conveniences.

An investigation of distress in Chinatown towards the end of the year led to efficient relief which should be continued as long as the situation warrants it. Although the Chinese themselves have given material assistance in the past, it is now obvious that they cannot continue to meet the situation alone.²⁷

Dr. Felton's report for the next year, 1932, offered even less encouragement to people in metropolitan Victoria. Stressing once again the relative lack of serious disease in the area (despite the growing number of impoverished people), he went on to say:

There is no doubt the return towards a simple life * made necessary by the scarcity of cash has been beneficial; and there is no doubt also that the efforts

in recent years of health departments and others interested, towards a more complete and balanced diet are bearing fruit; but any attempt at using the present figures indicating a continued improvement of the health of the people as a basis for further reducing a City Relief Scale cannot be too strongly denounced. The scale of food supplies used in most cities has been carefully thought out after reference to the experience and information available in the various Health Departments, and represents the lowest adequate diet. If we fail to provide our Relief Families with the opportunity to obtain this adequate diet, we court disaster, and all our other efforts towards the maintenance of health will be defeated.²⁸

In concluding his 1932 report, the doctor made a strong recommendation that more milk be provided for the young. He also urged that a family investigator be appointed to prevent the committment of neglected children to what was by then, the seriously overcrowded local Children's Aid Home. Lastly, Felton asked that the Victorian Order of Nurses (catering primarily to the aged) be given more money to offset their increased work load, while some financial recognition had to be given to doctors and dentists in Greater Victoria who had been devoting much of their own time without pay to unemployed people and direct relief cases.²⁹

Other health officer reports from the surrounding municipalities reflected the same views. Dr. J. S. McCallum of Esquimalt, for example, recorded that epidemic diseases were never a serious threat between 1929 and 1932, but the rise in hospital and indigent work caused him grave concern.³⁰ As the winter of 1932-1933 deepened, the officials at all levels responsible for health and welfare throughout Greater

Victoria had no recourse but to attempt to maintain sufficient nutrition levels, prevent disease from spreading, and keep a constant pressure on politicians for more relief funds. According to the City Engineer for Victoria, it was the coldest winter in decades. This in more normal times would have been discomforting enough. In 1932, for the destitute, it was miserable.

One might expect in such circumstances that crime would rise and school attendance would drop. Yet during the initial years of the Depression in Greater Victoria neither occurred to a significant degree. D. Hodnett, chief constable for Esquimalt, claimed in December, 1931, that the number of offenses in the year reported for had dropped from one hundred and eight to sixty-one. In 1932, Hodnett said the district was "remarkably free from crime." As to indictable offences such as assault, vagrancy, and theft, very few were committed.³¹ Victoria, Oak Bay, and Saanich enjoyed a similar freedom during the early years of the Depression, although Victoria City did experience a considerable upswing in vagrancy arrests in 1930 and 1931.³²

Children continued to attend school as they had before. The average attendance at Victoria High School rose from 1156 in 1930 to 1208 in 1932, although the actual enrollment decreased slightly by 1932 to 97.4 percent of the 1929 total. Similarly, the number of teachers in the Victoria school district dropped because of school-board cost-cutting, from 207 to 187 in the same period. School expenditures were

also reduced from \$484,784 to \$454,991 between 1930 and 1932. Of notable interest was the increase in average attendance at Victoria College (the local two-year liberal arts school) from 253 in 1930 to 289 in 1932. Obviously, Victorians considered education to be of prime importance in the Thirties - a fact borne out for instance, by the Victoria daily newspapers extensive front-page coverage each spring of the local college graduates' achievements.³³

As the Depression wore on, and it became more difficult for youths to complete their school years, various articles stressing the need for more practical training began to appear in the local press. At no time, however, between 1929 and 1932, did anyone make a direct attack on those fortunate few who were able to attend either Victoria College or the Mainland university. What was criticized, was the amounts spent on institutions of higher learning, and in the case of Saanich, on the upgrading of existing municipal school facilities.³⁴ Parents were nevertheless determined to have their children acquire as much education as possible, since it was generally believed then, as it is now, that those who failed to remain in school could not expect to make successful lives for themselves as adults. Moreover (and this attitude has changed little), children unsupervised or without the constant challenge that school could provide, were held likely to mix with bad company, which would ultimately lead them into trouble.

Despite the extent to which the early years of the Depression in Greater Victoria discouraged people, and however much economic privation had caused the pace of its society to slow, it was not always a time of unhappiness or pain. Recreational activities began to centre more upon sports, hobbies, reading, and other forms that cost little money but allowed a more leisurely tempo to the day. Movie houses reduced their admission fees and restaurants cut their prices in order to attract customers. The Twenties' brief courtship with the automobile at first slowed, then all but stopped, as few could afford to buy gasoline. Still, occasionally a car would pass, full of people all grateful for the ride. A sense of community and participation, seemingly long since past, resurged in the capital city region. In spite of the crisis atmosphere, Victorians had time to reflect upon their lives and to make plans for the distant future. Yet because the winter of 1932-1933 was the nadir of the Depression in Victoria, citizens were only too aware of the impending social dangers and could perceive the potential perils that several writers were then pointing out.

Unemployed parents, it was said, were often too proud to accept relief themselves, and tended to send their children to the municipal office; which caused the latter to believe that "getting something for nothing" was actually the norm. Falling birth rates, resulting in large part from declining marriage rates, concerned everyone - as did increases in suicides and mental illnesses.³⁵ Other hazards

predicted by scholars and other observers were to be "tottering morale" and a rise in delinquency³⁶, coupled with "a warped outlook on life, mental torpor, a dulling of perception, physical disability and a legacy of deprivation to the rising generation."³⁷

Although in too many cases this was true of the society of Greater Victoria between 1929 and 1932, the very fact that the region in comparison to the Mainland had escaped the more severe economic and political impacts of the Depression, caused many Victorians to be optimistic. The social stress on the four municipalities was considerable - of that there can be no doubt. But other centres in the province had suffered more, while Victorians had learned, with the aid of charities and government relief, to cope with their overall plight. Thus they could be expected to face with some assurance the problems that 1933 would bring.

CHAPTER THREE FOOTNOTES

- 1 Victoria Daily Times, May 7, 1931, p. 1.
- 2 Ibid., May 15, 1931, p. 1.
- 3 Loc. cit.
- 4 Ibid., May 16, 1930, p. 15. Citizens with a good memory might have recalled with some consternation that the new Anglican Christ Church Cathedral for Victoria was reported in February 1930 as costing \$469,804. At the time charges of "clergy extravagance" were heard, but many people overlooked the fact that the project had been planned and started before the Depression. Victoria Daily Colonist, 16 February, 1930, p. 4.
- 5 Various Annual Reports for Victoria and surrounding Municipalities: 1929-1930. Also, Mrs. F. Mutrie, Saanich. Interview with the writer July 28, 1968.
- 6 The working man was considered sufficiently a hero during the Twenties and Thirties to be portrayed in full-page advertisements exhorting the public to join him in a cup of cocoa or tea. (Victoria Daily Times, January 17, 1929, p. 10) Another full-page spread by the Canadian Daily Newspapers Association on December 31, 1930, pictured a tug-of-war between workers personifying courage, foresight, honesty, faith, etc. against a sickly lot labelled with rumour, ineffectiveness, delay, hoarding, inertia, indecision, fear, and other undesirable characteristics. "Victory vs. Defeat" for Canadian Industry was the theme. (Ibid., p. 12).
- 7 Mr. E. V. Jones, Esquimalt. Interview with the writer, July 31, 1968.
- 8 Victoria Daily Times, January 3, 1931, p. 1. The B.C. Telephone Company made the switch to an automatic exchange despite the protests. In attempting to be fair, the forty women involved were promised jobs in Vancouver, but people in that city saw fit to complain about alleged "dumping" of Victoria's unemployed onto the Mainland.
- 9 A suspicious clerk would simply turn the disc until the registration number of the claimant's card either proved or disproved the bearer was genuine. Hair colour, height, weight, etc. were all demonstratable in this rapid and clandestine manoeuver. Mr. E. E. Griffiths, Victoria. Interview with the writer, August 4, 1968.
- 10 Mr. E. V. Jones, Esquimalt. Interview with the writer, July 31, 1968.

11 R. H. B. Ker, "The Years of Frustration", 100 Years of Forward Thinking from 1863 to 1963, Victoria Chamber of Commerce, Victoria, B. C., 1963, p. 24.

12 Victoria Daily Times, December 5, 1930, p. 12. As much to the point was an advertisement on page 13 calling for "support of home industry" - "Eat Saanich Brand Clams" - further reference was made to the fact that 83% of the monies obtained from sales went to wages and it was asserted that "clams cost infinitely less".

13 Mrs. F. Mutrie, Saanich. Interview with the writer, July 28, 1968.

14 Mr. F. Beebe, Victoria. Interview with the writer, April 2, 1969.

15 A 1956 study of itinerant labour for a then current "Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects", examined in part the phenomenon of flight in the Great Depression. One statements in particular of that study stand out:

"Most economic and social factors tend to immobilize workers. The family itself and the responsibilities which it brings to the worker as to all other breadwinners in the population tend to root him in one locality. The employer tends to keep his efficient workers whether they be skilled or otherwise. All the attributes of good citizenship seem to contribute to the immobilization of the worker." Moreover:

"In a depression . . . when rates of mobility are low, there is less opportunity for variety of experience. When job changes occur, they frequently reflect down grading of skill and many job separations involve relatively long periods of unemployment and the deterioration of skills." (P. Webbnik, et. al., Labour Mobility and Economic Opportunity, Cambridge, M.I.T. Press, 1954, p. 115).

The first of these two statements might help to explain why it was primarily the young of Victoria who fled the city in the early years of the Depression; while the second should indicate the risks that were taken by people who moved from one job to another, and even from one locality to another.

16 Mr. E. W. Griffith, Victoria. Interview with the writer, August 4, 1968.

17 Loc. cit.

18 Loc. cit.

19 H. M. Cassidy, "The Problem of Relief, Health and Welfare Services for Interprovincial Transients", (B. C. Director of Social Welfare memorandum) Victoria, B. C., P.L.B.C., Revised July 11, 1936, pp. 5-6. ✓

- 20 Ibid., pp. 6-7.
- 21 F. Matric, Interview, July 28, 1968.
- 22 Saanich, B. C., Municipal Council Unemployment Relief Committee, Report, December, 1938. (From a graph for years 1932-1938 included in this above report and embodied in the Saanich Annual Report, 1938. See illustrations).
- 23 City of Victoria, Mayor, Annual Report, 1932, pp. 2-3.
- 24 City of Victoria, Treasurer, Financial Statements, 1930-1932. For relief work projects, descriptions are contained in unpublished mimeographed "Notes re City Parks from [Victoria] Annual Reports 1883-1940"; especially section on "Relief Projects 1931-1940". (City Hall, Victoria, B.C., Engineer's Office). See also Appendix "D", Table XVI of this thesis for types of relief work in Esquimalt.
- 25 Esquimalt, Oak Bay and Saanich Treasurer's Annual Reports and Financial Statements, 1930-1932.
- 26 Dr. R. Felton, City of Victoria, Metropolitan Health Officer, Annual Report, December, 1931, pp. 45-46.
- 27 Ibid., p. 49.
- 28 Felton, Victoria M.H.O., Report, 1932, p. 49.
- 29 Ibid., p. 50.
- 30 Dr. J. S. McCallum, Municipality of Esquimalt M.H.O., Annual Report, December, 1932, p. 1.
- 31 D. Hodnett, Esquimalt B. C., Chief Constable's Annual Reports 1931-1932.
- 32 Mr. R. J. Davidson, Victoria. Interview with the writer, October, 12, 1968.
- 33 Victoria School Board, Annual Reports, 1930-1932. (Held in Victoria City Hall and Victoria Public Library). Also, Victoria Daily Times, June 21, 1931, p. 1.
- 34 Between 1929 and 1932 reports of the controversy surrounding the costs of construction and additions to Saanich high schools appeared often in local newspapers. An article discussing a land purchase plebiscite (Victoria Daily Times, Feb. 4, 1930, p. 1) and another centering on construction start (Victoria Daily Colonist, May 26, 1932, p. 3) give an idea of how long the issue was at stake.

35 H. M. Cassidy, Unemployment and Relief in Ontario, 1929-1932, Toronto, 1932, pp. 252-258. Also, Victoria, M.H.O. Reports, (sections on Vital Statistics) 1929-1932.

36 J. M. Williams, Human Aspects of Unemployment and Relief, Chapel Hill, Univ. of North Carolina, Press, 1933, p. XV.

37 C. P. Gilman and H. M. Sinclair, Unemployment: Canada's Problem, Ottawa, The Army and Navy Veterans in Canada, 1935, p. 37.

CHAPTER FOUR

ECONOMIC RECOVERY: 1933-1939

In spite of troubled world conditions, the general outlook for the City seems brighter, there being much more building activity and an increasing demand for City owned properties I look forward to 1938 with confidence and trust that our financial condition will continue to improve.¹

The note of optimism in this statement taken from Mayor Andrew McGavin of Victoria's Annual Report for 1937, should indicate that economic recovery for the City in depression was a long and drawn out process - one which had not, even by that time, been fully completed. To illustrate, back in December, 1934, another of Victoria's mayors had written:

I regret to state that there is little change in this [unemployment relief] situation and it does not seem likely there will be any great improvement in conditions in the coming year. Expenditure on relief and social service for [1934] amounted to \$342,841.18, which is more than one-fifth of our general tax levy. This drain on our resources cannot continue indefinitely.²

One year earlier, the same mayor, David Leeming, had claimed that the burdens of unemployment relief - which had cost Victoria City \$230,094 in 1933 - was "a most acute problem".³ Thus it must have been obvious to civic officials at least by early 1935, that unless the yearly problem of providing increasing relief with funds from decreasing revenues was solved, (then the City of Victoria, with its hugely disproportionate debt, would be in direct danger of bankruptcy - perhaps in 1936.⁴)

To give some indication of the magnitude of the financial difficulties that Victoria City was faced with in relation to,

its adjacent municipalities during the last half of the Depression, one need only refer to the British Columbia Directory for 1937, and observe the amount of each municipality's bonded debt. Oak Bay's debt was \$777,239; Saanich owed \$783,000; Esquimalt, \$314,600. But Victoria, with approximately sixty percent of the area's population, had \$16,012,603 outstanding, or 89.4 percent of the total bonded civic debt in Greater Victoria⁵ - and that was the year that then had caused Mayor McGavin to be optimistic about the future.

Before examining the details of how officials in Victoria actually solved the City's financial crisis between 1934 and 1937, it might be enlightening to read how some of the other civic authorities in Greater Victoria interpreted the basic problems facing their respective municipalities in the mid-years of the Depression. One of the most penetrating and succinct analyses came, in 1933, from R. F. Blandy, the intrepid treasurer for Oak Bay:

. . . while Oak Bay's finances may perhaps be regarded in a favourable light, the immediate situation is not free from difficulty. With the appreciation of the dollar and the serious shrinkage in the income of most of our taxpayers, a tax levy of \$200,000 in 1933 was a much more onerous burden than a similar levy in 1927 or 1928. But reduction of municipal taxation has been impracticable. As has been pointed out in previous annual reports, our debt charges are somewhat heavy and will not show much further reduction for the next few years. Operation expenses tend to increase, especially those of a social or paternalistic nature. This is due in part to compulsion by superior authority. For example, poor relief has developed into a major branch of expenditure. The subventions from the Provincial Treasury - to which the people of Oak Bay are large

contributors - has been reduced by some \$30,000 a year. Collections have fallen off, tax sale properties are not selling, assessment values are shrinking and much development work needs to be done.⁶

Councilmen, this time from Saanich, claimed in 1935 that their community "was in a better financial position than other British Columbia municipalities"⁷; yet at the same time, they forwarded a request to the Bank of Montreal for a lower interest rate on borrowing. Apparently, the council members hoped that such a concession by the bank (which, incidentally, served all four of the municipalities in the capital city region) would encourage local citizens to pay their tax arrears.⁸ Two years earlier, Saanich council had made several attempts to exchange for guaranteed bonds all the stocks that their municipality held. By 1934, the council was accepting offers from firms such as A. E. Ames and Company of Edmonton, Alberta, whereby \$4,000 of Edmonton Dunvegan 4 1/2 percent bonds would be exchanged, "even trade", for District of Saanich 5 1/2 percent issues.⁹ Transactions of this nature allowed the municipality to obtain adequate funds (because the Dunvegan bonds were maturing sooner than their own) as well as finding a market for Saanich bonds at a time when many western Canadian cities were having considerable difficulty in avoiding bankruptcy.

Actions like those of the Saanich council tended to reflect the efficient and businesslike approach that the municipal officials in the smaller centres of Greater Victoria took towards civic matters in the Depression years. Primarily,

the elected representatives of the three outlying municipalities chose to pass through the last years of the Thirties by practicing fiscal retrenchment, deferring large work projects, and by maintaining a close scrutiny on all expenditures. Much of the reason for the apparent caution they displayed in matters of civic finance stemmed basically from the attitudes and experience that elected officials in the three peripheral municipalities of Greater Victoria had brought into office with them.¹⁰

Victoria City, however, was not always so fortunate. For now, it is sufficient to say that its civic representatives were often not of the same calibre as their outlying counterparts. To be fair, it must be remembered that council members in Victoria had to contend with a harsh financial legacy that had originated decades before, and that had developed during the Twenties through the ineptness of various city councils. To make matters worse, the Thirties should have been the years when Victoria would rectify its past mistakes, while building a solid financial and budgetary basis for future growth. In order to do so, however, the City would have to have enjoyed enough prosperity to maintain its sinking funds, provide adequate services for a growing population, and somehow, have its sources of obtaining revenues restructured or revitalized so that it never again would fall into an abyss of debt as deep as it had done by 1929.

Instead, Victoria City, almost crippled by large debts, rising relief costs, and falling revenues, sank lower and lower into the depths of depression. Unlike the nearby municipalities, Victoria's attempts at retrenchment and other cost saving devices did not alleviate its financial crisis; and as a consequence, the mayor and councillors chose the only course of action short of declaring bankruptcy that they could - a refunding of the city's debt.¹¹

Mayor Leeming, in December 1936, could finally offer to the people of Victoria a glimmer of hope with regard to the current state and probable outcome of the City's financial position. In his Annual Report for that year, he carefully outlined the factors considered by the council up to that point in time:

Early in the year [1936] the City Council called the bond dealers of the City together to discuss the City's financial position. In reviewing the whole situation the following were placed before the bond dealers:

First. For the last two years no levy had been made for sinking fund requirements. Approximately, \$260,000 per annum.

Second. Serial bonds maturing are being refunded and not redeemed, approximately \$240,000 per annum.

Third. Profits in sinking funds have all been used to keep down budget requirements.

Fourth. Uncertainty regarding City's obligations for relief of unemployment.

Fifth. Steady decrease in number of taxable properties owing to reversions for non-payment of taxes.

Sixth. Immediate necessity for making provision for proper maintenance of public services and a considerable amount of much needed work. Many of our streets,

roads, and sidewalks are in need of improvement and as a matter of fact all departments have been neglected for some years past.¹²

From this dismal synopsis of the City's financial ills, however, the mayor went on to delineate the steps that the city officials planned to take in the coming year in order to solve the growing crisis. Their paramount aim would be to "refund the whole of the City's debt."¹³ To that end, the mayor, and the city comptroller, Mr. Henley, were instructed by Council to "proceed to London and Toronto" for the purposes of conferring with the various groups that held the major portions of Victoria's bonds. As to measures on the home front, the Dominion Mortgage and Investors' Association was prevailed upon to wait until 1937 to collect the payments due to them in 1936. The Association, having been assured by Council that the bondholders were sure to agree to the refunding scheme, acquiesced in the matter.¹⁴

So noteworthy was the refunding venture to be that the editors of the Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs devoted considerable space in their 1936 volume in reporting it, and this read in part:

. . . . In August, 1936, the City Council of Victoria initiated steps looking for a conversion of its bonded debt on which the annual carrying charges amounted to \$1,300,000. It adopted a proposal by its fiscal agent, C. S. Henley, that it send a delegation consisting of himself, the Mayor (Mr. D. Leeming), aldermen, and civic officials to Toronto, New York and London in an effort to induce 51 percent of the bondholders to agree to conversion The plan was delayed when an injunction was secured by a ratepayer restraining the City from paying over to Mr. Henley \$15,000 for expenses of the trip of the party, the agreement calling for an additional payment of \$15,000 should the plan succeed. The arrangement as to

expenses was altered and the party proceeded to the large financial centres, accompanied by the Mayor of Vancouver. When Mr. Leeming left London on October 31, to return home he expressed confidence that a satisfactory solution would be reached on the conversion of Victoria's \$12,600,000 debt, but little more was heard of the plan that year.¹⁵

Negotiations between the bondholders and the City actually took place over an eighteen month period. When enough support for the scheme had finally been given by the required number of bondholders, the City submitted the plan to the provincial government for ratification, and by late 1937, the required legislation was passed whereby the refunding could proceed.

Andrew McGavin, the new mayor of Victoria, was obviously encouraged by these events, and he included a brief comment in his report for 1937 which showed his pleasure:

The scheme provides for an extension of our debt, thereby reducing the annual requirement for capital charges. This reduction . . . should make it possible to carry out much needed improvements to many of our public services, particularly our streets which have been neglected for many years and which are now demanding immediate attention.¹⁶

The mayor also pointed out that the tax rate was reduced in 1937 by one and one-half mills. Furthermore, civic salaries were increased by five percent (essentially to restore salaries that had been reduced from time to time during the mid-years of the Depression) and Victoria City could claim an operating surplus of more than \$111,000, whereas it had had a deficit of over \$61,000 in 1936.¹⁷ Yet it had not simply been the refunding action alone that was responsible

for the general improvement in the City's financial position. Other economic and political factors were at work in British Columbia during the period from 1933 to 1937 that were to have a direct effect on the City's recovery.

The simplest way to introduce those factors (and indeed, outline Victoria's economic resurgence) might be first to recall that between late 1929 and early 1933 the capital city region had suffered a severe decline in all economic sectors along with most other Canadian metropolitan centres. Then, through the remainder of 1933 and as far as the end of 1935, although conditions worsened in such areas as municipal finance, particularly for Victoria City, greater demands from at home and abroad for Vancouver Island products caused perceptible gains in the industrial production, retail trade, and employment levels of the capital city region. And, specific legislation generated by the provincial and federal governments provided greater financial assistance to the municipalities in the realms of direct and work relief. Thus aid from higher levels of government and a steady if unspectacular upswing in the region's business tempo combined, as far as Victoria City was concerned, to establish a basis of relative prosperity that was desperately needed by the city councils at mid-Depression if they were to avoid the same financial crises faced by their predecessors.

By 1937 general economic recovery was a reality in Greater Victoria. It would not be until the war years of the Forties, however, that the area once again reached the economic highs

that it had in the autumn of 1929. As a consequence, one can consider the Depression to have extended over a full decade in the Island metropolis. But it is more important to recognize that, while the citizens of Greater Victoria knew the nature and extent of their economic dilemma as early as the winter of 1930-31, and that they had attempted to use every means at their disposal between 1932 and 1936 to bring their city out of depression, it had become clear to them that individual urban centres were not going to solve their problems by themselves. Victorians, victims of a national as well as a world-wide economic collapse, realized that alone they were virtually helpless in achieving economic recovery for their city. It is no wonder they along with other citizens of British Columbia pressed hard for government action - almost from the beginning.

Responding in large part to that pressure, Premier Tolmie in May, 1933, had appointed a "Royal Commission on Municipal Taxation". Its main recommendations were so appropriate to the needs of Victoria that it might have appeared as if the commissioners had used the Island city as their model. First, they proposed a higher income tax rate and an increment tax for the province, presumably at the expense of Ottawa. Second, the commissioners urged that net business profits be taxed by the province and that the municipalities be compelled to employ strict improvements' levies in matters of local taxation. Third, they contended that the province should assume more municipal costs and, equally important, all

hospital costs. Fourth, they suggested that the province re-establish the 1929 basis of grants and social service benefits, since those earlier formulas would add upwards of \$3,000,000 to municipal coffers. Fifth, they recommended that the inner wards of Saanich be annexed to Victoria - a suggestion that may well have alarmed many residents in Saanich, who were accustomed to paying much lower taxes than their southern neighbours when the report was made public in February, 1934. Nevertheless, people in Greater Victoria were hopeful that most of the recommendations would come into force within the very near future.¹⁸

The Victoria Daily Colonist ran the headline "MUNICIPAL REPORT SEES SOLUTION IN HIGHER TAXATION" on February 16, but followed this rather frightening statement with an article that claimed that the commissioners were more concerned with finding ways to aid the cities than with recommending any severe increases in the current tax levels. To pay for that aid, taxes would obviously have to be raised, but across the board for businesses and individual citizens alike.¹⁹ Victorians, therefore, could have agreed fully with this comment from the Canadian Annual Review for 1934.

The Municipalities, the Commission found, had a just claim on the Province. Their existing revenues were declared inadequate; additional municipal revenues were needed, and these, the Report stated, could not come from land.²⁰

Tolmie's Conservative government had not survived into 1934. Instead, T. D. Pattullo and the Liberal party had to contend with the problems created by municipal finance and

their falling revenues. On May 18, 1934, Premier Pattullo announced that an understanding had been reached with the federal government, whereby \$10,000,000 had been obtained by British Columbia for immediate budgetary purposes. Of this amount, \$1,000,000 was earmarked for advances to the municipalities. While Victoria's share of the grant was not great, it was nevertheless a beginning.²¹

Pattullo continued to press the government of R. B. Bennett, and after the federal election of 1935, Bennett's successor, Mackenzie King, in the hopes that more economic aid would be given to the west coast province. On May 11, 1936, Pattullo returned from a trip that he had made to Ottawa, and disclosed that the federal government had for the time being refused to give British Columbia any more funds for municipal aid.²² The premier, by then faced with what was a very serious financial situation in both Vancouver and Victoria, had to act quickly in order to avoid civic disaster. According to one source:

Substantial relief for the municipalities at this [late 1936] Session was in the form of legislation relieving them of the cost of social services to the amount of \$700,000 a year. At the same time the Government secured the passage of a measure authorizing the municipalities to refund their debts provided they obtained the consent of 51 percent of the bondholders.²³

The City of Victoria, therefore, found itself able to rely upon the provincial government at last in its financial crisis; although it was clear to almost everyone that officials of the City would have to take many remedial steps themselves before the state of depression was over. Yet the

fact that Victoria's council had been so quick to seize the initiative in 1936 - as their actions towards refunding the City's debt had proved - showed its citizens that their community would probably recover from the Depression in due course; especially since the general economy of Greater Victoria had, by late 1934, begun to improve at a steady rate. Still, the refunding process, and the stigma that fell on the City because of it, took some toll when Leeming, upon his return to Victoria in late 1936 from an overseas trip to secure bondholder support, failed to win another term as mayor. Andrew McGavin, a sitting alderman, did win the mayor's seat, however, while men like R. H. Ker, a local chamber of commerce official, had openly supported Leeming in a letter to the Victoria Daily Times just prior to the civic election. Both McGavin's victory and Ker's letter indicated that the council was not actually in disfavour throughout the City. All in all, their efforts had been appreciated - but, more than proof of financial reform in civic affairs was required for Victoria's economy in mid-Depression.²⁴

It is somewhat difficult, however, to separate the economic recovery of Greater Victoria from that of the Dominion as a whole. Indeed, there are problems encountered in attempting to differentiate the capital city region's resurgence from other centres in British Columbia, since many of the reasons for Victoria's recovery lay in the overall growth of the provincial economy from 1934 to 1939. The

most satisfactory explanation is simply that Greater Victoria recovered, as it had earlier fallen - because British Columbia, and beyond that, Canada, had done so. Any element of uniqueness in the economic recovery of the capital city region would have to be in degree rather than kind.

From 1935 to 1939, metropolitan Victoria enjoyed economic growth in almost the same order as it had suffered economic decline between 1929 and 1933. Basically, improved world trade conditions affected the coast province. Great Britain, for example, embarked upon a nation-wide residential construction plan and sought much of its building materials from the forests of Vancouver Island. Similarly, greater demands for British Columbia resources such as minerals were made by nations attempting to recover from the Depression through major programmes to produce arms and capital equipment. Yet these processes were extremely slow, and never in any one year was a major breakthrough experienced in the provincial economy. Victoria's role in this instance was essentially that of a metropolitan area, whereby the capital city region tended to provide investment capital, labour, services, and some of the materials that were required by the men working in the primary industries up-Island.

From this juncture, it was not difficult for Victorians to believe that the retail trade and industries of their area would, if not flourish, at least increase at a steady rate. The Report of the provincial Deputy Minister of Labour for 1934 reflected this growing attitude when it mentioned,

"In common with other Provinces and countries, we experienced a severe setback during the recent years of depression, but we welcome as a very practical sign of improvement an increase of \$14,441,300.26 in our industrial pay-roll for 1934 over 1933."²⁶

(The upswing in the area's retail trade, generated by the servicing of up-Island communities, had the direct effect of creating new jobs in Greater Victoria. This in turn caused an increase of money in circulation throughout the area. Yet an even greater economic surge was about to occur, since the capital City region, in 1938, registered a total ^x of 225,000 tourists who had arrived in 44,160 automobiles. This was a record year in the history of the City's tourist industry - an achievement that many Victorians might have attributed in large part to the efforts of R. F. Green, their senator in Ottawa, who, in 1934, was a member of a committee that had been instrumental in obtaining a federal grant of \$100,000 for the promotion of tourism in Canada.²⁷ While the actual number of tourists had been greater in 1927 - 350,000 had arrived then - only 18,300 automobiles had come; and consequently, the increase in motor traffic had been the primary factor in creating the record number of tourist dollars entering the city.²⁸ Moreover, it was the speciality shops, hotels, transportation facilities, and service industries of the capital city region that benefited most from the increase in the influx of tourists. Victoria City, with its central business district virtually surrounding the

landing docks for the ships which carried a large proportion of the tourists, was to enjoy the greatest benefit from the increased trade.²⁹

Heavy industry in Greater Victoria did not, however, fare as well after 1934 as did the retail and tourist trade in the area. Shipbuilding, for example, was almost defunct by 1933. A submission regarding shipbuilding subsidies sent by the City to the prime minister of Canada in 1959, asserted that during the Depression, "The [Victoria] Machinery [Depot] managed to survive only by engaging in various industrial activities outside its general ship repair speciality while its staff dwindled to a slim nucleus of between 100 and 200 men."³¹ Similarly, Yarrows Limited, of Esquimalt, had allegedly reduced its operations to the most minimal level, while the Canadian Government Dry Dock in Esquimalt, which could be used to service the largest ships afloat in the world, had been obliged to drop its labour force at one point to 184: a reduction that meant much when it is considered that the dry dock employed up to 3,980 men during World War II.³¹

Industries pertaining to the sea seemed to be problematical for Victoria during the Thirties. Another example of the City being caught off guard as the Depression hit, concerned the Ogden Point grain elevators. In June, 1927, Pacific Grain Terminals Limited of Regina had obtained from the federal government a twenty-five year lease (including a renewals clause) in order to build elevators for the Pacific Ocean

grain trade. The City of Victoria had agreed at that time to guarantee the company's bonds up to the amount of \$508,000. When the company defaulted in 1935 due to the collapse of the grain markets, the City had to foreclose, and as a consequence, inherited the elevators. Only in January, 1937, did Victoria finally acquire all the previous rights in regard to the facilities that the company had enjoyed - but in the two-year interregnum, Victoria had had all the maintenance costs to contend with.³²

One part of the capital city region's income that literally moved down, then up, with the fortunes of the nation was the contribution made by government spending. For Greater Victoria, government expenditures were very significant, primarily because they provided the salaries of civil servants, both federal and provincial, who worked in the area. With regard to the military establishments in Esquimalt, however, they had not been that large during the Twenties and they had been reduced even more during the Depression - especially the Royal Canadian Navy's contingent. In the winter of 1933-34, the R.C.N. at Esquimalt could only maintain two small destroyers in a state of readiness: one fully serviceable, the other considerably less so.³³ Even by the outbreak of war in 1939, the R.C.N. had but two destroyers on the Pacific coast. Thus it can be seen that little economic impetus was forthcoming from the military units, other than a limited input of monies through salaries of the sailors and dockyard men, as well as the purchasing

in town of commissary and other supplies.³⁴

In the realms of financial recovery, however, the picture for Greater Victoria was considerably different. Bank clearings in the City had reached an all-time high of \$151,226,000 in 1929, but by 1932, the total had dropped to \$70,673,000 for the year.³⁵ As an indication of the rapid upswing in financial transactions, as well as the somewhat quickened pace of general economic activity in the coastal province by 1934, bank clearings for the first eleven months had reached \$228,352,093, or \$10,372,257 above a similar period in 1933.³⁶ Adding to the improvement in the financial climate, the stock market transactions in Victoria during the winter of 1933-34 "showed an element of stability that had been absent since the market crash of 1929."³⁷ Yet some areas of the financial world were still floundering in late 1933 - especially in the realms of life insurance sales and mortgages for residential construction.³⁸

Uneven as the overall economic recovery of Greater Victoria appeared to be, therefore, by 1936 there was no doubt in the minds of its citizens that they had come through the worst of the Depression. Whereas production in British Columbia had been valued at \$125,000,000 in 1933, in 1936 the province could claim products worth \$200,000,000.³⁹ The latter year had been one in which forest products had reached an all-time high, and substantial gains were also marked in both minerals and agriculture.⁴⁰ While unemployment throughout the province - and particularly in cities like Victoria - had not

been fully eliminated, there was a rise in the employment level and wages were higher. By 1938, the average weekly wage for males in British Columbia was \$26.70; and although it did not equal the 1929 high of \$29.20, it nevertheless was a substantial improvement over the \$22.30 average that had been paid out in the worst years of the Depression.⁴¹

The Victoria Chamber of Commerce could actively work by 1938 for a campaign to "revitalize downtown Victoria" because its members believed their City was ready to meet the future with renewed optimism.⁴² Furthermore, civic leaders in each of the four municipalities often expressed confident remarks on their respective communities' abilities to withstand the financial pressures anticipated for the years ahead.

R. F. Blanley of Oak Bay, for example, wrote in his last annual report of the Depression years:

Notwithstanding the outbreak of war, 1939 was very satisfactory financially. We budgeted for a deficit of \$10,047 but actually finished the year with a surplus of \$2,235. This was due chiefly to the excellent manner in which taxes were paid. Of the current levy, 93.656% was collected and the best percentage in our history Arrears at the end of the year were \$27,074 less than in 1938, (in spite of a slight increase in the levy. Only two lots fell to the Municipality at tax sale.⁴³)

The construction industry of Greater Victoria - perhaps the best overall indicator of the area's economic recovery - showed that this area of Canada, already famous as a residential and retirement centre, had truly weathered the Depression by the beginning of the war. Building permits were issued in Victoria City in 1940 for \$805,470. This involved 720 construction starts on new units;⁴⁴ whereas, in

1932, only \$389,673 worth of permits had been issued.⁴⁵ Esquimalt, having had let building permits for only \$18,900 in 1933,⁴⁶ increased its share to \$61,566 in 1940.⁴⁷ The same improvement in conditions was also true for Saanich and Oak Bay.

Metropolitan Victoria, therefore, had made economic recovery a reality by the end of the Thirties, although not until the early years of the war would the economic levels of the last years of the Twenties be reached and ultimately surpassed by the capital city region. The pattern of world trade, the national economy of Canada, and the general economic situation in Victoria's home province, had all to a greater or lesser degree contributed towards the particular economic impact of the Depression in the city - as well as delineating the road back that Victoria was forced to take during the latter part of the Thirties. Much of that journey was difficult and often frustrating for Victorians, especially for political leaders in the area. It is to their efforts during those years that we now must turn.

CHAPTER FOUR FOOTNOTES

- 1 City of Victoria, A. McGavin, Mayor, Annual Report, 1937, pp. 6-7. The mayor was referring more to world conditions of a military and political nature - such as those exemplified by the aggressive, overt moves by Japan, Germany, and Italy during the late Thirties - rather than world economic conditions, which had actually improved vastly during 1937.
- 2 City of Victoria, D. Leeming, Mayor, Annual Report, 1934, p. 15.
- 3 City of Victoria, Leeming, Mayor, Annual Report, 1933, p. 14.
- 4 A. Helmcken, Victoria. Interview with the writer, July 8, 1968.
- 5 "Greater Victoria", British Columbia Directory, 1937, pp. 1469-1471. See also Appendix "D", Tables XII, XIII, XIX, XX, XXII, XXVII.
- 6 Oak Bay, R. F. Blandy, Treasurer, Annual Report, 1933, p. 5.
- 7 Saanich, Municipal Council, Minutes, 1933, p. 4.
- 8 Ibid., p. 6.
- 9 Ibid., 1934, p. 134.
- 10 Mr. I. Foster, Oak Bay. Interview with the writer, January 5, 1969.
- 11 City of Victoria, "Finances of the City of Victoria", unpub. mimeo. brief, circa 1951. The mayor, P. E. George; the city solicitor, A. J. Patton; and the comptroller-treasurer, D. A. Macdonald; were all contributors to this document which read in part: "During the depression years and the war years the City was forced to follow a retrenchment policy, first, by the inability of many of its taxpayers to meet their tax obligations, and second, by the shortage of labour and materials during the war years. The result of the retrenchment is that there is a great accumulation of public works, etc., which the City has been forced by circumstances beyond its control to defer. While Municipal expenditures during those years were kept within the means of the Municipality, the great accumulation of deferred expenditures will place a heavy burden on the shoulders of the taxpayer, and he is in dire need of assistance in the form of restoration and increase of grants by the Province as already referred to in this brief." (p. 17).

Mayor Leeming, obviously aware of the concern of citizens in Victoria during 1934, wrote: "In spite of many difficulties your City Council has conducted the financial business of the City along orthodox lines and all the obligations of the City, including interest and sinking fund requirements, have been met in full, but it only has been by the closest supervision of expenditures and the strictest economy that this has been accomplished." (Mayor, Annual Report, 1934, p. 14).

12 City of Victoria, Mayor, Annual Report, 1936, p. 1.

13 Loc. cit.

14 Ibid., pp. 2-3.

15 Canadian Annual Review, 1936, pp. 394-395.

16 City of Victoria, Mayor, Annual Report, 1937, p. 6.

17 Loc. cit.

18 Canadian Annual Review, 1934, p. 331.

19 Victoria Daily Colonist, February 16, 1934, p. 1.

20 Op. cit., p. 332.

21 Ibid., p. 334.

22 Canadian Annual Review, 1936, pp. 391-392.

23 Loc. cit.

24 Victoria Daily Times, October 18, 1936, p. 5.

25 Canadian Annual Review, 1936, pp. 510-580. Also included in the C.A.R.'s appreciation of the national economic recovery, were these remarks: "The salient features of the two-year period [1935-36] of Canada's recovery may be summarized as follows: (1) the further expansion in production, the only major area not participating being the drought-ridden section of the Prairie Provinces, and in the physical volume of trade, both being principally by export demand from Great Britain and the United States; (2) the further growth of public debt financial chiefly by the banks, as private capital investment failed to provide normal employment of labour; (3) the additional emphasis on low interest rates and high prices for top grade bonds; (4) credit balances of international payments; (5) the gradual return of stability to the foreign exchange position of the Canadian dollar, toward parity with United States funds; and (6) the improvement in commodity and stock prices which gained momentum rapidly in the second half of 1936." (p. 513).

The C.A.R. also pointed out that British Columbia had produced substantially more in the above period - especially in forest and fishing products. For example, in 1934, B. C. forest production was valued at \$45,546,430 when it had been only \$29,404,759 in 1934. Similarly, fish products sold for \$17,231,534 in 1936, but only for \$15,234,335 in 1934. (p. 576). See also Appendix "D", Table III.

26 B. C. Deputy Minister of Labour, Annual Report, 1934, Victoria, B. C., K.P., 1934, p. 1.

27 Canadian Annual Review, 1934, p. 111.

28 L. A. Gale, "Tourists Arriving in the Business District of Victoria", (Brief prepared for Real Estate Board meeting, March, 1928 - title later modified to "Town Planning in Business District of Victoria").

This brief was a perfect example of the prevailing "booster" attitude extant in Victoria during the first two decades of this century. One paragraph stood out:

"Referring to the map again we find that the area of open space of the [proposed] Civic Centre could best be that space bounded by Pandora to the south, Amelia to the east, Cormorant to the north and Blanchard to the west taking in space that is now an eyesore, a maze of lanes with shacks and delapidated houses and vacant lots filled with rubbish and weeds. Some of the lots are assessed at only two hundred dollars. If it cost millions the price would be well worth paying to change this disease breeding slum (the only one we are glad to say in [the] city today) into a place of beauty and a source of pride to our citizens for all time, as a proper setting for a new Court House and other public buildings when needed. Think of the advertising value to our visitors this coming year and to the scores of realtors who will attend the Pacific Northwest Realtors Conference this summer if a large sign were erected at once saying that this was the site for the proposed City Centre in Victoria . . . Captain Cook Square." (pp. 4-5). Obviously this grandiose scheme fell along with others into the dustbin of the Thirties.

29 Malcolm E. Robinson, "A Method for Investigating the Effects of Tourism on the Functional and Morphological Development of a City: As Applied to Greater Victoria, British Columbia," Evanston, Illinois, Northwestern University, Ph.D. dissertation, 1957, pp. 170-178.

According to Robinson, the principal sources of income for Greater Victoria by 1900 were: service as a political and administrative capital; the local military units; an infant shipbuilding industry; trapping; lumbering; and fishing. Tourism at that stage was for "the winter visitor and commercial traveller". Later on in his thesis, Robinson claimed: "This study indicates that the rise of tourism is the outcome of

[Victoria's] past history. Early in Victoria's historical development it became apparent that certain aspects of the city's location seriously hindered the development of trade and manufacturing in the city. It also became apparent that the city was attracting a growing number of travellers, and later, tourists." (p. 178). This growth in the number of annual visitors apparently caused large amounts of private and public funds to be invested in the new industry during the first two decades of this century. (loc. cit.)

Two further comments on the importance of tourism in the area during the Depression are noteworthy in themselves: According to Wrigley's Greater Victoria Directory for 1933-34, "There has, owing to the world-wide business depression, been a decrease [in tourists since 1929], but despite these adverse conditions Victoria has continued to attract so many holiday makers it is clear her reputation as a summer resort is on a sure foundation. A large amount of capital is invested in this industry, which is only in its infancy and growing rapidly." (p. 42).

Perhaps more realistically, the B. C. Department of Trade and Industry's Annual Report for 1939, had this to say: "The tourist industry in British Columbia is steadily expanding and a considerable amount of work has been done by the British Columbia Travel Bureau to further the industry." (p. FF5).

30 Mayor's Committee of Greater Victoria, "Submission to the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister and the Government of Canada in Respect to the Shipbuilding Industry of Greater Victoria", May, 1959, p. 13.

31 Ibid., pp. 14-15.

32 A. J. Patton, city solicitor for Victoria, letter to C. C. Wyatt, municipal manager for Victoria; April 3, 1951. The elevators had actually begun operation in 1929 with a storage capacity of 1,500,000 bushels. (loc. cit.)

33 James Eays, In Defence of Canada, Toronto, University of Toronto, Press, 1964, vol. 1, p. 284.

34 Canada, Department of National Defence, Annual Reports, 1930-1938. Passim.

35 B. C. Manual of Provincial Information, 1930, pp. 260-280.

36 Canadian Annual Review, 1934, p. 379.

37 Ibid., p. 392.

38 Safarian, The Canadian Economy in the Depression, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1959, pp. 126-132.

Explaining in some detail the reasons for the actual psychology behind mortgage rates being "extremely sticky in the downswing", Safarian contends that, "It is well to note that on the average a house will last for approximately x! 60-75 years. This durability means that replacement can be postponed easily; in 1932-34 for example, gross residential construction barely off-set the overall depreciation on the stock of housing. For the purchaser and the lender it also means a very large and long-term commitment, which both may hesitate to undertake with costs, legislation and income uncertain." (p. 130). Moreover, Safarian claimed that insurance, trust, and loan companies were increasingly unwilling to loan funds with real estate and rental values falling, and that there were a growing number of defaults of interest and principal, coupled with an increasing burden of property taxes, and a rise in legislation which adversely affected creditors. Hence, these companies tended to move strongly towards purchasing government bonds and ignored any attempts at developing new real estate which usually had very high prices associated with individual building lots. All of these factors further decreased the demand for housing in the Dominion during the Depression. (Ibid., pp. 130-131).

39 Canadian Annual Review, 1935-36, pp. 392-393.

40 Loc. cit.

41 British Columbia, Department of Labour, Report of the Deputy Minister, 1934, pp. L4-L22.

42 Victoria Chamber of Commerce, 100 Years On Forward Thinking From 1863 to 1963, Victoria, B. C., 1963, n.p.

43 Oak Bay, Treasurer, Annual Report, 1939, p. 1.

44 "Greater Victoria", British Columbia Directory, Sun Directories Ltd., Vancouver, 1940, p. 1721.

45 City of Victoria, Building Inspector, Annual Report, 1932, p. 1.

46 Esquimalt, Reeve, Annual Report, 1933, n.p.

47 "Greater Victoria", B. C. Directory, 1940, p. 1721.
See also Appendix "D", Tables XII, XIII, XIX, XX, XXIV, XXVIII.

CHAPTER FIVE

POLITICAL REALIGNMENTS: 1933-1939

There is talk in certain quarters of defaulting, sometimes disguised under the term "refunding". For the purpose of protecting our own debenture debt, we have acquired \$438,000 of Government bonds. If interest rates on these bonds are reduced compulsorily, or the bonds repudiated, our taxpayers will suffer heavily.¹

R. F. Blandy, the treasurer of Oak Bay again - but this time his words were directed towards both the provincial authorities and civic officials in British Columbia who, in 1934, had begun to speak in earnest about the possibilities of averting financial disaster in the municipalities by refunding their communities' respective bonded debts. Certainly, Victoria City Council was one of those "certain quarters" that he referred to; for Blandy, like every other municipal official in the capital city region, was fully cognizant of the City's financial morass, including its long list of abortive attempts to reverse its rapidly mounting debt. Furthermore, as Blandy's comment will later be seen to indicate, a constant political tension between Victoria and the surrounding municipalities had existed for years, and it was to reach new extremes during the late years of the Thirties when economic and social pressures appeared to increase almost daily.

Nor would this inter-municipal conflict be all that civic leaders in Greater Victoria had to cope with on the political front. Between 1933 and 1937, the demands put upon them and their meagre resources by the citizens of the area for more

economic aid were a source of bedevillment and frustration. These demands in turn, caused local leaders continually to increase the amount of pressure they were putting upon the provincial government for financial assistance. Thus the latter body, with the obvious blessings of civic leaders, requested more and more aid from the federal cabinet in Ottawa, which, unlike the lower levels of government, had no superior body to turn towards. As a consequence, it could only hope to judge the relative merits of each appeal, with the aim of providing aid to the most destitute regions while simultaneously attempting to establish an economic climate that would be conducive to an overall recovery for the Dominion.

This significance of this political infighting was not lost upon the people of Greater Victoria during the last years of the Depression; and they had ample opportunity to express their views in what was, for a single four-year period, an unusual number of elections. Sandwiched between two provincial contests - one in 1933 and another in 1937 - the Canadian general election of 1935 was one of the most significant political events of this century. For people in Greater Victoria it was no less so. Judging from the area's voting patterns, which had begun to change in the provincial election of 1933 and which were manifestly different by 1935 from those of 1930, it was clear that a general political realignment had occurred in the capital city region.

While it cannot be ascertained that increased political and social agitation during the years of worst depression had created or even spurred this shift in the area's political views, it was, however, patently obvious that people in the capital city region had drifted to the left. They were seeking not only immediate relief from the burdens of the Depression, but also some form of political economy that would forever prevent such privation and misery as it had been their misfortune to experience in the preceding five years.

More than any other phenomenon during the Depression in Greater Victoria, the shift in political views explains the psychological impact that the economic crisis had upon the area. It further reveals many of the reasons for the tension between the four adjacent municipalities, as well as the harmful legacy left to Greater Victoria by their financial and political battles in the last years of the Depression. There is one further point to be made: tensions, pressures, stresses, and strains - the implications carried by such terms, whether in politics or engineering, is that either something must break or be sufficiently inspected (or modified) to be declared strong enough to withstand the forces acting upon it. This might be a worthwhile concept to bear in mind when one examines the effects of the cities clamouring for more aid from higher levels of government, a feature of Depression politics in which Greater Victoria was in the vanguard. Obviously, the City's first and most ready target in the battles for increased assistance was likely to be the provincial government.

Premier Tolmie, harried by dissension in his cabinet and disloyalty in his party, had entered 1933 with serious doubts; not only with regard to his party's fortunes, but also his own future as well. And he should have been; for by the beginning of October, 1933, he had been constitutionally forced to dissolve the legislature, he had accepted the resignation of several cabinet ministers, and he had been the victim of some of the most profound and brutal political criticism seen in British Columbia for decades.² While the criticism was severe, it nevertheless had much basis in fact, since, by mid-December, 1933, the provincial treasury was bankrupt and its own banker, the Bank of Commerce, had cut off all short-term credit. Furthermore, the provincial debt totalled \$165,000,000, with \$1,000,000 to be met immediately in current accounts. In addition, outstanding loans of \$20,000,000 had to be refinanced; and because the municipalities were literally on their knees, the provincial government had had to assume a greater responsibility for unemployment relief.³

Two months earlier, on September 27, Tolmie had opened his campaign for re-election with a speech in Saanich in which he appealed to, "men and women of character and ability who will set aside party politics oppose the dole system and propose that services shall be rendered for relief granted."⁴ According to the premier, he would lead these dedicated (but phantom) individuals in a "Union" government, and if re-elected, he would begin the process of reconstruction

by conducting a survey in conjunction with labour and industry "to develop every means of creating employment."⁵

On November 23, Tolmie, by then the leader of his newly styled Unionist Party, lost in his Saanich riding to a lawyer, N. W. Whittaker of the Liberals. Moreover, it was a clear defeat for Tolmie, as Whitaker had beaten him by over three hundred votes of the less than four thousand cast.⁶ In Victoria City, where twenty-three candidates had sought four seats, the results were far worse for the government. B. I. Johnson and John Hart - both Liberals - placed first and second respectively. Next came Herbert Anscomb, who, in the early years of the Depression had been the popular mayor of Victoria, but who had chosen instead to leave municipal politics and was apparently making an attempt to find relief for his city as an independent member of the provincial legislature. Rounding out Victoria's representatives, was R. Connell of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.⁷ Only in Esquimalt did the Unionists have any success; R. H. Pooley, earlier the attorney general in Tolmie's Conservative cabinet, was returned to office. Yet Pooley's margin was only fifty-nine votes beyond that of his nearest rival, a Liberal. If one observes, moreover, that the C.C.F. candidate polled 525 votes, then it is clear that the pattern of voting had shifted markedly to the left there too.⁸

Throughout the province the 1933 election had been a debacle for the Conservatives. The Liberals, under T. D. Pattullo, had obtained thirty-four seats, while the

C.C.F., by then the official opposition, had won seven. Thus a very large number of voters in the capital city region had seen fit not only to switch their political allegiance to the Liberals, but also to take a gamble, since they could have had no guarantee of significant cabinet representation in a government formed by Pattullo. In the course of the previous three years, he had often demanded that more aid be given to Mainland centres, but had spoken little of the specific needs of Island communities. Certainly, one of the reasons for the political realignment in Greater Victoria was the Tolmie regime's record of singular ineptitude. This in turn had been as good an indication as any to Victorians that a change was coming; while their own experiences in the early Depression years had proven to them that it could be much more profitable to be among the winners in British Columbia politics, than among the losers.⁹

Another likely reason for the shift, however, might have been that John Hart, a financial agent by profession, and a man highly respected in Victoria, had allegedly been earmarked by Pattullo before the election to become the minister of finance and industries. To have a local representative in so important a cabinet post would be a feather in any city's cap and should ensure ready access to the provincial treasury board.¹⁰ Apart from these considerations, however, was the fact the Pattullo and the Liberals appeared to offer proposals for economic recovery and the alleviation of social

distress which were actually exciting to many people in Greater Victoria.¹¹

Pattullo appealed to the voters' moral judgement and common sense; but all the party leaders did that. What set his campaign basically apart from his rivals' was his imaginative concept of "Work With Wages", a slogan coined by the Liberals that could be used as a panacea for virtually every problem facing the province in the Depression. Claiming that doles were "breaking down morale", Pattullo demanded the creation of a "national credit" for a "war on poverty".¹²

Included in this far-reaching concept, were interest-free loans to the provinces by the federal government which would enable massive public works programmes to be started; and these should then allow every man out of work in British Columbia an opportunity to obtain adequate and steady employment.¹³ For those persons in Greater Victoria seeking jobs, such promises would be difficult to vote against.

Directing his aim next at the problems of the cities, Pattullo claimed that he sought, "equitable adjustment between the Province and the municipalities and the placing of the latter in a sound financial position."¹⁴ Other highlights of his proposed programme included the creation of an economic council, abolition of certain taxes, the formation of a national unemployment insurance scheme, the development of a state health insurance plan, a central national bank, increased grants for education and highways, and sweeping reforms in the Mothers' Pension Act.¹⁵ One might contrast these

promises to those of the C.C.F. candidates, whereby the latter would seek:

Cooperation with other Provinces to obtain complete socialization of all the financial machinery of the country - banking, currency, credit, and insurance - and if compelled by a situation of a Provincial emergency, to develop purely Provincial credit, based on Provincial resources.¹⁶

Accordingly, Victorians confronted with Tolmie's vague platform on the one hand, and the radical militancy of the C.C.F.'s avowed goals on the other, chose to cast most of their votes for the party that promised concrete action but would not go so far as to threaten completely the status quo. As one study has it:

Of all the groups contesting the election, the Liberal party was alone in being an orthodox party in a position to form a stable government if it were victorious . . . however, in refusing Tolmie's offer [of coalition, Pattullo] had run the risk of failure - but the bulk of the electorate reasoned that Tolmie was simply trying to retain office and therefore had to go.¹⁷

Within the first few months after their victory, Pattullo's Liberals were faced with two major crises: that of making a provincial budget for the coming year, 1934, and second, having to respond to the Report of the previously mentioned royal commission on municipal taxation. In the first instance, John Hart budgetted for a deficit of \$2,000,000, while making no provision for the province's sinking fund or unemployment relief expenditures. In the meantime, Pattullo demanded \$8,000,000 from Prime Minister Bennett: a claim based in large part upon the fact that British Columbia was playing host to upwards of one-third of all the unemployed

in Canada. Bennett countered with a demand that Hart's budget deficit be reduced to \$1,000,000. This Pattullo refused, and warned the prime minister about interfering in the affairs of the provincial government.¹⁸ The battle of demands and counterdemands between the governments in Ottawa and Victoria continued on for many months after 1933 had passed. Sometimes, as in the case of their first demand, the provincial government appeared the winner - sometimes not.¹⁹

Still, almost immediately after assuming office, Pattullo had had to take direct and positive action with regard to the cities, for nowhere, in 1934, were the pressures from the municipalities more evident nor more eloquently expressed than in the above mentioned Report of the "Municipal Taxation Commission" which was released on February 9 - eleven days prior to the opening of the 1934 session of the provincial legislature. Virtually every provincial centre of any consequence had made a representation to the commission, and in the case of the larger cities like Victoria, several interested agencies in addition to the city council had submitted specific complaints and proposals on the subject at hand.

Victoria City Council had demanded for itself all revenues collected from the amusements taxes in the capital city region, since it considered the City to be the recreational centre of the area, which, according to the councillors, meant that costs to the City for these purposes were much

higher than in the outlying districts. Using similar arguments, the council called for shares in gasoline tax revenues, automobile licence fees, and provincial income taxes. Furthermore, the council requested increased grants for the various capital city beautification projects in progress, as well as for more financial assistance for the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria, since the council claimed it was in reality "a county hospital".²⁰

Representatives of the Victoria Real Estate Board went beyond those proposals by urging that a municipal income tax be levied as well as the existing taxes on property. Additionally, the board sought to secure a scheme whereby municipal revenues would be protected in the future by having the provincial government reduce its own expenditures: if so, the realtors believed, the savings realized could be passed onto the municipalities.²¹ The Victoria Ratepayers Association, however, saw education and police costs as the major problem facing the cities. In its own submission, the association urged that one province-wide municipal police force be created; that education costs be "immediately reduced by 50%"; that the province assume all the costs of education; and that free education be given to a pupil only until his sixteenth birthday.²² Thereafter, he was presumably to be on his own.

With regard to relations between provincial and municipal governments (an important area to be examined by the commission) the Victoria City Council went on record as saying:

The City reaffirms its stand that the cost of unemployment relief is a national problem and should not be assumed by the Provinces or the Municipalities.

Many who share in the benefits of the activities of a centralized or highly organized metropolitan area are living just beyond the confines thereof, and escape the burden of the cost of unemployment relief that must inevitably fall within the business or metropolitan area.

The policy of shifting the new burdens imposed during 1932 on the municipalities, without giving some other form of revenue to provide for the cost, is an erroneous one, as the only place the burden can fall is on land and buildings, which are already bearing excessive tax charges.²³

As the Report began to take shape, it must have been clear to all those involved in its preparation that the contributors were concerned primarily with local conditions (in addition to being most anxious to further their own specific causes or projects) rather than to provide any overall solution to the Province's financial ills in relation to its municipalities. The submission from the Saanich Ratepayers, for example, concentrated solely upon "the hopeless task" of assessing equitably lands in the rural and urban wards of Saanich.²⁴ Furthermore, it was claimed that since, "farm improvements were inaccurately assessed as land, farmers were paying excessively high taxes".²⁵ In contrast, Esquimalt Council put forth the proposal that naval and military property should not exempt from municipal taxation. Moreover, the council stated that until this proposed reform was achieved, the municipality should receive special financial aid from Ottawa to defray the costs incurred by Esquimalt in providing the services that the defence units enjoyed but which they actually never paid for.²⁶

Out of this tangled web of civic demands - some obviously valid, others less so - the commissioners attempted to draft specific proposals on which Pattullo's government could act. By urging the recognition of a "necessity for gradual introduction of reforms", however, the commissioners drew attention to the key factor essential to the solving of the cities' economic and financial woes: an overall recovery of the provincial economy, which would surely come only with a resurgence of business activity and industrial production.²⁷ Without this, it was explained, the provincial government could not hope to strengthen the municipalities to the degree that everyone who contributed to the Report had wished.

The provincial government did make a determined effort to encourage the growth of trade and industry in the ensuing years of the Thirties, as the previous discussion on the capital city region's economic recovery between 1933 and 1939 has already shown. As to the specific actions that Pattullo's cabinet took with regard to the plight of the municipalities, its most sweeping measures were outlined in the amendments to the Municipal Act, approved by the Lieutenant Governor on March 23, 1935. Fundamentally, the cabinet had sought to relieve property owners of the burdens they were carrying with respect to civic finances. By inserting a clause in the act that would force civic officials to clear proposed spending by-laws with the provincial department of municipal affairs, the cabinet did a real service for the people of British Columbia.²⁸ When the act further implied that

properties should not fall so easily to tax-sales (as they had done too often in the past) the government undoubtedly earned the lasting gratitude of many homeowners in Greater Victoria.²⁹

During the 1934 and 1935 sessions, special acts regarding the problems of specific cities (such as Vancouver, but not Victoria) were passed with the aim of alleviating conditions there. The Unemployment Relief Act of 1933 was amended to allow provincial relief investigators much greater latitude in performing their duties, since one of the new government's goals had been to make the process of dispensing relief in the cities more effective than it had been before it came to power.³⁰ In such manner Pattullo continued to struggle with the problems of the Depression throughout the rest of the Thirties. If he had hoped, however, to obtain stronger support from the new federal Liberal regime of Mackenzie King than he had obtained from Bennett's Conservatives, he was not long in discovering that the new prime minister was, if anything, even less sympathetic to his pleas for increased aid.³¹

In the meantime, civic officials in Victoria and elsewhere continued to lament the state of municipal finances; particularly with regard to their inadequate sources of revenue, which the Municipal Act amendment of 1935 had failed fully to resolve. In December, 1935, Mayor Leeming of Victoria summarized his own city's plight in the following words:

The Council had again to resort to refunding of maturing serial debentures, to seek authority from the Government to avoid making payments into the sinking fund, to borrow from the Government on account of unemployment relief and to take surplus profits from the sinking funds. These four items amounted to approximately \$650,000, for which no provision was made by direct taxation as had been the case until recent years. The interest on our debt in 1935 was in the neighbourhood of \$850,000, an enormous burden to be carried by a City of such small proportions as Victoria and with a decreasing number of parcels of land caused by reversions from non-payment of taxes.³²

The Mayor went on to say that the "financial set-up" between the Province and the City "must be changed"; but then admitted that the provincial government was not taking the initiative because it expected Victoria to put its own finances in "better shape" before any assistance would be forthcoming from the cabinet. Leeming appeared to regard this to be virtually impossible, for he added:

It is obvious that real property, or land and buildings, cannot continue to carry the burdens that are being placed thereon. Confidence in real property as an investment has been completely destroyed and, if we are to survive, our Governments must take cognizance of the situation which has been created and amend the whole system.³³

Discourses of this nature fell easily into the category of political infighting. In any case, it was a good indication to political observers in Greater Victoria that Pattullo's honeymoon with the voters was over. Reinforcing this view was the fact that the local newspapers made only fleeting references to his government towards the end of 1935, while the editorial pages of the Times and Colonist revealed a singular lack of comment on provincial Liberal policies. Instead, an increasing amount of their space was devoted to arguing the relative merits of the new Social Credit movement in Alberta.

Yet, as the Canadian federal election of 1935 proved, voters in the capital city region of British Columbia were still inclined to support programmes on the left, despite the fact that they now returned a Conservative, D'Arcy Plunkett, to Ottawa. Plunkett polled 7,505 votes: 1,023 more than his nearest contender from the C.C.F. party, and 1,127 ballots above the Liberal candidate. Taken together, however, the latter two aspirants polled 5,355 votes more than the Conservative.³⁵ When one remembers that 1933 was the first year in which the C.C.F. had contested an election in British Columbia, then it should be obvious that if only one party of the left had run a candidate, - especially had he been a Liberal - the Conservatives would likely have been defeated in the 1935 general election.

The provincial government continued to struggle with the problems of the Depression through the next two years. Yet Pattullo never seemed to lose his elan or energy as he ploughed into one demanding task after another. His relations with the federal prime minister were never a cause for much encouragement at home - a frequent fact of political life in Canada that had appeared to be as much a fault of the one man as the other. Nevertheless, the premier always attempted to take full advantage of every economic opportunity that came the way of his province, whether it lay in federal legislation, unemployment relief projects, highway construction, or bridge building. By and large, the efforts that his government made up to 1937 accorded with the general pattern of economic

recovery in the Dominion, while he and his cabinet certainly contributed much to the resurgence of British Columbia's economy.³⁶

Ironically, it may have been because Pattullo and the Liberals had been as successful as they were in solving some of the most pressing problems of the time, that people in Greater Victoria altered their voting patterns just enough in the 1937 provincial election so that two Conservatives managed to win seats - one in Esquimalt, the other in Victoria City. While John Hart was returned as a Victoria member, for the extent of his service to the province and to his city was beyond question, the personable E. V. Finland, a lawyer and a veteran of the Great War, won a relatively easy victory in Esquimalt for the Conservatives. J. D. Hunter had a more difficult time in Victoria - where some went so far as to say that it was only because he had earlier been a city alderman that he was elected for the Conservatives.³⁷ Whatever the truth of that claim, or however Victorians saw the election, one thing still was clear: that though the City was well on the road to economic recovery, the Depression had taken its toll in the size and strength of the support that the area was willing to give to the Conservative party that had earlier served it for years. Never again would the Conservatives enjoy the almost overwhelming loyalty that they had had in Greater Victoria before the Depression began. As a salient feature to these shifts in voting patterns, however, Tolmie returned to federal politics through a by-election in

1937, since Plunkett had died. Nevertheless his victory could not itself be considered to be a significant new shift in political alignments since four years was a considerable length of time in which many people could soften their attitudes towards a public figure, particularly one for many years prior to the Depression had been a familiar and reassuring presence in Greater Victoria.³⁸

If, during the last years of the Thirties, civic officials in the four municipalities had more or less accepted the idea that the provincial government had worked upon their behalf, they had not, however, learned to co-operate amongst themselves. In fact, they chose instead to increase their prevailing conflicts, which only served to harm them all. Essentially, they had come to be divided into two warring camps: Victoria City on the one side; Saanich, Esquimalt, and Oak Bay on the other.

Sometime earlier in this thesis it was mentioned that councilmen from the capital city usually performed their civic duties at a level below that of other officials in Greater Victoria. Such a charge is difficult to substantiate fully, but certain clues are available to whomever seeks to determine the levels of probable competence and experience that individual civic leaders displayed during the Depression years. It has been said, for example, that municipal politicians from Saanich were usually farmers - men who had been used to living at a marginal economic level, and therefore, not adverse to saving money, either in their personal or their public

lives.³⁹ On the other hand, representatives in Oak Bay were alleged to have had considerable business and legal experience - in some instances to the extent of having successfully managed commercial enterprises worth millions of dollars.⁴⁰ Officeholders in Esquimalt, however, had varied backgrounds, in as much as there were often tradesmen, artisans and retired servicemen interspersed with merchants and professionals on the municipal council. As for Victoria City, people who sought civic office had almost inevitably earned their livelihoods in the central business district; hence, the rolls of the Victoria Chamber of Commerce and the Victoria City Council too often appeared to be carbon copies of each other. Accordingly, the City's small merchants, through numerical strength alone, had dominated the councils and consequently, the capital city had suffered through decades of poor management, born of small thinking, in the guise of "civic betterment and progress."⁴¹

By 1939, the council's composition had apparently changed very little,⁴² although the basic attitudes of Victoria's council members (made more realistic perhaps by the events of the Depression years) showed signs of civic responsibility that had never before been so evident before in their predecessor's actions. The primary stumbling block towards enlightened municipal government during the Depression was, however, the peculiar political and financial infighting in which each of the municipalities periodically indulged.

We know of Blandy's views on Victoria City's rush to refund its bonded debt; but we have not seen the extent to which the City sought measures to alleviate its own financial burdens at the expense of the adjacent municipalities during the Thirties. Basically, Victoria's manoeuvring could be seen at work in three different ways: in an outright neglect of joint municipal responsibilities; in precipitate actions to increase the rental rates of various municipal services to the adjacent areas without prior consultation with the latter; and through active encouragement of the concept of municipal amalgamation, whereby all four of the communities in Greater Victoria would be merged into one - the City of Victoria.

Of these three, Victoria's call for amalgamation was, by 1933, both the most ludicrous concept to people outside the City limits, as well as the most frightening. As early as February, 1928, Alderman Marchant of Victoria, had made the following statement:

Had the city fathers of the growing time and boom days been wiser in their generation they would again have sought to stretch the "curtain and the cord" and included in the city limits a still wider extent of territory, and thereby rendered unnecessary the creation of neighbouring municipalities. These adjoining civic bodies have created a number of difficulties that might have been avoided Victoria City is the centre of municipal influence. Should it, because the largest factor, bear all the burdens of municipal life, or should the burdens be broadened out and shared by the neighbouring municipalities? Is Victoria the milch cow, or is it the repository of the resources of the district? . . . I think that the vision of civic statesmen should be of a Greater Victoria; one Municipal Council representative of every section, combining the powers now enjoyed by the four municipalities in action involving charity - pensions to the aged, care

of indigents, provision for the helpless - surely there should be no line of demarkation drawn between municipalities so closely related as in Greater Victoria.⁴³

By 1933, no sane resident of Saanich, Esquimalt, or Oak Bay could have wished for amalgamation; for to do so would have meant that he would have had to have been willing, along with his fellow ratepayers, to assume the same tax rates that Victorians were paying in order to save the capital city from bankruptcy. Nor were citizens in the outlying municipalities to be lulled into believing that great savings in the realms of civic services were likely to occur through any form of amalgamation. In the Saanich Annual Report for 1938, a cryptic note was added to the municipality's financial statement which read: "A disputed water bill of \$17,355.46 from the City of Victoria is not included in the above accounts. The bill is for water supplied from April 1, 1936, to December 31, 1938, at the increased price of 2.37 cents."⁴⁴ Even more to the point, Oak Bay's Report for the same year stated:

Victoria claimed a greatly increased price for water, on the expiry of our agreement in 1937. The former rate was 7 1/2 cents per 1,000 gallons, but the City claimed the equivalent of a 13 1/2 cent rate and brought suit against us. The claim was dismissed by the Supreme Court on January 13, 1939, but the price remains unsettled.⁴⁵

Actions of this nature would hardly have endeared the ratepayers of the outlying municipalities towards any attempts by Victoria City Council to force amalgamation. Indeed, if more proof was needed as to the dangers of such a proposal, people in Greater Victoria had to look no further than to the

Report of a royal commission of 1931 that had been ordered to investigate the state and use of Mount Douglas Park, which, at that time, was jointly administered by both Victoria City and Saanich. The commissioners were unequivocally dismayed with what they had discovered, and they charged that Victoria City had "abandoned the trust" put upon it by the local "Beaches and Parks Committee", since the commissioners alleged, only "a starvation allowance" for maintenance had been provided by the City. Furthermore, the commissioners stated that actual disfigurement of the landscape and scenic beauty of the park would result if Victoria City was allowed to proceed with its plans to build a highway through it.⁴⁶

Needless to say, the surrounding municipalities survived the Depression years as separate entities; and judging from the potential dangers presented by the state of Victoria's finances as well as its political turmoils, they were fortunate to have done so. Thus, if one were to search for a political realignment in municipal politics during that period, surely it would have to be found in the straightening and strengthening of peoples' loyalties to their own municipalities.

Where the initial years of the Depression had produced a negative tone in the politics of the capital city region - the only exception at that time being, perhaps, that the municipal governments of the area enjoyed more confidence from the people than did those at higher levels - the same was not true of the years 1933 to 1939. Primarily, the tone

this time was generally positive - especially with regard to the plans and actions of Pattullo and his Liberals. Municipal officials in the three outlying centres could be counted as having been successful in their efforts also; although, as it has been pointed out, theirs was more of a holding action than one of instigating any economic recovery for the area. Victoria City was obviously less fortunate; but even there an improvement was made in the approach to civic finances; and it might well be said that the men who held the aldermanic positions by 1939 knew how to avoid most of the economic pitfalls that had come uncomfortably close to disgracing their predecessors. What effect, then, did the slow economic recovery and gradual political realignments of the period from 1933 to 1939 have on the day-to-day lives of the citizens of Greater Victoria? Had this society learned any lessons from the events of the Thirties?

CHAPTER FIVE FOOTNOTES

1 Oak Bay, Treasurer's Report, 1934, p. 1.

2 The Vancouver Sun, June 27 and September 15, 1932.
(Cited in M.A. Ormsby, British Columbia: A History, Toronto, 1958, p. 447).

3 Margaret A. Ormsby, "T. Dufferin Pattullo and the Little New Deal", Canadian Historical Review, 43:4, December, 1962, p. 289.

4 Canadian Annual Review, 1934, p. 329.

5 Loc. cit. The C.A.R. article on B. C. politics went on to declare: "Other items of [Tolmie's] policy was as follows: rotation of work and shorter hours of labour; a request to the Dominion Government to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the subject of 'better terms' for B. C. . . . ; the encouragement of outside as well as local capital for investment in B. C. and for this, he pointed out, stability would have to be maintained; a request to the Dominion Government for a redefinition of Dominion and Provincial fields of taxation, the income tax being a case in point; state health insurance on a Dominion basis; a national system of unemployment insurance on a contributory basis; and the disposal of the P.G.E. Railway on terms that would insure its completion to the Peace River district."
(Loc. cit.) A set of proposals as uninspired as this one was, surely indicates why Pattullo and the Liberals would wish to avoid joining Tolmie's ranks. Even the Independent Conservatives were anxious to "dump" Tolmie, since they were, on principle, opposed to heavy borrowing, in favour of increasing the level of currency in circulation, and wished to utilize the P.G.E. as a major source of unemployment relief work.
(Ibid., p. 330).

6 The Canadian Parliamentary Guide, Ottawa, 1934, p. 377.

7 Ibid., pp. 375-378.

8 Loc. cit.

9 Listed below are the parties that contested the 1933 provincial election in addition to the number of candidates they fielded: (C.A.R., 1934, pp. 328-329.)

Unionist (Tolmie)	13
Liberal (Pattullo)	47
Conservatives	4
Independent (non-partisan)	38
C.C.F.	46
C.C.F. (independent)	8

Independents	35
United Front	19
Labour	3
Independent Labour	2
Socialist	4
Total (including 11 women)	<u>219</u>

10 Mr. A. Helmcken, Victoria. Interview with the writer, July 22, 1968.

11 Loc. cit.

12 C.A.R., 1934, p. 329.

13 Loc. cit., and Ormsby, British Columbia, pp. 458-461.

14 Daily Province, (Vancouver), September 27, 1933. (Cited in Ormsby, "T. D. Pattullo and the Little New Deal", C.H.R., 1962, p. 282).

15 C.A.R., 1934, pp. 329-330.

16 Ibid., p. 330.

17 J. N. Suthorland, T. D. Pattullo as a Party Leader, Vancouver, U.B.C., April 1960, unpub. M.A. Thesis, pp. 59-60.

18 Ormsby, British Columbia, pp. 458-460. According to Ormsby in her 1962 article on Pattullo (cited several times above) the new premier had chosen an outstanding array of cabinet ministers - a group in which John Hart was by no means the least able or qualified. (p. 285).

19 Ormsby's overall assessment of Pattullo's role in the Canadian Depression is an interesting one. In the above mentioned article, she claimed: "For Canada as for British Columbia, the implication of his programme of 'Work and Wages' was far-reaching. He helped to move Canada forward on the path of state-planning for economic and social betterment. He saw R. B. Bennett sponsor, in 1934 and 1935, central banking, agricultural marketing, minimum wage, and unemployment insurance legislation; he saw King won over to the ideas of a publicly owned central bank, unemployment insurance, and a broad programme of social security. He maintained and expanded his own province's excellent record for welfare programmes, and introduced regulation that was in the public interest." (Ibid., p. 296).

Another view on Pattullo's efforts is seen in, Canada, Unity in Diversity, (Paul G. Cornell, et. al., Toronto, Holt, Rinehart, and Wilson, 1967, p. 443) which said in part: "T. D. Pattullo favoured positive government action to create jobs, and the use of federal money for building and extending public works and beneficial projects. In a time of depression

he felt it wrong to deprive schools, hospitals, and welfare services of needed funds, and right that the government should inject money into industries, if that had the effect of rejuvenating the industry and expanding its activity. He was confident in economic planning, and encouraged government agencies to use the advice of professional experts. To a great extent he viewed the role of government in the Depression crisis very much as President Franklin D. Roosevelt did in the New Deal."

Judging from these assessments as well as the evidence of the premier's persistence in dealing with the federal authorities in Ottawa as the years passed by, one can only conclude that British Columbians were fortunate indeed that they had shifted their allegiance to the Liberals.

20 British Columbia, The Municipal Taxation Report, (unpub. mimeo copy in B. C. Royal Commissions: 1930-1935, P.L.B.C.) p. 5.

21 Loc. cit.

22 Loc. cit.

23 Ibid., p. 7.

24 Ibid., p. 8.

25 Loc. cit.

26 Ibid., pp. 9-10.

27 Ibid., p. 22.

28 British Columbia, "Amendment to the Municipal Act, 1931", (Revised Statutes of B.C., Chap. 51, 1935, p. 288).

29 Ibid., pp. 291-294.

30 British Columbia, "Amendment to the Unemployment Relief Act, 1933", (Revised Statutes of B.C., Chapter 51, 1935, p. 288).

31 Ormsby, "T. D. Pattullo", pp. 292-294. Ormsby further claimed that after the 1933 election, King had viewed Pattullo's victory as "another auspicious sign that his own political fortunes were rising"; but, as she went on to say, it was instead, the beginning of an "era of acute controversy" that ultimately resulted in the creation of the Rowell-Sirois Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations in 1937. According to Ormsby, men like Pattullo and Gerry McGeer, a later Mayor of Vancouver, served to keep strong pressures on King who was less liberal in outlook than they. (Ibid., pp. 295-297).

32 City of Victoria, Mayor's Report, 1935, p. 1.

33 Ibid., p. 2.

34 Victoria Daily Times and Victoria Daily Colonist for months of November - December 1935, and January 1936. Passim.

35 The Canadian Parliamentary Guide, Ottawa, 1936, pp. 100-140.

36 Ormsby, British Columbia, p. 460.

37 C.P.G., 1938, p. 433; and A. Helmcken, Victoria, interview with the writer, August 6, 1968.

38 C.P.G., 1938, pp. 431-434.

39 Mr. I. Foster, Oak Bay, interview with the writer, January 6, 1969.

40 Loc. cit.

41 Loc. cit.

42 Hereunder are the council members for the four municipalities in 1939 at the time of the Royal Visit. Shown adjacent to their names are their respective occupations:

Victoria City

A. McGavin (Mayor)	- Garage Owner
B. J. Gadsden	- Manager, Sunshine Inn
J. A. Worthington	- Retired
W. L. Morgan	- President, W. L. Morgan Fuel Co. Ltd.
W. H. Davies	- Manager, Empire Realty
T. W. Hawkins	- Retired
E. Williams	- Workman for a Contractor
R. Dewar	- Operator, B.C.E.R.
H. Wills	- Managing Editor, <u>Victoria Daily Times</u>
S. Okell	- Apartment Manager

- Basic Composition: Managerial, 60%; Labour, 20%; Retired, 20%.

Saanich

A. G. Lambrick (Reeve)	- Proprietor, Gordon Head Dairy
G. Austin	- Proprietor, Glyn Farm Dairy
J. W. Howroyd	- Farmer
E. C. Warren	- Barber
J. R. Scoby	- Retired
S. C. Hagan	- Unknown
S. H. Passmore	- Unknown
J. Oliver	- Unknown

- Basic Composition: Farmers, 33.3%; Labour, 11.1%; Retired, 11.1%; Unknown, 33.3%.

Esquimalt

- A. Lockley (Reeve) - Retired
- R. G. Humphreys - Gunner, R.C.A.
- N. Fraser - Carpenter, Yarrows Ltd.
- A. Heald - Proprietor, Esquimalt Hardware
- T. Hadfield - Machinist, Yarrows Ltd.
- G. R. Guillemaud - Salesman, Imperial Oil
- J. P. Christensen - Automobile Mechanic
- Basic Composition: Management, 14%; Labour, 72%; Retired, 14%.

Oak Bay

- R. R. Taylor (Reeve) - Secretary, Victoria "Super Service"
- W. L. Woodhouse - Manager, Hoyle Brown Wholesalers
- P. Vernon-Jackson - Salesman
- N. Wells - Owner, Photography Shop
- R. Angus - President, Wholesale Auto Parts Co.
- P. Gibbs - Manager, New Method Laundry
- J. V. Johnson - Manager, Evans, Coleman & Johnson Bros.
- Basic Composition: Management, 86%; Labour, 14%.
- Sources: Victoria, Saanich, Esquimalt and Oak Bay Annual Reports for the year 1939. Also, "Greater Victoria", British Columbia Directory, 1939.

43 "Civic Union, Theme of Talk by Alderman Marchant", Victoria Daily Times, February 29, 1928, p. 4.

44 Saanich, Financial Statement (Waterworks Operating Account) 1938.

45 Oak Bay, Treasurer's Report, 1938, p. 1.

46 British Columbia, Royal Commission Re Mount Douglas Park, Report, Victoria, K.P., 1931, (P.L.B.C.).

CHAPTER SIX

SOCIAL UPHEAVAL: 1933-1939.

Unfortunately, in September, Great Britain had to declare war on Germany, with the result that our Dominion with the rest of the British Empire, rallied to the help of the Motherland. No man can foresee how long this struggle will continue nor what nations will be drawn in, we can but resolve to do everything in our power to hasten the day of victory. Whatever setbacks may occur, I feel sure they will but stiffen our determination to see things through to ultimate success.¹

This statement made by Mayor Andrew McGavin of Victoria City in 1939 indicated that, from city in depression to city in wartime, Greater Victoria had made the transition with surprising ease. At least that was true on the economic and political fronts, for, in the last months of 1939, industries in the capital city region began to receive major orders for war material, while employment levels soared as men flocked to the recruiting centres or joined the growing ranks of labourers at the local shipyards. Moreover, retail sales spurted up when Victorians, responding to the tempo of a city gearing itself for the war effort, brought out of hiding their savings and began to spend once again as they had done before the Depression struck in 1929.² As for the local political scene, the first real test of the peoples' response to their new conditions came in the 1939 civic elections. In the City of Victoria, for example, every council member was returned to office, an event which the mayor claimed was, "a very uncommon occurrence . . . it was quite obvious [the voters] were satisfied with the administration of civic

affairs and perhaps more deeply concerned over the graver situation created by the war."³

Yet it is relatively easy to understand why the move from a depression economy in Greater Victoria to one of greatly heightened activity was not altogether difficult - particularly when one considers that the area's economic resurgence had been progressing for many months prior to the onset of war. Similarly, if the political climate was not fully improved by 1939, it was at least in a more settled state than it had been during the years of the worst depression. The advent of war, however, and the City's response to it, constituted the last in a series of major social alterations that Victorians at large had had to face during the second half of the Thirties.

Earlier, in the first months of 1933, for instance, the social impact of the economic crisis in the capital city region had appeared profound indeed; and as a consequence, virtually everyone in Greater Victoria had then tended to interpret the rising social distress in purely economic terms. Even the new premier, Pattullo, had implied that the solutions to the problems of the cities would come from the dormant wealth of the province as soon as the right impetus could be found. In one statement made to Prime Minister Bennett he saw fit to claim: "We are an empire in ourselves, and our hills and valleys are stored with potential wealth which makes us one of the great assets of the Dominion."⁴ Six years later, however, Pattullo's views of urban life had been subtly

altered, to the extent that he tended to emphasize the need for values and rights that were more social than economic in nature. Accordingly, in a letter that he wrote in August, 1939, he stated:

Sooner or later we will get to it where everybody by right (by law not by charity or chance) will draw sustenance for his old age and the fight will continue by all of use for an existence as far above the sustenance line as we can achieve.⁵

But more important than any development or broadening of Pattullo's own viewpoint was the fact that the bulk of the people in the province had come to similar conclusions, because of their experiences during the second half of the Depression. Nowhere was this more true than in the capital city region; and no aspect of the Depression was more upsetting than the social impact of mass unemployment in the area. Furthermore, since Greater Victoria was neither a financial, industrial or cultural metropolis of any major significance during the mid-Thirties, its citizens, as conditions worsened, could not be blamed for displaying tendencies to view the prevailing social malaise in the light of their own particular, if local experience. A fundamental qualification on this insularity, of course, was that Victoria was the administrative and political centre for British Columbia, which caused Victorians to at least be aware of events occurring elsewhere in the province, and which ultimately was to become the major factor in the full effects that the Depression would have upon Greater Victoria.

Still, if citizens in the area during the mid-1930's were determined to trace any nagging social problem to its source, they would sooner or later come in contact with the fact of unemployment - whether reflected in legislation, retail sales, personal income, health, education, crime, or a host of other phenomena - all of which were, by 1933, in various states of rapid change in the capital city region. Thus, to understand the overall social effect of the Depression on Greater Victoria between 1933 and 1939, one must focus first on local unemployment conditions, then attempt to determine how those conditions precipitated certain actions by individuals or groups that ultimately caused veritable upheavals that altered the patterns of life in the area forever.

Those who have lived through that era seem to have carried the memory that upwards of fifty percent of the area's labour force was unemployed in early 1933; and while these estimates seem overly severe, there is no doubt that a very high percentage of workers in Greater Victoria had not then worked for many months.⁶ In 1934, the provincial employment service recorded a total of 125,443 applications for jobs in British Columbia; but only 47,994 of the applicants were successfully placed.⁷ For men and women in Greater Victoria, however, the picture was ostensibly much brighter, for out of 21,509 job seekers, placement was achieved for 15,337.⁸ Yet there was a dark side to this too, because all but a handful of each week's total placements would be for temporary work only, and

as a consequence, a permanent corps of unemployed workers existed in Greater Victoria.

Nor could the various levels of government in the province combat the problem through their combined relief work programmes. It will be recalled that huge sums of money had been spent by both the Province and the municipalities of Greater Victoria between 1930 and 1932 to provide emergency employment while simultaneously carrying through several public works' projects planned earlier for the area. Similarly, the provincial forestry camps had been designed for essentially the same purposes, in addition to establishing out-of-the-way centres for restless single men, and thereby easing many of the economic and social pressures that had threatened the capital city region. But, the employment service and the relief work would not and could not be an adequate solution for mass unemployment, no more than charitable and direct programmes could be expected fully to solve the problems for which they had been designed. Furthermore, it was obvious that the City of Victoria, for example, could not continue to pass unemployment relief by-laws whereby \$500,000 would be raised in one year by debentures, and \$108,000 in the next,⁹ unless civic revenues improved markedly - which they could not possibly do for reasons already noted.

Such were the economics of unemployment in Greater Victoria during 1933; and it was not long before both the Conservatives (and the Liberals in turn) discovered what the new politics of unemployment were going to be.

Tolmie's defeat had been a foregone conclusion even before the 1933 election was held. His government had become virtually incapable in the face of widespread unemployment. Pattullo had come to power essentially on the slogan "Work with Wages" and his determined efforts to that end would be widely appreciated. Moreover, as the following statement of the provincial deputy minister of labour seemed to show, government action, coupled with economic resurgence had begun to combat the unemployment problem in 1934. Still, it could also have indicated to many people in the province that the pace of recovery had not been fast enough:

In common with other Provinces and countries, we experienced a severe set-back during recent years of depression, but we welcome as a very practical sign of improvement an increase of \$14,441,300.26 in our industrial pay-roll for 1934 over 1933.

Further gratifying evidence of improvement is to be found in subsequent pages of this report, which disclose, during the year under review, a constant increase in the numbers employed, a decrease in the number of relief recipients, and a general upward trend in wages.

British Columbia . . . has experienced its share of prevailing industrial unrest. One could not expect otherwise.

Periods of industrial depression with attendant decreases in wages must in the logical course of events . . . stimulate the aspirations of the working-classes to retrieve their losses and regain the standards they formerly possessed.

The Department has striven to exercise a conciliatory influence where disputes have occurred and whenever possible to prevent disputes from taking place.¹⁰

This low-keyed assessment of labour conditions was considerably misleading, in as much as ¹¹1934 was the worst year for political and social agitation in British Columbia that officials at all levels had had to face since the outset of the Depression - especially in the logging camps of central

Vancouver Island.¹¹ To people in the capital city region, moreover, the areas around Duncan, Port Alberni and Nanaimo seemed like hotbeds for communist and socialist activities.¹² Yet worse was still to come, for, in 1935, agitation in the forms of mass meetings, protest marches and strikes, created an ugly temper in the ranks of labour, management and government up and down the Island. New and peculiar political parties had sprung up, and if they later disappeared almost as quickly as they had emerged, their very existence was usually a cause for worry to residents of the area.¹³

To add to the general unrest, many of the men employed throughout British Columbia in the federal government work relief camps, sought to bring attention to various grievances they had by instigating a strike themselves: a strike that ultimately resulted in one thousand men boarding a train in Vancouver during the early days of June, 1935, and proceeding east with the intention of confronting the national government's leaders in Ottawa.¹⁴ Although there were several of the federal camps on Vancouver Island, and a sizable contingent of men had worked in projects of a similar nature at the Esquimalt naval and army bases in the preceding months, few if any of them actually joined the protestors. It appeared, therefore, as if the epic journey was to be primarily a Mainland and up-Island venture.¹⁵

In any case, agitation by unemployed men, so prevalent in 1932-33, changed during 1934-35 to become a balanced pressure put upon governments and management by both jobless

and employed. Indeed, as 1936 passed, and then 1937, the sources of political and social agitation on Vancouver Island stemmed less and less from men without jobs. Instead, it was usually the employed who sought to ensure that their livelihoods would never again be endangered to the degree that they had been in the initial years of the Depression.

The provincial government knew this, and because its department of labour could ultimately report 1938 as a year "free from strikes", it was to be increasingly obvious in the last years of the Depression that the Liberal government had not flagged in its efforts to protect the basic labour structure of the provincial economy. It had not been an easy task, and had required what by 1938 appeared to be a most judicious mixture of foresight, firmness and patience on the part of cabinet ministers and department of labour officials, since the primary method to solve disputes which they had employed throughout the tumultuous years, was simply conciliation.¹⁷ "Very rarely did the government intervene directly in labour-management disputes, in spite of the heightened tensions brought on by mass unemployment. Instead, by anticipating industrial strife and volunteering the services of their offices for the purposes of achieving just and equitable solutions, the provincial authorities were able to keep many disputes from developing into full-scale labour and (ultimately) political or social crises on Vancouver Island."

As a study in contrasts - as well as being a yardstick to judge government officials' growing effectiveness between 1934

and 1938 - it will be useful to compare briefly the outcome of various labour conflicts on Vancouver Island during both of those years. Moreover, the following discourse should place in perspective the relative freedom from labour strife that Greater Victoria enjoyed during the disruptive years of mid-Depression. In other words, people in the capital city region were to be spectators of the province's industrial and labour turmoil during those years, rather than participants in it.

In a dispute of 1934 between Island fish packers and salmon-fishermen working out of Victoria and other west coast ports, for example, the Department of Labour had made no effort to intervene, as it was clear that both sides were perfectly capable of reaching an agreement on their own.¹⁸ The same was true of a loggers' sympathy strike in Port Alberni.¹⁹ A coal miners' strike at Cumberland in late November, however, presented a different state of affairs since there were more issues at stake than wages or dismissals. Job safety and alleged non-discriminatory practices were considered by the miners to be of equal importance to the wage demands they were making. Apparently the government did too, for as the provincial Department of Labour report stated:

During the entire negotiations, representatives of the Dominion Department of Labour and the Provincial Department of Labour were in close touch with the situation. On November 21, an agreement was signed, giving the haulage crew \$4.30 a day [up from \$4.22], and included the alterations in rents, mine-lamps, coal, gloves, powder, caps, and split timber. Work was resumed November 22.²⁰

As it can be seen from these examples, the government, when it came to intervening in labour disputes during the mid-years of the Depression, was obviously not going to make any moves that would cause more agitation in what had surely been the most emotion-packed features of the time - unemployment and labour relations. Furthermore, it should be clear that despite this cautious approach, government officials had judged the climate right, and they were able to gain considerable experience in these areas, while at the same time, built an image of impartiality for itself that would increasingly become its greatest asset in industrial disputes as the Depression wore on.

But Greater Victoria, the conservative, naturally beautiful and comparatively tranquil urban centre to the south did not have one major labour dispute of its own from 1933 to 1937. It is true that it had its share of social disruptions during that period; but none of them were of a kind that would cause significant problems for the Department of Labour. Furthermore, when Victoria's time of labour difficulties did finally come in 1938, the usual course of events was for either side - normally the union involved - to request conciliation services from the provincial department of labour. And because the record of that body to date had been most encouraging, the issue at hand was more often than not brought to a quick and happy conclusion.

On March 29, 1938 for example, laundry workers in Victoria had demanded, along with higher wages, a five and one-half

day week, union recognition, and holidays with pay. When government officials had completed their study and had made various recommendations to both the groups involved, the workers dropped their demands and accepted certain verbal guarantees from the laundry operators - thereby avoiding what could have been a costly and bitter strike.²¹ Similarly, on September 23 joinery employees in the capital city region demanded wage and benefits' parity with their counterparts in Vancouver. The employers justifiably countered with the argument that their own costs were higher than they would have been on the Mainland, and as a consequence, the government decided in favour of the latter.²²

Thus the determined and persistent actions of the provincial government through its Department of Labour had, by 1938, maintained as stable a climate as possible for industrial relations during a prolonged period of considerable labour unrest. Additionally, the government had displayed a willingness to include in its solutions an increasing emphasis on social aspects in addition to the economic ones which had always seemed so paramount before. Moreover, by doing so, the government itself had been instrumental in the making of a significant social upheaval - the ubiquitous recognition of the fact that a job was more than simply a source of income. This became an idea more easily accepted by Victorians than would have been the case if the government had, through heavy handed interference in labour disputes, alienated one class or another.

Actually the government was in the forefront of social change if for no other reason than it was its considered duty to be so. Furthermore, as in the case of Greater Victoria, six major legal and administrative systems were available to tackle the problems of depression - the federal, provincial and four municipal governments. Finally, it must be remembered that men with jobs were usually on firm enough ground by 1934 to attempt to solve their own economic and social problems - those without employment, including the aged, the infirm, the young, and the very poor, however, would not be so fortunate. Is it any wonder, therefore, that a political party, which, in 1933, had promised work, wages, and increased aid to these latter groups, would enjoy the conversion of thousands unto its fold?

If true, the shift to the Liberals had been somewhat of a social upheaval too, and it was one that bespoke of a willingness of the population in Greater Victoria to accept even more changes in the socio-political framework of the day. Thus with its mandate in its hand, the Pattullo government had attacked the problems of the cities with a programme of increased financial aid on one hand, and comprehensive liberal legislation on the other.

To bring fiscal responsibility and financial assistance to the cities, the government had in turn made it mandatory for civic officials to clear all money by-laws with the provincial inspector of municipalities²³ and increased immediately their grants for unemployment relief.²⁴ In

addition, as the years passed, further sums were given to centres like metropolitan Vancouver and Greater Victoria for the purposes of providing for single homeless men, since both urban areas as late as 1939 were still inundated by large numbers of unemployed transients.²⁵ Seeing large public works projects not only as sources of relief work, but also as opportunities to provide individual communities with repairs to their transportation, sewerage, and water systems, the government always kept public works crews at work throughout the province. In the case of Esquimalt electoral district, for example, 1939 became the year in which a large portion of the West Coast and Main Sooke roads were widened and reconstructed. Much work was also done on the Sooke River road, while a three story warehouse was built at Langford in order to provide storage facilities for tools and camp equipment. These projects and a similar one in the Saanich area allowed for 1,407 men to obtain over seven thousand man-days work.²⁶ According to the deputy minister of municipal affairs, "The work was well and efficiently done and has resulted in improvements to the highways in the vicinity which might otherwise have remained in abeyance for some time."²⁷

By then, the only substantial criticisms directed towards the Province's relief work programmes - and those projects that the four municipalities organized on their own - were usually that there were not enough of them. In other words, by 1939, people in Greater Victoria had come to accept relief work as a fact of life - overtones of socialism notwithstanding

- as it was considered fair by all that the men employed ✓ were putting in an "honest day's work" for their dole.²⁸"

Curiously enough, the same attitude did not appear to extend into the realms of public health, for, as the medical health officer for Saanich, Dr. J. L. Gayton, claimed in his 1934 report:

. . . many people have the erroneous idea that the Health Officer is obliged to attend anyone who wishes to avail himself of his services . . . as early as 1930, the Reeve had claimed that the Medical Health Officer is the health advisor to the Municipality, "not the Saanich family doctor."²⁹

If this statement gave the impression that the public health officials in Greater Victoria were hardening their attitudes towards people seeking aid or comfort in their respective communities, nothing could be more untrue. In fact, health officers and their nursing colleagues were constantly on the alert for situations that could conceivably result in a health or social menace. In justifying the destruction of condemned cabins, Dr. McCallum of Esquimalt said:

This class of structure should be removed if possible, as the social costs due to these places are far in excess of anything that accrues to the municipality in the way of taxation There has undoubtedly been some deterioration of general health due to the prolonged depression. One evidence of this is a general raising of social costs.³⁰

A year earlier, in 1934, McCallum, had criticized the local waterworks company for refusing water to indignant (sic) families and claimed that, "every effort was made to ameliorate this condition quietly if this condition were widespread

serious results might ensue."³¹ Two years later he stated that teeth and tonsils were the main sources of infection; but a general increase in hospitalization had shown the "adverse effect on health caused by the depression."³²

Yet a more serious omen had been observed in Victoria City, for Dr. Felton, the metropolitan health officer had been obliged to report:

The outstanding feature [of 1935] is the fall of the Birth rate in Greater Victoria below the Death rate. For some years these two rates have been approximating, and the district of Greater Victoria appears to be the first to show a negative Vital Index. Whatever explanation may be given, it is by no means a feature for self-congratulation.³³

Adding to the discomforture in the area caused by this revelation, were the memories of Felton's comments on family life that he had given some months before. These affirmed, in part: "It is difficult to assess the resulting mental and moral depreciation, but it is common knowledge that a larger number of problems of marital and family relationships are being dealt with by all our Social Service Workers."³⁴

If Victorians were alarmed by the deterioration in community health, they very rarely mentioned it - perhaps because for many the process of physical and emotional degeneration was drawn out over a period of years and not easily observed by the untrained eye. Besides, considerable numbers of people in Greater Victoria were suffering to more or less the same degree as their neighbours from inadequate nourishment and mounting social stress: a condition which undoubtedly caused some of them to take solace from the fact

that they were all victims together.³⁵ As long as the efforts of the public health officials and their staffs were judged to be in the best interests of the people of Greater Victoria, the latter did not hesitate to give as much support as they could to health education programmes, sanitary (or clean-up) campaigns, and to the periodic pleas for more financial assistance that Felton and his colleagues in the outlying municipalities had made throughout the Depression years.³⁶

Citizens in the area did not, however, take as kindly to requests for money by the municipal police officials. The prevailing attitude that Victorians had towards the state of law and order in the capital city region was one of justifiable pride; for, even in the worst years of economic distress and social agitation, Greater Victoria had never become a city filled with lawbreakers. As a consequence, by 1934 residents in the area genuinely believed that they had escaped one of the worst anti-social developments of the Depression, and therefore consistently refused to vote more money for their respective constabularies than they believed should be the absolute minimum required to maintain the level of law enforcement that had served them so well up to that time.³⁷

Yet there was a changing pattern of crime at work in the City, one that was a social upheaval in its own right; but one which few people would likely have sensed as significant, since it proved to be a subtle and slow moving transformation.

During the last years of the Twenties, the majority of indictable offences in the capital city region had centered on crimes against the person. Moreover, the bulk of these had been crimes of particular violence, such as murder, manslaughter and rape. Between 1930 and 1933, however, this pattern underwent a definite change, for, where crimes against property had only been approximately thirty percent of the total of those of a personal nature before, they by this time constituted seventy-six percent of all indictable offences in Greater Victoria. In other words, offences against property had skyrocketed by 1,000 per cent in the nadir of the Depression.³⁸

Nor was this all. People committing property crimes before 1930 had showed a marked tendency towards breaking and entering, theft, arson, and vandalism; but between 1930 and 1933, the large majority of property crimes came to fall into the categories of false pretenses, conspiracy, forgery, fraud, lotteries, and theft. As to personal crimes in this latter period, another shift had occurred: sex crimes increased proportionately while those of a violent nature did the reverse. What was more, the types of sexual crimes had been altered in the balance, since, beginning in 1931, most charges laid thereafter were for homosexual offenses - a condition brought about no doubt by the fact that homeless and destitute men had for months been crowded into certain undesirable quarters of the City.³⁹

While the fact of those overcrowded conditions might account for much of the area's increase in sex crimes, it does not adequately explain the reasons for the major shift from personal to property offences - although common sense alone must indicate that a certain rise in the level of property crimes would result when people were without sufficient funds to feed and clothe themselves properly. Yet what of the record in this regard of the Oriental community in Greater Victoria during the Depression? It too had suffered the same privation and frustration that its neighbours had; and to add to the Oriental's woes, it was in and about their district that most of the transients tended to gather.

Under such circumstances, one might expect that a similar pattern of crime would take shape in Chinatown as conditions deteriorated - but nothing of the sort occurred. One of the most startling facets of the Depression years in the capital city region was that the Oriental community, with almost ten percent of the area's population, never had one of its members indicted on a charge involving crime against property.⁴⁰ Furthermore, no sex crimes were recorded against them, although, as to offences against the person, their record was considerably different, since several cases of murder, manslaughter, and especially violations of the narcotics act were brought before the courts against Orientals throughout the whole decade.⁴¹ Still further, as was commonly known at the time, police raids on Victoria's opium dens were usually prompted by incidents

of Caucasians creating havoc after they had seen fit to force their way into the premises.⁴²

One can only guess at the reasons for the differences in criminal activities in the two communities. Certainly, much of it had a basis in differing cultural patterns. What probably was another factor, however, was the long-standing animosity that Whites felt towards Orientals in British Columbia; and in a period of considerable competition for jobs, and retail sales, this tension would likely have reached even higher levels than it had done, say, in the Twenties.⁴³ If so, then one could expect the minority group to withdraw more within itself, and perhaps tend to shield its own offenders from the laws of the society at large - or deal with the lawbreakers on the minority's own terms. From time to time during the Depression, mention had been made by various civic officials in Victoria City to the fact that Orientals were suffering to a greater degree than most of their White neighbours; but judging from the overall performance of the Chinese community during the Thirties, it was obvious that they had maintained a greater social stability than virtually any other group.

Had these conditions remained, then it is most probable that more attention would have been drawn towards them as the Thirties wore on; yet what had obviously been the primary sources of these social stresses - economic depression and its attendant feature of widespread unemployment - began to leave the Island City by 1934. Like fluid taking the shape of its

host vessel, the pattern of crime in Greater Victoria once again redressed its "normal" balance, until, in the period from 1939 to 1941, personal crimes were in the main ones of violence; and lamentably, they were three times more than those against property.⁴⁴ Victorians, however, had missed most of the drama of these upheavals, for it had been their police forces and law courts that had had to cope with the strange and disturbing changes in local criminal activities.

But surely that was what the law was for, and if Victorians had turned their attentions away from some of the seamier sides of their community life, they did not hesitate to scrutinize carefully another of its aspects which they considered to be infinitely more beneficial to them - education.⁴⁵ To begin with, the building of schools and the costs of maintaining them was a major budgetary item for each of the four municipalities. The City of Victoria in 1935 for example, had a mill rate of forty. Of this, 11.0981 mills were set aside for school purposes.⁴⁶ In the same year, general civic expenditures in Saanich totalled \$178,674. For school expenditures, however, \$114,171 was listed, and of that sum, \$82,418 was for teachers' salaries.⁴⁷ It should thus be apparent that unless education per se was believed to be a positive asset by the population - and indeed an essential one at that - then persons whose lands and homes were falling to tax sale would have a most legitimate argument against the municipalities maintaining the levels of current school expenditures, far less increasing them.

Yet residents of Greater Victoria continued to pay the heavy price of universal education - not only for their own children; but for those of others as well, since, it will be remembered, a disproportionately high number of persons in the area had educated their own children decades before.⁴⁸ Still, the Depression was too severe for the local education process to come out of it unscathed. Where the City of Victoria had been able to hold the line in the number of enrollments up to the end of 1932, there was a drop in the student population of almost two hundred per year from 1933 to 1937. Similarly, the number of teachers employed was reduced annually until, in 1938, their total was fifteen percent less than it had been in 1929. Year by year, the number of young people whose parents were able to afford to have them remain in school was reduced, until in June, 1939, on the eve of war, only 81.2% of the 1929 level were enrolled.⁴⁹ Such a notably retrogressive step surely indicated social upheaval in itself.

There were other significant changes in the attitudes, actions, and perhaps the interests of the people in the capital city region between 1933 and 1939. Recreational activities tended more and more to become family-oriented and were usually performed without the usage of artificial stimulants such as liquor, movies, or attendance at events as part of large paying crowds - who could afford them? Occasionally, however, there were significant social events which allowed for a break in the humdrum pace of the Depression. For sheer

excitement, nothing by 1937 had equalled the "great welcome" given to the American President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, on his visit to Victoria in September of that year. The streets of the city were lined with crowds who cheered for the man who seemed to personify the "greatness of the republic" he led.⁵⁰ Similarly, during the last week in May, 1939, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain visited the capital city region during their cross-country tour. According to the Victoria Daily Colonist, "Many thousands of voices were uplifted in tumultuous acclaim to welcome Their Gracious Majesties."⁵¹ Yet these outstanding social events were not commonplace, for, as one writer has said about the activities of the upper echelons of society in Victoria during the period from 1931 to 1936:

Circumstances did not lend themselves to gay social events during Mr. Johnson's period of Government House. There was little money to be spent on entertainment and show. Everything was on short commons.⁵²

Thus people discovered new ways to use leisure time - once they became accustomed to having much more of it. The day-long journey to out-of-town places, the visits to those grateful for company, a better record of church attendance, the upswing in sports and games and picnics - all of these contributed to what would become for many people in Greater Victoria suprisingly happy memories of the Depression. Somehow people felt more neighbourly; somehow the big problems became little ones; "somehow we made it through".⁵³

Somehow they did.

CHAPTER SIX FOOTNOTES

- 1 City of Victoria, Mayor McGavin, Annual Report, 1939, p. 7.
- 2 A. Helmcken, Victoria, interview with the writer, July 22, 1968.
- 3 Mayor McGavin, op. cit.
- 4 Pattullo Papers, Pattullo to R. B. Bennett, December 18, 1933. (Cited in M.A. Ormsby, "T. D. Pattullo and the Little New Deal", C.H.R. 43:4, 1962, p. 281).
- 5 Pattullo Papers, Pattullo to Geo. Pattullo, August 21, 1939. (Cited in ibid., p. 282).
- 6 Mr. A. Woods, Victoria. Interview with the writer, June, 21, 1969.
- 7 B. C. Department of Labour, Annual Report of the Deputy Minister, 1938, Victoria, B. C., K.P., p. L-70.
- 8 Loc. cit.
- 9 City of Victoria, By-Laws: 1930-1941 (nos. 2498-2989, in 4 volumes; held at Victoria Public Library). In accordance with the "City of Victoria Act, 1932", (B.C. Statutes, Chap. 58), City officials were empowered to issue debentures as they saw fit during 1932 and 1933. Hence, the "Unemployment Relief Loan By-Law, 1932", passed by the council on April 18, 1932 (no. 2581), did not require the approval of the voters. That one was for \$500,000 at an interest rate of 6%. On January 3, 1933, By-Law No. 2613 was passed for the same purposes, but it was designed to raise only \$108,000. After the Liberals came to power in 1933, they made it mandatory for the cities to clear proposed money by-laws with the Inspector of Municipalities prior to issuing bonds. In May, 1935, \$94,500 (no. 2701) for unemployment relief was raised; in October, 1935, \$100,000 (no. 2716); and in June, 1936, \$105,500 (no. 2741) - but in each instance, passed under the new regulations.
- 10 B. C. Department of Labour, Annual Report of the Deputy Minister, 1934, p. L-1.
- 11 Mr. E. E. Griffiths, Victoria, interview with the writer, August 4, 1968. According to this source, agitators in up-Island areas and on the Mainland were well organized; often to the extent of having clandestine meeting places in which the halls would be festooned with red flags and large photographs of Marx, Lenin and Stalin.

12 Loc. cit. Also, James A. Wright, "The Winter Years in Cowichan. A Study of the Depression in a Vancouver Island Community", Vancouver, U. B. C., M.A. Thesis, September, 1967, pp. 62-71.

13 Loc. cit. (although more detailed information is available in Wright's thesis). According to Wright, for example, one of the groups north of Victoria that had become notorious for its radical stand was the "National Unemployed Workers' Association", a communist-led organization that was known to be affiliated with another active group, the "Workers' Unity League." As early as August, 1931, the Cowichan Leader had published a list of the Association's demands up to that time:

- "1 All married unemployed should receive four days relief work a week at union wages, or failing this, the cash equivalent.
- 2 All single unemployed should receive two days relief work a week at union wages, or a cash equivalent.
- 3 That there should be no evictions in the event of a person out of work being unable to pay his taxes.
- 4 The Association takes no notice of race discrimination and that all persons, no matter what nationality are treated on the same basis.
- 5 Abolition of "government prison camps." [presumably the relief work camps].
- 6 A non-contributory insurance for persons unemployed." (Cited in Wright, "Cowichan . . . Depression," p. 69).

Furthermore, Wright goes on to say that a Mr. J.R. Berry originally of Victoria, was the Association's main leader, while recent immigrants from Europe were its main supporters.

Yet were their demands so far-fetched by 1934? Certainly by 1938 they were not.

14 G. M. LaFresne, "The Royal Twenty-Centers (The Department of National Defence and Federal Unemployment Relief 1932-1936)," Kingston, R.M.C., B.A. grad. essay, 1962, pp. 104-115.

15 Ibid., pp. 110-116, and, Canada, Department of National Defence, Annual Report, 1936, Ottawa, K.P., passim.

16 B.C. Department of Labour, Deputy Minister, Annual Report, 1938, p. P-1.

17 Ibid., 1933-1938, passim.

18 Ibid., 1934, pp. L68-L69.

19 Ibid., p. L69. Three hundred and fifty men had walked off their jobs when four of their fellow workers had been dismissed for distributing seditious literature and interfering

in normal union activities. The government realized that the worker's wave of sympathy would relax within days - as indeed it did - and therefore, chose to remain outside the dispute.

20 Ibid., p. L70.

21 Ibid., 1938, p. P84.

22 Loc. cit.

23 See fn. 9.

24 See Chapter 4 for details of these grants.

25 Victoria Daily Times, September - December 1939 (see the newspaper for these months in order to appreciate the prevailing level of transient problems); also, E. E. Griffiths, Victoria. Interview with the writer, August 4, 1968.

26 B. C., Department of Public Works, Report of the Chief Engineer, 1938-39, p. Z13. The report also had this to say with regard to the "relief of single homeless men" at that time: "A large number of single homeless men and transients migrate to the Pacific Coast to take advantage of the mild climate. Many of these men are in needy circumstances and it has become necessary to provide for their assistance. Accordingly, an agreement, dated November 16, 1938, was entered into by the Department of Labour whereby the Dominion Government and the Province contributed on a fifty-fifty basis, providing these men with employment by means of forestry development and highway - construction projects." (pp. Z3-Z4).

27 Ibid., p. Z13.

28 Mr. A. H. Wills, Victoria. Interview with the writer, June 20, 1969.

29 Saanich, Medical Health Officer, Annual Report, 1934, p. 1.

30 Esquimalt, Medical Health Officer, Annual Report, 1935, pp. 1-2.

31 Ibid., 1934, p. 1.

32 Ibid., 1936, p. 1.

33 Victoria City, Metropolitan Health Officer, Annual Report, 1935, p. 56.

34 Ibid., 1934, p. 54.

35 Mr. A. Woods, Victoria. Interview with the writer, June 23, 1969.

36 Greater Victoria, Annual Reports of the medical health officers, 1933-1940 (passim). More specifically however, is this comment from the M.H.O. of Saanich, written at the end of 1937: "I assure you that we have acquired the whole-hearted cooperation of the population in doing our work, not through the application of a mailed fist, or coercion, but by education, persuasion, and actual demonstration." (p. 1).

37 Mr. Davidson, Victoria. Interview with the writer, October 12, 1968. Also, various Financial Statements and Annual Reports of police commissioners, mayors, and reeves in Greater Victoria, 1933 to 1939, (passim). See also Appendix "D", Table XVII for an indication of the salaries paid to policemen during the Depression.

38 B. C. Supreme Court, Calender of General Assize, October, 1927 to March, 1941 (registered twice yearly - held at Law Courts, Victoria, B. C.). The analysis shown in the text is derived from an examination of this calender for the years: 1927-1933. See also Appendix "D", Table X for a detailed breakdown of the number of indictments per category. Note too the writer's terminology re "personal" vis-a-vis "property" crimes. It is my own, and essentially it means that if an attack was made upon an individual, and the results were primarily an effect on the individual, and not his property, then it was a "personal" crime. Conversely, if the offender was obviously interested in material objects only, then it was a "property" crime. If doubts still exist, the reader is urged to judge the categories for himself.

39 Ibid., 1931-1939; and Mr. R. J. Davidson, Victoria. Interview with the writer, October 12, 1968.

40 Ibid., 1929-1939.

41 Loc. cit.

42 R. J. Davidson. Interview, October 12, 1968.

43 Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Official Reports of Debates, February 8, 1935, pp. 622-623. (In this instance, Angus McInnis, an M.P. for Vancouver, was speaking of the effects of Whites and Orientals in competition with each other, and how it had been a long-standing issue in his home province of B. C.).

44 B. C. Supreme Court, Calender, 1934-1941.

45 While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to pursue the full extent of the impact that universal education had had upon citizens of the capital city region in the early decades of this century, some of the following points may be of interest to the reader:

Donald L. MacLaurin, in a 1936 study of the history of education in the province, saw the years from 1920 to 1935 as being ones of rapid progress in the field. Major changes accomplished in the curriculum had been: an eleven grade system adopted (1923); health education introduced (1925); a switch to promotion by subjects instead of by grades (1926); creation of junior high schools (1927); introduction of a four-year high school course (1929). Moreover, as a native of British Columbia, he proudly pointed out that up to 1935, not one school had been closed due to insufficient funds - the Depression notwithstanding. (D. L. MacLaurin, "The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and the Province of British Columbia", Seattle, University of Washington, 1936 - held in P.A.B.C.).

Yet in March, 1935, a study commissioned by the provincial government on education costs, showed that under the prevailing economic conditions, a full-scale reform of the school board system was needed, while the Province should assume the full fiscal load of education. (B.C., H.B. King Report on School Finance in British Columbia, Victoria, K.P., 1935, pp. 30-38).

Obviously the full recommendations of King's report were not enforced by 1938, since the Union of British Columbia Municipalities demanded at their annual meeting in September of that year that the Province accept the entire burden of education costs in B.C. (Canadian Annual Review, 1937-38, p. 513).

46 Victoria City, Financial Statement, 1935, n.p.

47 Saanich, Financial Statement, 1935, p. 10.

48 The reader will recall the discussion in Chapter 1 on the retail trade of the area and how that trade was geared in large part to the number of elderly and retired people in the capital city region.

49 Victoria City, School Board, Annual Reports, 1929-1939, passim.

50 Daily Times, (Victoria), September 30, 1937, p. 1.

51 Daily Colonist, May 30, p. 1. The four municipalities in concert with merchants throughout the area chose to publish a heavily illustrated souvenir programme for the visit that at least showed a new confidence was at work in the area (Souvenir of the Royal Visit, Programme of Festivities, May 24, 31, 1939, passim).

52 D. A. McGregor, They Gave Royal Assent, Vancouver, Mitchell Press, 1967, p. 56.

53 Mr. A. Woods, Victoria. Interview with the writer, June 23, 1969.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

Whatever the Depression was to Greater Victoria, it did not break its economic backbone nor crush its community soul. And if that has a dismal ring to it, so did the years 1929 to 1939 for many people in the capital city region. The Depression, when it finally arrived, had not been unexpected by Victorians. What they were not prepared for, however, was the severity and length of the economic slump. Moreover, when they did ultimately recognize the full extent of the problem, they were quick to discover that, as only a lesser urban centre in an outlying province of a modestly powerful nation, the chances they had themselves of bringing an economic resurgence to their own metropolitan area, were unlikely in the extreme. To add to their frustration and worry, the limited constitutional sources of municipal revenues, combined with a legacy of financial ineptitude (as in the case of the City of Victoria), placed ready-made constraints on their abilities to meet the rapidly mounting challenges presented by mass unemployment, and the necessity for their four municipalities to provide either relief work or direct assistance - not only to many of their own citizens but to hundreds of itinerants as well.

The municipalities had almost immediately turned to the Province for help in these ventures; but the government

leaders in Victoria had proved themselves no more able to solve the problems than they. All that remained for the citizens of the area to do, therefore, was to attempt to organize their own local resources and talents in a series of efforts that might alleviate some of the social distress brought on by the economic crisis and the inadequacies of the political process of the time. Thus the economic, political, and social impacts on Greater Victoria during the initial years of the Depression were widespread and profound, for, by the winter of 1932-33, virtually every approach made by governments, social institutions, and individuals alike, had failed to solve the combined problems of mass unemployment and severely reduced personal incomes. Furthermore, no hope was held by Victorians for an increase in business or industrial activity in the area; which in turn, made the position of any government without specific plans for economic recovery - especially Tolmie's Conservatives - very precarious indeed.

Between 1933 and 1937, the voters in Greater Victoria had ample opportunity to show how they felt about the methods employed by all levels of government in attempts to solve the problems of the Depression. The record of the Conservative party (both in Victoria by 1933, and in Ottawa by 1935) was considered to be so poor by Victorians at large that they did not hesitate to reject that party's candidates. Yet by 1933 there were only two real alternatives: the Liberals and the C.C.F. Moreover, because the problems affecting their community

were so serious, voters in the capital city region had definitely concluded that only government had the resources, first, to bring a halt to the economic crisis, and second, to alleviate the social misery which appeared to be growing almost daily. T. D. Pattullo, with his promises of "work and wages", coupled with some highly imaginative schemes for provincial development was considered by Victorians to be the progressive and positive leader needed for the time. Hence they gave him and his Liberals almost overwhelming support in the 1933 provincial election.

For Victorians, this shift to the left in their political views paid considerable dividends as the years progressed; and in 1935, they were still sufficiently captured by the idea of a highly developed role for government in the economy (including spheres of activity created by the social needs of millions), to award the bulk of their votes in the Canadian general election to candidates of "leftist" parties. Furthermore, the governments at all levels affecting Victorians seemed to have learned many lessons, too, as the years of the Thirties passed by. They provided a combination of legislation, regulation, persuasion, education, and patience which at once helped to lead the capital city region into economic recovery, and greatly eased the financial and social burdens of their citizens during the latter half of the Depression.

As one of the consequences of this concentrated activity on the part of governments, however, a heightened attitude

of nationalism developed in Canada, while in the provinces a sense of economic and social regionalism grew markedly: a change brought on, no doubt, by the bitter years of tension and conflict between the various levels of government as well as the magnitude and scope of the economic crises they had all experienced. Thus attitudes were being more sharply focussed about national, provincial - or urban - communities. For, as Harold A. Innis showed in his 1937 article entitled, "The Canadian Economy and the Depression", the large metropolitan centres of the Dominion had added more and more of the specialized economic and institutional functions of their respective hinterlands to their own centralized control. In short, the Depression had been instrumental in speeding-up the urbanization and collectivization of life in the nation. Judging solely from the experience in Greater Victoria, this is hard to prove. Yet there is no doubt that an increase of the importance of the capital city region, in relation to the rest of British Columbia, had occurred by 1934; to some extent because Victoria was a major gathering point for itinerants, but above all because it was the political and administrative centre of a new and highly active provincial government.

The significance of this change in Victoria's importance is of the first magnitude when considering the total effect of the Depression on the city. While, on the one hand the economic disasters and the social miseries brought on by the

events of the Thirties stunted the growth of Greater Victoria as an urban centre - as, for instance, in the development of municipal services where virtually a decade of progress was lost - the other hand, the political and administrative one, made for a major change in the relative importance of the capital city. From the turn of the century to the mid-years of the Great Depression, Victoria had fallen more and more × into the shadow created by the rising metropolis of Greater Vancouver. Before Pattullo's victory in 1933, moreover, the role of government in the socio-economic fabric of the province had been relatively minor. But between 1933 and 1939 a major transformation occurred, and Greater Victoria, the capital city region of British Columbia, came to enjoy a extended × metropolitan power that it had not held since its pioneer days. Once again it was the centre of heightened and exciting political activity in the province at a time when politics and the power of government were becoming primary forces in shaping the destinies of British Columbians.

In this light, it can be said that Greater Victoria benefitted considerably from the events of the Thirties, and while there is no doubt that the Depression had taken its toll on the area and its citizens, if a city could have made a trade - a decade of privation for a future based upon an ever × expanding and ultimately a billion dollar industry - then surely it would have made a sound exchange. Victoria had had no such choice of course, but events themselves brought about exactly that. From 1939 onwards, the capital city region of

British Columbia has developed in direct proportion to the growth in the activities and importance of the provincial government which it houses.

There is one more feature of the Depression's effect on the City that must be kept in mind. Victoria, of all the larger urban centres in Western Canada, was affected least by the blows of the years 1929 to 1939. Not so dependent upon a single resource, commodity or industry as Calgary, Regina or Edmonton, and not enmeshed to a significant degree in a vast transportation network that had earlier given rise to a complex structure of service industries, like Vancouver or Winnipeg, Victoria did not have so far to fall when the economic crisis began in 1929. Unfortunately, no direct comparison between Victoria and the cities mentioned above - save perhaps Vancouver - could have been made with regard to the intended scope of this study. Still, considering the severity and extent of the Depression on the Prairies; and the serious (if not disasterous) problems that Vancouver faced in the Thirties; one is left with a distinct impression that Victoria was crippled least of all.

Thus protected also by its modest metropolitan size, isolated geographically from the worst of the social turmoil and political unrest that convulsed the Lower Mainland and up-Island centres, and benefitted by the natural beauty and climatic attributes of its location as well as its new significance as the capital city region of British Columbia, Greater Victoria survived the Thirties with enough tenacity and determination to turn its full energies readily to the demands and sacrifices placed upon it by the hard new events of the 1940's.-



Figure 1

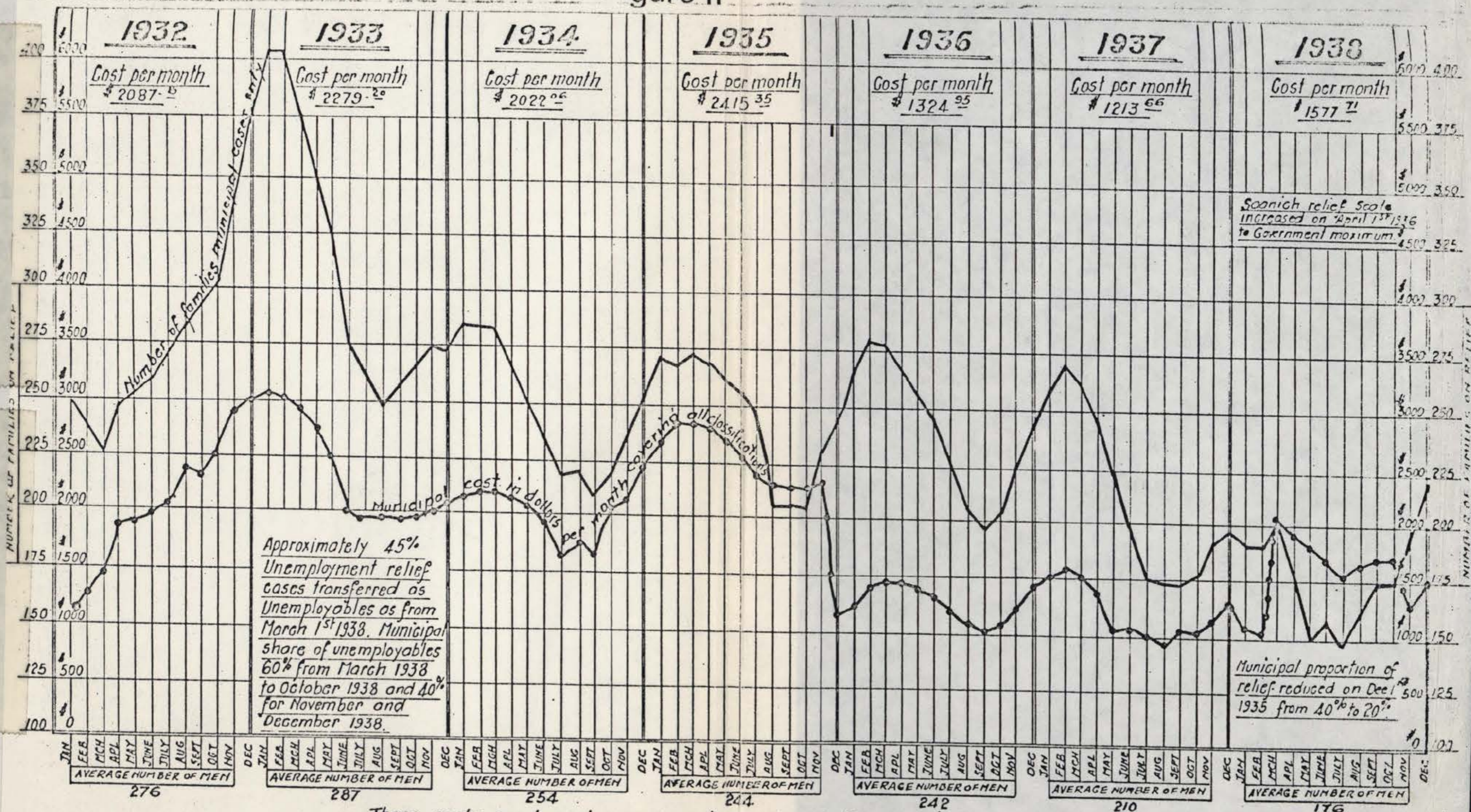
1938

THE ISLAND BLUE PRINT & MAPPING CO.
523-A BAYWARD BLDG.
VICTORIA, B.C.

LEGEND

- MAIN STREETS ON ROADS
- OTHER STREETS
- STREETS UNDER CONSTRUCTION
- BUS AND TRAM ROUTES
- RAILWAYS
- BOUNDARIES
- POSTAL BLOCK NUMBERS
- TOURIST CABIN CARS
- RUB POST OFFICES

Figure II



These costs are based on accounts rendered the Provincial Government.

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The following list of source material used in the preparation of this thesis is arranged into two basic forms. Any work that is essentially interpretative in nature is given with a brief critical comment added to it; while sources that are primarily non-interpretive, are simply listed in the categories into which they fall. Since the latter group are primary (or manuscript) sources, they are presented first. As to other matters of format, the style manual employed has been D. Blakey and A. C. Cooke, The Preparation of Term Essays, Vancouver, B. C., 1964.

Unless it is stated otherwise, all annual reports for the Dominion of Canada and the Province of British Columbia have been located in those governments' respective Sessional Papers - all of which are held at the Provincial Library of British Columbia in Victoria. In the majority of cases, the annual reports are for the fiscal years ending March 31. Those that do not fit into this category are mentioned as such. For the municipalities in the Greater Victoria region, however, the annual reports cover the periods of the calendar years for which they are listed.

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- MacLaurin, Donald Leslie. "The History of Education in the Crown Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and in the Province of British Columbia". Seattle, University of Washington, Ph.D. dissertation, 1936. Held at P.A.B.C. A thorough study containing much information on the provincial school system during the early years of the Depression. Vast amounts of statistical information is included therein.
- Robinson, Malcolm E. "A Method for Investigating the Effects of Tourism on the Functional and Morphological Development of a City: As Applied to Greater Victoria, British Columbia". Evanston, Illinois, Northwestern Univ. 1957. (Xerox copy held in V.C.A.). An interesting study of a particular aspect of the City's economic growth; but also, a comprehensive picture of the whole area's development from the second half of the last century to the mid-years of this one. X
- Sloan, William A. "The Crowsnest Pass During The Depression; A Socioeconomic History of Southeastern British Columbia, 1918-1939." Victoria, University of Victoria, M.A. thesis, June 1968. A sound, but occasionally disorganized study of an important region of the province - particularly during its period of greatest economic crisis when it often saw fit to send delegations to agitate in Victoria.
- Sutherland, J. N. "T. D. Pattullo as a Party Leader." Vancouver, U.B.C., M.A. thesis, April, 1960. A good examination of the Liberal Party in British Columbia between 1920 and 1942 - yet it has proved disappointing in that it centres more on personalities than issues. As for material on Greater Victoria, there is very little therein. X
- Wright, James Arthur. "The Winter Years in Cowichan. A Study of the Depression in a Vancouver Island Community". Vancouver, U.B.C., M.A. thesis, September 1967. A most thought-provoking thesis - one that relies heavily upon newspaper sources, but nevertheless displays insight into the problems and events of up-Island centres. His appreciation of the political agitation and the social milieu of the area around Duncan during the Depression is outstanding.

Wright, John M. "The Settlement of the Victoria Region, British Columbia. Montreal, McGill, M.A. thesis in geography, 1956. It has been used primarily for background information regarding the growth and development of the capital city region. Otherwise, it is a reasonable history of Victoria in the nineteenth century.

II. PRINTED SOURCES

A. GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS and YEARBOOKS

British Columbia, Provincial Bureau of Information. Manual of Provincial Information for British Columbia, 1930. Victoria, B.C., K.P., 1930.

Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Canada Year Book. Ottawa, K.P., 1929-1940.

Canadian Review Company. The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs. Toronto, The Canadian Annual Review Company, 1929-1940.

Meltz, Noah M. Changes in the Occupational Composition of the Canadian Labour Force, 1931-1961. (Occasional Paper No. 2, Economics and Research Branch, Department of Labour, Canada.) Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1965.

Normendin, Maj. A. L. ed. The Canadian Parliamentary Guide. Ottawa, Labour Exchange, 1929-1940.

Wrigley's British Columbia Directory. Vancouver, B.C., Sun Directories Ltd., 1929-1940. (Especially sections on "Greater Victoria").

B. GENERAL WORKS.

1. CONTEMPORARY BOOKS.

Cassidy, H.M. Unemployment and Relief in Ontario, 1929-1932. Toronto, J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1932. An extensive study that is one of the few for the period that explains in great detail what the problems were that relief administrators faced.

Gilman, C. P. and H. M. Sinclair. Unemployment: Canada's Problem. Ottawa, The Army and Navy Veterans in Canada, 1935. A work that attempts to outline the basic problems ✓

confronting the unemployed; but it is too somewhat biased in its tone in that much of its membership was among the unemployed who were seeking immediate relief.

- Innis, H. A. and A. F. W. Plumptre, eds. The Canadian Economy and its Problems. Toronto, Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1934. A series of scholarly papers compiled into two basic parts: The Depression and the economy in general; and, arguments pro and con regarding central banking as a partial solution to the nation's ills. Innis' own contributions are outstanding. ✓
- MacLean, Andrew D. R. B. Bennett. Toronto, Excelsior Publishing Co. Ltd., 1935. Essentially an eulogy on Bennett as well as prone to favouring the Conservative Party's policies. Yet it is an extremely well written volume with a multitude of interesting character sketches.
- Maxwell, J. A. Federal Subsidies to the Provincial Governments in Canada. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1937. A history of federal grants and subsidies that of course, includes those for British Columbia.
- Scott, F. R. Canada Today. Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1938. A general work that gives an overall impression of the nation coming out of the Depression. While there is little material on British Columbia, and even less on Greater Victoria, it nevertheless makes for background reading.
- Solloway, I. W. C. Canada's Destiny. (Random Thoughts of a Speculator). Toronto, Political and Economic Publishing Co., 1934. An author who lauds both Hitler and Mussolini might be suspected of having fascist leanings himself. To Solloway, the panacea for the Dominion was "Canadian Nationalism" - a concept to him that meant "work before wealth". A most peculiar book - even for the Depression. ?
- Williams, J. M. Human Aspects of Unemployment and Relief. ✓
Chapell Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1933. Another scholarly study, but this time on a socio-psychological plane. Easy to read, this study is remarkable for the insights it has. Among them: that only extensive government intervention could solve the problem of mass unemployment since, by 1933, almost everyone had agreed that no other remedy would.

2. LATER BOOKS

- Careless, J. M. S. Canada, A Story of Challenge. Toronto, Macmillan of Canada, 1963. One of the general histories

available on the market today that treats the Depression in relation to the overall development of the Dominion in the twentieth century. Careless concentrates on Canadian foreign trade and the national economy generally, rather than making extensive comments on specific provinces or cities.

- Clark, S. D. The Developing Canadian Community. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1962. A series of Clark's essays on the social history of Canada. Used as background reading only.
- Cornell, Paul G. et al. Canada, United in Diversity. Toronto, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967. A heavily illustrated general history of Canada that does devote considerable space to provincial events in the Thirties; although the material therein on British Columbia is suspiciously akin to M. A. Ormsby's British Columbia: A History.
- Dawson, R. MacGregor. The Government of Canada. (revised by Norman Ward). Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1963. A remarkable book that clarifies for the reader many of the historical issues involving Dominion-Provincial fiscal relations. Furthermore, a sizeable amount of material is provided for that area of dispute during the Depression years. As to the municipalities vis-a-vis the provinces, the reasons for the dilemmas faced by cities like Victoria in the Thirties are more easily understood after reading Dawson's and Ward's analysis of this topic.
- Deutsch, John J. et al. The Canadian Economy: Selected Readings. Toronto, Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1965. Basically designed for use as a textbook, this volume is a good companion when one chooses to study the economy of Canada. The topics included therein cover a very broad spectrum of the economic questions that have confronted this nation before, during, and after the Depression.
- Easterbrook, W. T. and Hugh G. Aitken. Canadian Economic History. Toronto, The Macmillan Co. of Canada Ltd., 1967. Again, a standard textbook; but one of considerable merit and scope that has also been used as a general background reference.
- Eayrs, James. In Defence of Canada. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1964, 2 vols. An outstanding series that has, along with Le Fresne's essay, provided a clear picture of the work camp situation in British Columbia during the mid-Thirties. Eayr's volumes have also been invaluable in determining much of the effect that the military had upon the economy of Greater Victoria.
- Fox, Paul. Politics: Canada. Toronto, McGraw-Hill Co. Ltd., 1962. Similar to the Deutsch volume - only this time the

readings are obviously on politics rather than on economics. The articles that deal with the origins of the C.C.F. and the Social Credit parties are succinct and enlightening.

Galbraith, John Kenneth. The Great Crash. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1955. An austere analysis of the causes of the Great Depression, particularly as applied to the United States. Very little space is given to the Canadian experience; but the latter cannot be fully understood without knowing of the events south of the border.

Gray, James H. The Winter Years. The Depression on the Prairies. Toronto, Macmillan Co. of Canada Ltd., 1966.* An outstanding book that is as much literary as it is social history. While it has few areas that pertained directly to this thesis, it nevertheless has given the writer a much better appreciation of those years in Western Canada.

Himmelberg, Robert F. ed. The Great Depression and American Capitalism. Boston, D. C. Heath & Co., 1968. (Problems in American Civilization). A compilation of major economic essays written by scholars who have been divided into various "schools" of interpretation by the editor in an attempt to provide as comprehensive a view of the nature of the Depression as possible.

Innis, Harold A. Essays in Canadian Economic History. (ed. by Mary Q. Innis). Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1962. Innis' essay entitled "The Canadian Economy and the Depression" (pp. 123-140) is a masterpiece. One of his main contentions is that the era brought on an increased and heightened feeling of nationalism in the country. x

Irving, John A. The Social Credit Movement in Alberta. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1959. A political history of a neighbouring province during the same period as covered by this thesis, and as such, has provided general information only.

Labergott, Stanley ed. Men Without Work: The Economics of Unemployment. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall Inc., 1964. A general reference only that has provided a few ideas towards understanding the effects of mass unemployment on an urban centre - especially with regard to relief costs and their long-term psychological effects on a populace. ✓

Lipset, S. M. Agrarian Socialism. (The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan). Berkeley, University

- of California Press, 1959. A work similar in nature to Irving's that has been used for basically the same reasons.
- McGregor, D. A. They Gave Royal Assent. Vancouver, Mitchell Press, 1967. A brief history of the lieutenant governors of British Columbia that, except for minor comments as to the social events at Government House in the Thirties, has proven to be of little value.
- Morton, W. L. The Kingdom of Canada. Toronto, McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1963. Another general history of the nation that contains a considerable amount of material on the Depression. Morton's volume appears to fit between the emphasis that Careless or Cornell have put onto their interpretations, in that this work gives equal attention to provincial and federal events in the Thirties.
- Neatby, H. Blair. William Lyon Mackenzie King: 1924-1932. The Lonely Heights. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1963. A political biography to be sure, but one that examines in considerable detail the issues of the time as well as the attitudes and actions of the protagonist.
- Ormsby, Margaret A. British Columbia: A History. Toronto, Macmillan of Canada Ltd., 1958. A most readable and informative history in general, and a most succinct account of the Depression years in the province. This obviously has been a fundamental source for this thesis.
- Rowat, Donald C. Your Local Government. Toronto, The Macmillan Co. of Canada Ltd., 1962. A basic guide to the understanding of functions and responsibilities of civic governments - although its emphasis is on centres in Eastern Canada.
- Safarian, A. E. The Canadian Economy in the Great Depression. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1959. This volume has been invaluable in the writer's understanding of the overall causes and effects of the Depression. Virtually every facet of the decline and upswing are covered therein, while Safarian is at his best when he summarizes such features as domestic and foreign market fluctuations. An excellent work.
- Smiley, Donald V. The Rowell-Sirois Report. (An Abridgement of Book I of the Report). Toronto, McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1963. A reasonable job of editing that has assisted the writer in understanding both the nature of the Report and its significance in the history of Canada.
- Webbink, R. et al. Labour Mobility and Economic Opportunities. Cambridge, Mass., The M.I.T. Press, 1954. Another special

study in the form of essays which is ostensibly similar to some of the other labour studies mentioned above, but in this case, the contributors have written about the upgrading or downgrading of skills and occupations rather than migratory patterns. For this thesis it has provided general ideas only.

Wilbur, J. R. H. The Bennett New Deal: Fraud or Portent? (Issues in Canadian History, gen. ed. Morris Zaslow). Toronto, Copp Clark Publishing Co., 1968. An interesting work that is a trifle disorganized. Still it has provided some general ideas on a difficult subject: the effectiveness of R. B. Bennett's years in power and his attempts at a general solution to the problems facing the nation. Unfortunately, no conclusive statements are given and the reader had to judge for himself from a confusing array of information.

3. PERIODICAL LITERATURE

Brady, A. "Report on the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations." Canadian Historical Review, vol. 21 (1940), pp. 245-253. Essentially a review of the Rowell-Sirois Commission's Report immediately after its release. In short, it was a clear, brief summary of the Report's contents and recommendations.

Currie, A. W. "Freight Rates on Grain in Western Canada." C.H.R., vol. 21 (1940), pp. 40-55. A most interesting article that contends that tariff reduction in the 1930's - a critical factor to Prairie farmers - was prevented by political considerations; which in turn caused a chain reaction of economic trouble throughout the western provinces. Such information has helped the writer to understand the interdependence of the major economic regions of the Canadian West.

England, Robert. "A Victoria Real Estate Man - The Enigma of Sir Arthur Currie." Queen's Quarterly, vol. 45-2. (Summer 1958), pp. 209-221. A study of Currie and the real estate market in Victoria both prior to, and during the Great War that has been of assistance in determining the nature and extent of the city's growth from 1900 to 1920. ✕

Harvey, E. H. "Depression and Community Health." Public Health Nurses' Bulletin, Victoria, B.C., K.P., vol. 2-1 (May, 1933), pp. 3-7. An article that concerns itself more with the general problems facing public health personnel rather than discussing specific issues.

- Hutchison, Bruce. "Revolt Beyond the Rockies." Maclean's Magazine, July 16, 1934, p. 16 and p. 26. Basically an analysis of the 1933 provincial election in British Columbia that regards the Liberal election as a major shift in voting patterns.
- Lower, A. R. M. "Canada and the Problems of the World's Population and Migration Movements." C.H.R., vol. 12 (1931), pp. 55-59. A seminal paper with a classic statement: ". . . Canadian writers are at least beginning to outgrow the worst lunacies of the 'booster psychology' and to discuss the Dominion's problems of population with some approach to adult mentality." (p. 59). Lower states that people have to have a reason for migrating; and it should be, as far as Canada is concerned, to obtain better employment in an area that can support them.
- McGaffey, Ernest. "The Commercial Progress and Future of Victoria, B.C." British Columbia Magazine, May, 1912, pp. 374-380. A fascinating article in which the author predicts a bridge across the Seymour Narrows and Victoria as the future Pacific terminus for five intercontinental railways. X
- MacInnis, Angus. "More About the B. C. Election." Canadian Forum, February, 1934, pp. 169-170. A general synopsis of the election results and a standard pro-Liberal prediction of the years to follow.
- Mealing, S. R. "The Concept of Social Class and the Interpretation of Canadian History." C.H.R., vol. 46 (1965), pp. 201-218. An excellent, thought-provoking article that claims that very little has been written on lower-class history or the 1930's as far as scholarly contributions in Canada are concerned.
- Ormsby, Margaret A. "The United Farmers of British Columbia - An Abortive Third Party Movement." British Columbia Historical Quarterly, vol. 17 (1953), pp. 53-73. Ormsby establishes a direct link between "disaffected Conservative" farmers in the 1920's, and the then new Social Credit League in British Columbia in 1936. This article has been of considerable value in determining the nature of the political realignments between 1933 and 1939.
- X - - C.H.R., vol. 43 (1962), pp. 277-297. A most comprehensive and coherent article that puts Pattullo in a very good light indeed. It has been used extensively in the researching of this thesis.

Riddell, R. G. "A Cycle in the Development of the Canadian West." C.H.R., vol. 22 (1940), pp. 268-284. According to Riddell both 1870 and 1930 are dates heralding new eras in the western provinces: the former for the beginning of a new expansion; the latter as the start of a consolidation process. X

Wilson, Roland. "Migration Movements in Canada, 1868-1925." C.H.R. vol. 13 (1932), pp. 157-182. A writer who contends that migration has always been a major feature of Canadian economic and social life - yet his emphasis is on out-of-the-country movements rather than interprovincial ones which became so prevalent in the early Thirties. X

4. NEWSPAPERS.

Extensive use has been made of the following newspapers - particularly the latter two:

The Vancouver Daily Province, 1929-1939.

The Vancouver Sun, 1929-1939.

The Daily Colonist (Victoria), 1929-1940.

The Victoria Daily Times, 1929-1940.

C. SPECIAL STUDIES.

1. MONOGRAPHS.

British Columbia, Joint Committee on Unemployment. "Memorandum on Relief and other Matters presented to the Premier." Vancouver, B. C., (unpub. mimeo. memo. held at P.L.B.C.), 1934.

Canadian Association of Social Workers, B.C. Mainland Branch. "Submission to the Hon. Newton Wesley Rowell, Chairman, Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations." Vancouver, March 19, 1938.

Canadian Welfare Council. "Problems in the Social Administration of General and Unemployment Relief in Canada." Ottawa (unpub. mimeo. brief), 1933.

Capital Region Planning Board of British Columbia. Overall Plan For The City of Victoria. Victoria, B.C., Morriss Printing Co. Ltd., 1965.

Cassidy, H. M. "The Problems of Relief, Health and Welfare Services For Interprovincial Transients." Victoria, B.C. (unpub. memo. prepared for the Director of Social Welfare for British Columbia), July 11, 1936. P.L.B.C.

Kitts, Frank L. "History of Unemployment Relief in the Province of British Columbia, 1930 to 1939." Unpub. mimeo. brief, n.d. Held at S.M.H.

Myers, T. R. "90 Years of Public Utility Service on Vancouver Island: 1860-1950." (A History of the B.C. Electric-xerox copy, V.C.A.), Victoria, B.C., 1930. X

2. PAMPHLETS.

The British Columbia Market In Relation To Other Canadian Markets: 1925-1975. Vancouver, B.C., Western Development and Power Ltd., 1962.

Fifty Years of Growth 1906 - Golden Jubilee - 1956. Oak Bay, B. C., Oak Bay Council's Souvenir Booklet, 1956.

100 Years on Forward Thinking from 1863 to 1963. Victoria, B.C., Victoria Chamber of Commerce, 1963. X

Souvenir of the Royal Visit to Victoria, B.C. City of Victoria, May, 1939.

III. PERSONAL INQUIRY.

Mr. Frank Beebe, Victoria (relief camp worker, 1935). Interview with the writer, April 2, 1969.

Mr. R. J. Davidson, Victoria (city constable, 1939). Interview with the writer, October 12, 1968.

Mr. I. Foster, Oak Bay (presently treasurer for Oak Bay). Interview with the writer January 5, 1969.

Mr. E. W. Griffith, Victoria (relief administrator, 1930-1939; later Deputy Minister of Health and Welfare for British Columbia). Interview with the writer August 4, 1968.

Mr. Ainslie Helmcken, Victoria (presently Victoria City Archivist). Interviews with the writer, July 8, 15, 22, 1968 and December 13, 1968.

Mr. E. V. Jones, Esquimalt (labourer, 1937-1939). Interview with the writer July 31, 1968.

Mrs. F. Mutrie, Saanich (relief administrator, 1930-1939).
Interview with the writer July 28, 1968.

Mr. H. A. Wills, Victoria (Managing Editor, Victoria Daily Times and an Alderman for City of Victoria during the 1930's). Interview with the writer, June 9, 1969.

Mr. Albert Woods, Victoria (labourer during the 1930s).
Interview with the writer, June 21, 23, 1969.

IV MAPS, ILLUSTRATIONS.

Victoria and Island Publicity Bureau. "Map of the City of
Victoria and Vicinity, 1938."

Corporation of Saanich. "Graph Showing the Costs of Relief
to the Municipality: 1932-1938." (From Saanich Annual
Report, 1938. Held at S.M.H.).

APPENDIX "A"

THE GREAT DEPRESSION - SOME INTERPRETATIONS OF ITS CAUSES AND NATURE

John Kenneth Galbraith in his book The Great Crash: 1929, (Boston, 1955) asserts that the Depression was world-wide and that its causes were manifold. Primarily he blames the period's financial structure and the ineptitude and timidity of government leaders. In no particular order of importance, the flaws perceived by Galbraith were:

1. An overdependence on foreign trade supported by only the most rudimentary balance of payments arrangements on a nation to nation basis. Canadian trade with the United States fitted neatly into this pattern. International controls were virtually non-existent.
2. Few nations had a central banking system which in turn prevented extensive manipulation of monetary policies or widespread restrictions on credit. Further, many banks could not expect ready support if caught by a run on their deposits.
3. In the case of the United States, there was no regulatory agency such as a securities and exchange commission which could have at least reduced the speculation mania prevalent in the late Twenties or that could have eliminated many of the now obvious abuses such as buying on margin.
4. Financial power was too centralized in the monopolistic trust and investment companies, which, by their irresponsible actions, led to an oversupply of capital in the economy and a mood of extravagance that percolated down into the ranks of producers, labour and consumers.
5. A real paucity of economic expertise and knowledge existed with regard to the market system. (Perhaps the clearest example of this phenomenon is the underdeveloped state of fiscal and monetary policies in 1929 as well as the singular lack of extensive market regulation).
6. No socio-economic compensatory system had even been planned far less tested for an eventuality such as a national economic disaster. Laissez-faire, while considerably muted by 1929, still had its adherents and their numbers were great.

7. Finally, politicians always hesitated to utilize their political power "to break a boom" even when they came to realize some of the potential dangers of an overheated economy. Galbraith apparently considers this type of wisdom as having passed forever when he says, "The avoidance of depression and the prevention of unemployment have become for the politician the most critical of all questions of public policy." (p. 196).

Robert F. Himmelburg, editor of The Great Depression and American Capitalism (Boston, 1968) sums up clearly the main arguments presented by the economists contributing to the above work, and he concedes that while recent interpretations are most likely correct, enough debate still exists to warrant even further study of the period. Himmelburg divides his economists into six "schools" and these briefly are:

1. Contemporaneous economists saw the onslaught of the 1929 depression as a machine breaking down. Somehow, to them, economic self-regulation had failed; either through perverse human behavior or some "impressive and tangible event". Hence it was easy for some to blame events in Europe (such as the illogical reparation payments) while others pointed to a mass psychosis in the stock market.
2. Within two years notions of "overproduction - under-consumption" occurred. Coupled to this were visions of economic rigidities caused by business monopolies - "fatal flaws" which cried out for structural reforms throughout national economies. (This trend, according to Himmelburg, led eventually to an acceptance of Keynesian economics).
3. The "maturity thesis" was the next to follow. Accordingly, American industry and the world economy had reached their apogees, and hence, the depression was a symptom of the decline and not the cause. To proponents of this hypothesis two lines of action seemed possible: "moral suasion" or cooperation between business leaders could lead to an era of non-competitiveness, and therefore, all would share in the production of a mature economy. Or, failing this course, drastic government action (resulting from basic policy changes) would force the ruinous elements of competition out of the market place. (The editor claims that Franklin D. Roosevelt and his "New Dealers" favoured the latter method).
4. Sophistication was slow in coming but its beginnings were apparent in the "Secular stagnation" thesis. Keynesians were at that time developing the concept of an economy at equilibrium

without full employment or optimum investment levels. From Keynes' brilliant insight they were quick to point out that stimulants to perpetual expansion - such as a high rate of population growth and exploitation of hitherto untapped resources - were rapidly disappearing. North American economies must remain static and therefore living standards would have to come in the future from periodic redistributions of wealth prompted by government action. (It must be said here that Keynes did not himself carry his views to this extent and it is not difficult to see how this of all the "solutions" would be most likely run afoul of those seeking to guard their economic, political and social liberties).

5. By 1939 a seminal paper by Joseph A. Schumpeter entitled, "Social Atmosphere and the Future of Capitalism: A Pessimistic Appraisal", argued that recovery was possible but it was hampered by the diffidence of investors in a new social, political and economic atmosphere. In other words, slumps caused demands for new controls which in turn hurt any economic climate that is conditioned to a free rein.

6. Later economists saw the Depression as essentially cyclical and the institutional weaknesses on every hand only caused more trouble and made recovery even more difficult. Investment opportunities were there - but not taken. Prices were rigid - but no one would unilaterally cut them. Tariffs were pernicious - but statesmen raised them nevertheless and on it goes.

The best example of these later economists is Galbraith and indeed, Himmelburg includes an essay of Galbraith's in this volume.

Whatever the reasons for the initial stock market crash, or the subsequent and often parallel decline in virtually all economic sectors, the Canadian experience had a few peculiar twists of its own. One of the most comprehensive and coherent analyses available today is A. E. Safarian's The Canadian Economy in the Great Depression (Toronto, 1959). In this he states that the three main causes of the Depression in Canada were: a deadlock in wheat; a decline of investment opportunities; and before these two could be solved, the rest of the world had suffered such setbacks to their own economies

that Canada, instead of riding out a minor recession, was "hit full swing by a major depression."

Safarian's conclusions on the downswing are extensive but basically they include:

1. The international ramifications were linked to the severity of the American decline that was prompted primarily by severe financial difficulties together with industrial overproduction and inventory pileups. Since the Americans were actively engaged in world trade and financing this resulted ultimately in a world collapse by 1931.
2. Canada's downswing from 1928 highs (in almost every sector) preceded other nations but there is no doubt that when exports collapsed (especially in primary products such as wheat, lumber, fish and coal) a cumulative effect occurred via the multiplier-accelerator process. To make the problems even more formidable, Canadian per capita foreign trade was far too high to be healthy and primary exports were far too large for a country attempting to maintain a standard of living enjoyed by the most heavily industrialized nations. Adding to the threat was the fact that the United States was the major importer of Canadian raw materials; her major source of external capital; and by 1929, perhaps the primary model of the materialistic "good life" which so many Canadians were seeking.
3. As Canadian exports fell, the national income did too. Rigid price structures, financial abuses, overexpansion in previous years plus other legacies from the past all led to a distinct loss of long-term profit expectations, thereby causing a marked restraint in domestic investments. Gross national expenditure between 1929-1933 fell by forty-two percent and investment spending suffered most. Proportionately, the loss of exports was almost as severe but consumer spending tapered-off more gradually. Government spending became the most stable of all, although, as the winter of 1932-1933 approached, combined government deficits were so large that spending cuts were made wherever possible. This occurred when consumer and investment spending plus the export trade were either leveling off or beginning to increase slightly. Time lags like this prevented government spending from becoming contra-cyclical.
4. Cost, rent, interest and wage rates as mentioned above, were unusually rigid. These constraints helped make for little uniformity of decline. Further, the desire for liquid assets, while certainly understandable, was little short of phenomenal. Debt charges accumulating from earlier years were by 1931, extremely serious in themselves. By 1933 fully forty-seven percent carried outside of Canada. When one considers that twenty percent of total current account receipts at that time were

earmarked for interest charges, the stark vision of a vicious debt circle emerges.

5. Safarian's last set of conclusions centre on government policies during the initial years of the downswing. To him there were no effective policies extant and no control instruments available. The large foreign debt precluded any radical economic experiments and the tariffs applied by the R. B. Bennett administration were too rapidly applied and too drastic in scope. Apparently, insufficient account was taken of the varying needs of the diverse regional economies and while manufacturing sectors benefitted considerable, the domestic market could not absorb all the goods produced - particularly in the West where the tariffs served to cripple export trade even more. Virtually the only successful element of the government's policies were those that involved its own spending programmes. Yet, as has been seen above, these schemes simply limited the rate of decline rather than changing its course.

In severity of decline, Canada, out of seventeen industrial nations, placed sixteenth - only the United States' economy fell more. Consumer expenditure for 1933 in Canada was only sixty-five percent of its 1929 level. Inventories were one hundred and thirty-four percent below. Gross national expenditure had plunged to fifty-seven point six percent in four years. Britain devalued her money in the Sterling Crisis of 1931 and the Americans were forced to do likewise in 1933. Canada had entered the downcycle before other nations, was very seriously affected by the breakdowns in other countries, and would have to wait for escape until other nations included her in their own plans for reconstruction.

APPENDIX "B"

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF VICTORIA AND VANCOUVER IN 1929

The following brief descriptions of the two major cities in the province of British Columbia in 1929 should indicate the considerable differences that existed between them and it will be obvious that their dissimilarities cannot be attributed to the population gap alone. In both instances the first paragraph is cited in the British Columbia Manual of Provincial Information, 1930, while the supplementary statistics are taken from Wrigley's British Columbia Directory, 1930:

Victoria, incorporated in 1862, capital and seat of Government, situated on the south shore of Vancouver Island, is one of the wealthiest cities, per capita, in Canada. It has a well developed port for ocean and coastwise traffic, with good facilities, including a grain elevator, and has car-ferry connection with mainland railways. Many industries are operated. The Esquimalt and Nanaimo and Canadian National Railways operate to points on Vancouver Island, for which the city is the distributing centre. Victoria is widely famed as a residential city and is popular as a tourist resort. The city's well equipped with utilities and conveniences. The Provincial Government Buildings are located within the city. With adjoining municipalities - Oak Bay, Esquimalt, and Saanich - population is about 70,000; about 42,000 within the city limits.

Steamship Lines: Port of call for 18 steamship lines.

Churches: 56 all denominations.

Automobile Registrations: 11,000.

Telephones in Service: 16,521.

Hospitals: Four, with 550 beds.

Amusements: Eight theatres plus one arena with total seating of 12,600.

Hotels: 34, with a total of 2030 rooms.

Volumes in Public Libraries: Provincial Library 200,000
City Library 56,000

Financial: Seven national and provincial banking institutions, and four trust companies.

Industry: Industrial plants - 390
 Employees in said plants - 7,000
 Retail Stores - 1,200

(Not included above, but nevertheless somewhat substantial as an economic force in the community were the Canadian armed forces establishments in Esquimalt and other federal government offices in Victoria.)

Vancouver, incorporated in 1886, has developed rapidly and became the commercial metropolis of the Province and Canada's great Western seaport. Five railways terminate there - Canadian Pacific, Canadian National, Northern Pacific, Great Northern and Kettle Valley Railways - and the Pacific Great Eastern, running from Squanish, is connected by steamship. The British Columbia Electric Railway operates to Chilliwack, Steveson, and New Westminster. Over fifty regular steamship lines connect with different parts of the world and coastwise lines to British Columbia and United States points. Vancouver is the chief manufacturing centre of Western Canada. The port is well equipped, with extensive docks, grain elevators, and other facilities; and the harbour is open the year round. The city has many fine buildings, is well supplied with utilities and civic requirements, and owns its water-supply. It is a growing tourist centre. Stanley Park, covering 1,000 acres, adjoins the city. On January 1st, 1929, the Point Grey and South Vancouver Municipalities were amalgamated with Vancouver, giving the city a population of about 240,000. With adjoining municipalities including Burnaby, West and North Vancouver, city and district, and New Westminster, the population of the area is estimated at 290,000.

Telephones in service - 81,775
 Automobiles Registered - 45,572
 Library Holdings - 93,236
 Hotels - 124
 Hospitals and Homes - 54
 Churches - 284

Financial-Seven national and provincial banking institutions and twelve trust companies.

Industry: Industrial Plants, 1,200; manufacturing plants, 600;
 Retail Stores, 2,100.

Population estimate 1930 - 343,855.

From the above it is apparent that Victoria (as per population) is proportionately overrepresented in the

Following areas: library holdings; retail stores; and financial outlets. In virtually every other category the Island city is underrepresented.

APPENDIX "C"

THE GROWTH OF VICTORIA: 1862-1928.

The following synopsis is designed simply to give a very brief summary of the major events in the development of the capital city region before 1929 that in some way might have warned the citizens of the area about the follies of over-extension in commerce, industry and investments. It is by no means an indictment of the populace; rather, it is just an attempt to outline patterns of the then prevailing attitudes and aspirations.

On one hand the pattern can be seen as cyclical in as much as the City would experience a period of rapid growth, followed by recession, then a slight rise until a slow but steady pace of development was reached. The gold-rushes of 1858 to 1862 fit into this mold as does the period from 1875 to 1902 where Victoria enjoyed sound manufacturing, population and trade progress until 1901 when it was obvious that Vancouver had reversed the trend and was producing goods valued at two times that of Victoria. In 1882 trans-Pacific service began from Victoria and in 1887 a graving dock had been built at Esquimalt thereby giving an impetus to ship building and repair. In February 1890 an electric street railway was opened and by 1900 the districts of Esquimalt and Oak Bay were included in this system which prompted bridge building and stimulated other construction. T. R. Myers in his work, 90 Years of Public Utility Service on Vancouver Island:

1860-1950, claimed Victoria was a "British city of 25,000 - mostly wealthy, cultured, and busy gentlefolk."

But signs of potential decline were there: In 1886 the C.P.R. reached Vancouver and never made Victoria its western terminus. The fur seal trade that employed upwards of 1,000 men between 1890 and 1911, and which operated primarily out of Victoria, ceased abruptly because of an international conservation agreement. In 1912 the Panama Canal was completed thereby giving Vancouver the second major transportation facility it needed for international trade and Victoria was forever relegated to second place.

It is no wonder that when rumours of a second trans-continental railroad which would have Victoria as its terminus began to circulate in early 1910, people, slowly at first, but soon with great enthusiasm, invested their life's savings in land speculation. Moreover, they borrowed what they did not have and when it became obvious in 1914 that the Canadian Northern would never lay rails across Georgia Straits, the boom broke leaving hundreds of paupers in its wake. According to Myers:

Some few people undoubtedly made money but by far the great majority became wealthy only on paper. This, however, did not deter them from adopting a mode and style of living commensurate with their apparent profits. Credit on anything and everything was easy. Everywhere it was 'big business' and let the future look after itself. People became convinced Victoria was about to become a large manufacturing centre with heavy industries and a population of 100,000 within a very short time Many fantastic development schemes and rumours were set afoot. These were mostly engineered by shrewd real estate dealers. They were accepted with alacrity by a speculative-happy public. (p. 71).

The Great War intervened, giving another boost, but the general recession affecting all of Canada in 1919 had more effect in the West. Returning soldiers seeking work; the Winnipeg General Strike of that year; decreased sales in every sector from wartime highs; all these contributed to a general unrest and dissolutionment. Victoria varied little from the overall Canadian pattern and indeed the eminent economic historian, Dr. A. Shortt, singled out the tendency towards an irresponsible "boom or bust" mentality in every Western Canadian city. His study of 1922 was unequivocal in its implications that unless town planning and budgetary acumen were brought in immediately, Victoria City would face serious consequences. Yet, the cyclic features of Victoria's economic history appeared to take hold again. 1920 saw a rise in retail sales and employment. This trend continued until 1925 when a levelling-off occurred; but the years 1926 to 1929 saw phenomenal growth in certain sectors (particularly in construction and tourist trade) as well as advances in other areas. As a consequence of these periodic ups and downs, most Victorians with a knowledge of the City's past, could easily have regarded the downswing of 1929 as "normal". The confusion, in part, came when the expected up-turn failed to materialize.

One other aspect of Victoria's growth should be mentioned: land use and urban development.

John M. Wright in a 1956 work entitled The Settlement of the Victoria Region, British Columbia (McGill Univ. M.A. thesis) summarizes the morphological history of the City thus:

1. Nineteenth century settlement resulted in a rectangular gridwork of streets extending outwards from the waterfront. Hence commercial and industrial sites occupied considerable amounts of the downtown area. Wood buildings gave way to stone construction as settlement moved outward. With the advent of roads and the street railway, a ribbon-type development occurred and since many people sought land on the seashore, major pockets of land went unsettled.

2. Twentieth century development centred on rejuvenating the central business district and the granting of choice land to such corporations as the C.P.R. and C.N.R. with the hopes of bringing new industry and tourist facilities to the City. Residential expansion through subdivisions occurred but since a small population was spread throughout a large area, the costs of providing services were unnaturally high for Victorians. The creation of the surrounding district municipalities by 1912 cut Victoria's growth short and split development of the capital city region into four unequal parts.

Only in 1929 was a comprehensive zoning by-law for Victoria passed, but by then so much damage had been done that when the financial strains of the Depression began, City officials had to work through as inefficient and as uneconomical a land tax system that could possibly have been imagined./

APPENDIX "D"

STATISTICAL TABLES PERTAINING TO MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURES,
SOCIAL SERVICES, AND OTHER FEATURES OF THE YEARS 1929-
1939 IN GREATER VICTORIA.

EXPLANATORY NOTE ON TABLES

The following tables are included in this thesis simply to give the reader an opportunity to compare many of the costs incurred by the municipalities of Greater Victoria during the Great Depression. By no means are the tables to be considered as a comprehensive picture of the full costs to the municipalities and their citizens during those years, however, nor should they be viewed as a full representation of social phenomena at work in the area.

The reader is urged to view the financial statistics for Victoria City with considerable caution, in that the primary sources for the figures therein were taken from the City's Financial Reports -- a situation which left much to be desired regarding consistency, and one suspects, accuracy. For example, the various by-laws passed to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars towards unemployment relief for a given year, were not always reflected as such in the financial statements. Similarly, the mayors occasionally claimed that relief costs were one amount, while the financial statements showed another total altogether. In the case of the other municipalities, however, their financial statements normally

coincided as to accuracy with any statements by their respective civic officials. This in turn was one of the major reasons for including a considerable amount of material on the budgets and finances of Esquimalt and Saanich — their financial statements were well organized and clear.

The abbreviations "N. G.", and "N. O." mean not given, and non-obtainable respectively. The totals shown for the number of indictments by the Supreme Court (Table X), are obviously not the full number of offences in Greater Victoria during that period. The vast majority of cases were handled in the local magistrates' and county courts. All tables have been prefaced with the locality to which they pertained, rather than by subject heading; although in each major category, a logical arrangement by subject has been attempted. It is hoped that some of the seemingly unrelated groupings of sub-categories in certain tables will not create confusion. By remembering that the tables are included only for the purpose of assisting the reader in his overall understanding of the scope, magnitude, and variability of the Depression's effects on Greater Victoria, then it should be clear that the tables have been organized in order to achieve maximum flexibility with regard to observing some of the changes that occurred from year to year.

TABLE I

CANADA Numbers of Unmarrieds by Sex in Western Canada,
1921, 1931 and 1941

Province	Males			Females		
	1921	1931	1941	1921	1931	1941
B. C.	159,629	204,961	215,205	114,119	148,909	165,064
Alberta	199,741	242,542	243,666	143,958	179,961	186,215
Saskatchewan	263,186	315,196	283,297	196,499	242,039	221,557
Manitoba	196,072	221,183	209,936	162,928	184,410	176,458
TOTALS	818,628	983,922 ¹	952,104	617,504	765,319 ¹	749,294

1 Thus the ratio of single men to single women in Western Canada at the beginning of the Depression was approximately 5:4.

Sources: 1. B. C. Manual of Information, 1930, p.88.
2. Census of Canada, 1931 and 1941

TABLE II

BRITISH COLUMBIA Metropolitan and Other Centres in the
South Coast Region by Population and
Land Values: 1930.

Centre ¹	Population	Value of Lands and Improvements
Vancouver	230,000	\$348,668,001
New Westminster	19,000	-
Victoria	38,750	77,328,380
Saanich	12,000	14,633,645
Esquimalt	4,000	13,014,996
Oak Bay	5,450	5,244,216
Nanaimo	8,900	6,632,424
Port Alberni	3,165	2,972,688
Duncan	1,740	1,732,333
Courtenay	1,080	1,202,183
Ladysmith	2,250	708,670

1 Among those not listed: North Vancouver, Burnaby, Richmond and Fraser Valley centres.

Source: B. C. Manual of Information, 1930. pp. 167-178.

TABLE III

BRITISH COLUMBIA. Ports, Exports: 1925-1939. (Thousands of Dollars).

Year	Victoria	Vancouver	New Westminster	Prince Rupert	Nanaimo	B.C. Total	% Victoria
1925	\$3,283	\$105,303	\$11,211	\$15,810	\$5,626	\$148,272	2.2
26	3,299	144,635	14,155	15,418	5,891	192,458	1.7
27	3,855	116,920	14,513	20,618	5,674	172,075	2.2
28	3,601	153,021	12,701	27,050	6,982	211,569	1.7
29	4,129	181,222	17,707	19,741	7,279	237,584	1.7
30	4,653	127,215	19,833	11,085	7,489	178,551	2.6
31	3,902	95,325	17,956	8,039	5,731	134,605	2.9
32	3,483	76,385	15,851	8,094	4,837	109,956	3.2
33	2,348	80,303	13,525	5,230	2,574	104,347	2.3
34	5,125	67,055	20,929	4,189	4,828	102,624	5.0
35	4,377	73,448	23,939	7,233	4,872	114,809	3.8
36	4,597	84,924	33,448	9,055	6,399	139,985	3.3
37	5,291	95,467	43,754	4,378	8,990	161,289	3.3
38	6,296	76,976	48,452	4,855	9,466	149,461	4.2
39	5,276	73,845	36,533	4,810	8,490	132,287	4.0

- Sources 1. B.C. Manual of Information, 1930, pp. 185-201.
2. Canada, Department of Trade and Commerce, Bureau of Economics and Statistics. Annual Reports. 1930-1940.

TABLE IV

BRITISH COLUMBIA Bank Clearings for Vancouver and Victoria:
1925-1940. (Thousands of Dollars).

Year	Bank Clearings		Victoria % of Vancouver
	Victoria	Vancouver	
1925	\$101,269	\$ 807,198	12.5
1926	110,886	888,704	12.5
1927	119,553	924,785	12.9
1928	134,096	1,109,376	12.1
1929	151,226	1,243,625	12.2
1930	125,397	994,132	12.6
1931	95,261	795,228	12.0
1932	70,673	637,133	11.1
1933	69,301	667,956	10.4
1934	73,931	755,532	9.8
1935	79,008	781,265	10.1
1936	87,485	953,566	9.2
1937	89,963	975,233	9.2
1938	85,998	867,260	9.9
1939	89,367	888,886	10.1
1940	93,191	908,570	10.3

Sources: 1. B. C. Manual of Information, 1930, pp. 260-280.

2. Canada, Dominion Bureau of Economics and Statistics. Annual Reports. 1930-1940.

TABLE V

BRITISH COLUMBIA Religious Faiths by Members: 1921,
1931 and 1941.

Faith	1921	1931	1941
Anglican	160,978	205,047	245,531
Presbyterian	123,022	84,183	94,300
Methodist	64,810	-	-
Baptist	20,158	23,395	29,780
Congregationalist	2,513	-	-
Lutheran	17,659	36,635	41,772
Salvation Army	2,086	2,801	3,880
Buddhist	10,559	15,074)	29,137
Confucian	19,663	17,548)	
Roman Catholic	63,980	90,852	113,282
Greek Orthodox	2,612	3,274	5,198
Jewish	1,654	2,666	3,235
United	50	164,750 ¹	200,817
B. C. Population	524,582	694,263	817,861

1 During 1925, Methodists, Congregationalists, and many Presbyterians were to form the United Church of Canada.

Source: Census of Canada, 1921, 1931, 1941.

TABLE VI

GREATER VICTORIA Mayors and Reeves in Greater Victoria:
1928-1940.

Year	Victoria (Mayor)	Saanich (Reeve)	Esquimalt (Reeve)	Oak Bay (Reeve)
1928	H. Anscomb	W. Crouch	J. Elrick	E. C. Hayward
1929	"	"	"	"
1930	"	"	"	"
1931	"	"	"	"
1932	"	"	"	"
1933	D. Leeming	"	A. Heald	R. W. Mayhew
1934	"	"	A. Lockley	"
1935	"	"	"	"
1936	"	"	"	R. R. Taylor
1937	A. McGavin	"	"	"
1938	"	"	"	"
1939	"	A.G.Lambrick	"	"
1940	"	"	"	"

Sources: Annual Reports of the Municipalities in
Greater Victoria, 1928-1940.

TABLE VII

GREATER VICTORIA Vital Statistics: 1921, 1925, and
1928-1940. (Rates per 1,000 population).

Year	Population					
	Births	Deaths	Marriages	Greater Victoria	Victoria City	Infant Mortality
1921	24.6	11.3	11.6	60,200 ¹	38,750	57.1
1925	18.9	11.2	10.3	N.O.	N.O.	59.9
1928	20.1	13.9	8.4	"	"	48.1
1929	18.1	13.1	7.5	"	"	45.2
1930	18.1	13.8	8.3	65,874	40,250	45.8
1931	17.9	13.5	7.6	66,600	42,000	25.8
1932	11.4	10.4	6.1	61,216	39,082	30.1
1933	11.2	10.4	7.3	N.O.	N.O.	55.2
1934	11.3	10.8	7.8	"	"	37.0
1935	10.8	11.6	5.7	64,540	"	30.0
1936	11.3	12.2	8.2	N.O.	"	27.2
1937	11.6	12.9	9.5	"	"	40.6
1938	13.1	12.8	9.0	"	"	26.0
1939	13.0	13.15	14.0	"	"	38.9
1940	14.0	12.0	16.4	78,000	46,500	28.4

1 Victoria 38,750 Oak Bay 5,450 Esquimalt 4,000
 Saanich 12,000.

Sources: Victoria Health Officer Reports. 1929-40;
 City Directories; 1930-40; Canada Census, 1930.

NOTE:

Population figures vary as to sources. Those shown above are at best only estimates, except for 1930 which is a Canada Census figure.

TABLE VIII

GREATER VICTORIA Education Costs: District Municipalities
and Provincial Government Estimates,
Totals: 1929-1939.

Year	Oak Bay	Esquimalt	Saanich	British Columbia
1929	\$192,699	\$46,882	\$99,767	\$3,597,699.00
1930	146,032	46,559	116,220	4,248,919.00
1931	109,607	47,578	129,234	4,306,927.00
1932	100,942	46,414	135,009	4,737,110.00
1933	91,550	38,787	124,870	3,846,012.00
1934	90,829	38,419	112,159	3,103,694.00
1935	92,174	38,315	114,171	3,347,940.00
1936	95,914	36,380	110,741	3,542,481.00
1937	97,077	36,445	110,949	3,843,001.00
1938	96,412	37,782	120,437	4,090,279.00
1939	98,596	40,490	135,607	4,116,619.00

- Sources: 1. School Trustees of Oak Bay, Esquimalt, and Saanich Reports;
2. B. C., Department of Education. Annual Reports. 1929-1939.

TABLE IX

GREATER VICTORIA Direct Cost of Charities, Victoria & Oak Bay
1929-1939. Plus Direct Cost of Unemploy-
ment to Victoria and Oak Bay: 1929-1939.

Year	Victoria ¹	Oak Bay	Victoria	Oak Bay
1929	N. G.	\$ 7,316	N. G.	N. G.
1930	\$27,500	9,088	\$69,524	\$ 1,894
1931	32,680	9,783	107,114	13,393
1932	52,650	13,533	164,143	7,490
1933	N. G.	14,780	120,041	N. G.
1934	42,810	15,745	92,626	"
1935	46,000	15,757	91,293	"
1936	46,909	17,821	144,633	"
1937	38,415	13,237	132,417	"
1938	32,061	11,196	150,156	"
1939	42,356	11,279	104,723	"

1 Includes: Aged and Infirm Women; Maple Rest Home; Charitable Aid Fund; Childrens' Aid Society; Friendly Help Association; Refuge Home; Y.W.C.A. Travellers' Aid; Mothers' Pensions Grants; Y.M.C.A.; Salvation Army.

Sources: Financial Statements of above municipalities 1929-1939.

TABLE X

GREATER VICTORIA, B. C. Supreme Court in Victoria,
B. C. Indictments for the
Years: 1927-1941.

Indictment	Period				Totals
	1927-29	1930-33	1934-38	1939-41	
Vs. the Person (including attempts)					
Murder	5	3	3	6	17
Manslaughter	3	6	5	4	18
Rape	2	1	0	1	4
Gross Indecency	2	0	6	3	11
Buggery	0	0	4	2	6
Seduction	1	0	0	0	1
Prostitution	0	1	0	0	1
Carnal Knowledge	1	1	1	0	3
Robbery with Violence	1	1	1	2	5
Assault	2	0	0	1	3
Libel	0	0	1	0	1
Narcotics	1	4	2	4	11
TOTALS	18	17	23	23	81
Vs. Property					
Breaking & Entering	0	3	2	4	9
Theft	2	11	2	4	19
Arson	0	2	1	0	3
Property Damage	2	1	1	0	4
Fraud	1	1	0	0	2
False Pretences	0	13	0	0	13
Forgery	0	4	0	0	4
Conspiracy	0	13	3	1	17
Blackmail	0	1	0	0	1
Lotteries	0	4	0	0	4
TOTALS	5	53	9	9	76

TABLE X (Cont'd.)

Source: B. C. Supreme Court Calendar of General Assize,
October 1927 - March 1941. (Registered Twice
Yearly) Law Courts, Victoria, B. C.

- NOTE: 1. While Crimes versus the Person appear constant throughout, they in fact decreased in half of the categories, including Murder, Rape and Assault. The rise in Crimes of a homosexual nature may possibly be accounted for by the increased numbers of homeless single men banding together during the 1930's.
2. Crimes against Property increased markedly in most categories and seven out of ten show definite advances during the periods 1930-1933 and 1934-1938.
3. This is by no means the total extent of all indictable offences in B. C. Magistrates and County Courts handled the vast majority.

TABLE XI

ESQUIMALT, B. C. Sources of Revenue by Major Items:
1928- 1940.

Item	1928	1932	1936	1940
General Taxes	\$46,432	\$53,855	\$55,282	\$47,915
Sewer Frontage Rate	16,477	11,642	8,525	9,509
Tax Arrears Interest	1,305	2,448	1,463	924
Percentage Additions	2,157	4,785	2,012	1,356
Licences, Fines & Fees	2,718	2,175	1,825	3,802
Road Tax	390	206	166	370
Dog Tax	-	-	397	387
Motor Licence Fees	6,039	3,590	3,590	3,584
Pari-Mutual Taxes	2,505	1,070	-	-
Tax Sale Registration	365	912	699	48
Better Housing Act Administration	106	102	98	341
Liquor Control Profits	7,232	3,858	-	-
McCauley Golf Club Rent	-	-	1,000	1,200
Profit on Work Done	1,121	1,049	216	161
Profits on Garbage Cans	-	-	5	-
Tax Adjustment	194	486	-	-
Rents and Sundry	-	-	176	189
Water Main Installation	-	-	-	32
TOTAL	87,047	86,183	75,460	69,822

Source: Esquimalt, B.C. Financial Statements: 1928-1940

TABLE XII

ESQUIMALT, B. C. Miscellaneous Financial and Budgetary Statistics: 1928-1940, #1.

Year	Assets over Liabilities	Revenue	Revenue over Expenditure	Receipts & Disbursements	Cash on Hand	Floating Debt	Outstanding Taxes	Mill Rate
1928	\$141,158	\$ 87,047	\$ 8,788	\$144,899	\$ 5,481	\$ 2,745	\$20,862	26.00
1929	149,856	92,414	-5,984	157,816	2,683	10,443	19,394	28.00
1930	154,148	91,117	5,015	151,405	5,551	13,547	23,442	28.00
1931	162,331	84,777	10,649	137,559	14,559	22,011	34,940	29.50
1932	178,038	86,183	18,026	143,036	4,707	31,416	51,428	30.20
1933	201,588	99,537	25,647	155,439	11,059	37,457	33,593	34.00
1934	235,255	105,870	30,376	179,553	5,629	8,547	39,268	40.00
1935	242,230	84,819	5,622	152,408	8,672	N.G.	31,677	40.00
1936	245,573	75,460	1,527	142,749	4,548	"	27,278	40.00
1937	253,354	74,119	5,739	150,273	18,645	"	21,545	42.00
1938	257,284	72,239	1,411	150,977	15,087	"	21,409	41.00
1939	255,259	71,127	-5,585	167,671	26,046	"	19,696	41.00
1940	248,208	69,822	-14,294	175,640	26,929	"	16,511	39.00

Source: Esquimalt, B. C. Financial Statements, 1928-1940.

TABLE XIII

ESQUIMALT, B.C. Miscellaneous Financial and Budgetary Statistics: 1928-1940. #2.

Year	Trade Licences Cost ¹	Auto Licences Cost ²	Building Costs New Units	Building Permits Issued	Municipal Population
1928	\$1,126	\$6,039	\$61,877	130	4,500 est.
29	1,369	7,086	77,810	124	" "
30	1,165	7,105	67,990	122	" "
31	1,375	7,090	60,810	134	3,274 census
32	1,155	3,590	22,400	118	" "
33	965	3,215	18,900	92	" "
34	925	3,492	18,900	82	" "
35	885	3,590	22,300	62	" "
36	997	3,590	26,250	88	" "
37	1,155	3,584	N.G.	94	" "
38	1,241	3,584	"	136	3,500 est.
39	1,822	3,584	"	116	" "
1940	2,442	3,584	"	182	4,000 est.

Source: Esquimalt, B.C. Financial Statements. 1928-1940.

NOTE: 1 There is no way of determining the actual decrease in trade licences taken out, as no available figures exist re the cost of individual licences from year to year. Nevertheless, sizable numbers of firms folded as the depression deepened in Esquimalt as advertisements re closing out sales in the local newspapers would indicate.

2 No explanation for the consistency of motor vehicle licence costs during the years 1935-36 and 1937-40 can be found. Conceivably, it results from a fixed rate afforded by the Provincial Government.

TABLE XIV

ESQUIMALT, B.C. Major Civic Revenues & Expenditures: 1928-1940.

Year	School Costs	Depreciation	Public Health	Police	Office & General	Donations	Public Works	Revenue From Licences
1928	\$44,298	\$2,355	\$3,902	\$7,500	\$7,144	\$1,189	\$21,039	\$2,718
29	46,882	2,849	4,317	8,360	7,346	1,034	24,349	3,780
30	46,559	4,394	5,176	8,742	6,825	1,354	22,808	2,982
31	47,578	3,202	4,927	7,366	6,242	3,832	16,653	2,325
32	46,414	2,713	4,719	6,483	6,177	8,026	12,882	2,225
33	38,787	2,608	5,475	5,833	7,476	2,056	11,126	1,744
34	38,419	2,300	4,368	5,865	5,957	2,567	10,059	1,581
35	38,315	2,137	5,627	5,695	6,427	2,439	10,990	1,722
36	36,380	1,847	6,464	5,222	5,771	2,553	10,600	1,825
37	36,445	1,648	6,288	5,195	5,045	2,352	10,412	2,250
38	37,782	1,529	5,755	5,842	6,297	3,008	11,605	2,298
39	40,490	1,504	4,998	6,315	6,618	2,062	13,549	3,079
1940	43,845	2,010	5,800	7,190	7,031	2,604	16,903	3,802

NOTE: 1. The totals for the years 1931 and 1932 have included therein grants from other governments of \$1,403 and \$4,801 respectively for unemployment relief. Succeeding years do not differentiate unemployment relief in the Financial Statements. "Donations" - rather, they are included in Esquimalt's "Schedule D1 - Unemployment Relief Costs". See also Table XVI.

Source: Esquimalt, Financial Statements, 1928-1940.

TABLE XV

ESQUIMALT, B. C. Charitable Donations by Items for
Selected Years: 1930-1939.

Item	1930	1932	1935	1937	1939
Saanich Health Centre Hospital	-	-	-	-	\$ 390
Lebanon Nursing Home	-	-	-	-	356
Allowances	\$ 258	\$ 240	\$1,356	\$1,339	-
Aged and Infirm Women's Home	384	384	384	367	384
Civilian Protection Committee	-	-	-	-	25
Firemen's Mutual Benefit Ass'n.	10	10	-	10	10
Victoria Musical Festival	20	-	-	-	-
Children's Aid Society	-	-	573	573	573
Salvation Army	50	25	25	25	25
T. B. Veteran's Ass'n.	25	25	-	-	-
B. C. Safety League	15	-	-	-	-
Esquimalt Boy Scouts	25	-	-	-	-
Maple Rest Nursing Home	-	-	14	-	236
Esquimalt Women's Institute	25	-	-	-	-
Victorian Order of Nurses	50	-	25	25	-
Armistice Period Committee	15	12	12	12	12
Friendly Help Society	450	7,168	-	-	-
Provincial Old Men's Home	-	113	-	-	-
TOTAL	1,354	8,026	2,439	2,352	2,062

Source: Esquimalt, Financial Statements for years
1930, 1932, 1935, 1937, 1940.

TABLE XVI

ESQUIMALT, B. C. Unemployment Relief Costs: 1934-1937.

Item	1934	1935	1936	1937 ²
Relief Work	-	\$ 7,005	\$ 8,421	\$ 4,454
Single Men	\$ 1,415	-	-	-
Married Men	5,841	-	-	-
Direct Relief	1,203	2,487	3,040	2,632
Material and Supervision	2,706	1,373	1,780	813
Relief Officer's Salary	840	840	840	460 ¹
Gross Costs	12,007	11,706	14,081	8,360
Less				
Government Refunds	5,370 ³	6,061	9,226	5,668
City Total	6,636	5,644	4,854	2,692

NOTES:

1. Six month period only.
2. Unemployment Relief Costs for the years 1938-40 are not listed separately in the Esquimalt Financial Statements.
3. In addition to accepting government grants, Esquimalt borrowed a total of \$3,500 from the Provincial Government at 5% interest. That debt matured in 1944-45.

Source: Esquimalt, B. C. Financial Statements: 1934-1937.

TABLE XVII

ESQUIMALT, B. C. Representative Civic Salaries and Total Court Cases: 1928-1940.

Year	High School Teachers Salaries ¹	Health Officer Salary	Police Chief Salary	Court Cases All Crimes	Crimes Against Person
1928	\$6,611	\$600	-	85	6
1929	6,652	"	\$1,860	145 ³	10
1930	6,808	"	1,920	108	9
1931	6,890	"	1,040 ²	61	6
1932	6,699	"	1,643	52	4
1933	6,028	517.50	1,740	80	2

Source: Esquimalt B. C. Financial Statements: 1928-1940 and Reports of the Chief Constable and the Board of School Trustees.

- NOTE: 1. Total salaries paid for all High School teachers.
2. Unreliable indicator since incumbent changed during the year.
3. Notable increase due primarily to new Liquor and Motor Vehicle Acts, the categories for crimes against the person have been arbitrarily chosen by the writer; those arising from economic distress such as wife desertion, vagrancy etc. are not included.

...

ESQUIMALT, B. C. Representative Civic Salaries and Total Court Cases: 1928-1940.

Year	High School Teachers Salaries ¹	Health Officer Salary	Police Chief Salary	Court Cases All Crimes	Crimes Against Person
1934	6,510	510	1,740	57	4
1935	7,181	"	1,860	70	2
1936	7,304	"	N. G.	60	6
1937	7,079	"	"	N. G.	N. G.
1938	8,013	"	"	"	"
1939	9,077	"	"	"	"
1940	8,681	"	"	"	"

Source: Esquimalt, B. C. Financial Statements: 1928-1940 and Reports of the Chief Constable and the Board of School Trustees.

- NOTE: 1. Total salaries paid for all High School teachers.
2. Unreliable indicator since incumbent changed during the year.
3. Notable increase due primarily to new Liquor and Motor Vehicle Acts, the categories for crimes against the person have been arbitrarily chosen by the writer; those arising from economic distress such as wife desertion, vagrancy etc. are not included.

TABLE XVIII

ESQUIMALT, B. C. Description of Municipal Services Development
1929, 1934 and 1939.

Item	1929	1934	1939
Area of Municipality	1,500 acres	1,500 acres	1,500 acres
Population (estimate)	4,500 (est.)	3,300 (census)	3,500 (est.)
Area of Public Parks	8.13 acres	17.29 acres	17.29 acres
Roads			
Cleared	4.43 miles	4.30 miles	N. G.
Rough Graded	1.77 "	1.77 "	"
Gravelled	0.57 "	0.57 "	"
Macadam	6.90 "	1.13 "	"
Macadam (Tarviated)	12.82 "	17.72 "	"
Tarvia Penetration	.42 "	0.42 "	"
TOTAL	26.91 "	25.91 "	25.04
Plank Sidewalks	15.74 miles	12.10 miles	N. G.
Tarvia Sidewalks	4.10 "	4.91 "	"
Sanitary Sewers	20.29 "	20.29 "	26.29
Water Mains	18.50 "	18.50 "	18.50
Gas Mains	Nil	3.43 "	3.82
Tramway Tracks	4.15 miles	4.15 "	4.15
Electric Poles and Wires	20.25 "	20.25 "	N. G.
Telephone Poles and Wires	14.04 "	14.04 "	N. G.
Railroad Tracks	1.96 "	1.96 "	N. G.

Source: Esquimalt, B. C. Engineer's Report.
 1929, 1934 and 1939.

TABLE XIX

OAK BAY, B. C. Selected Financial Statistics:
1928-1939. #1

Year	Net Tax Levy	% Paid	Amount Unpaid	Assessments' Total	Revenues' Total
1928	\$162,846	93.40	\$15,102	\$ 9,153,862	\$281,395
1929	177,121	93.04	18,840	9,927,256	316,911
1930	195,232	92.36	19,570	10,707,702	318,052
1931	195,477	92.00	25,043	11,967,146	329,820
1932	201,537	87.20	38,027	11,967,146	331,676
1933	203,034	85.20	48,281	11,768,641	312,544
1934	201,175	85.60	44,879	11,793,365	314,611
1935	196,727	84.10	46,283	11,346,390	315,167
1936	196,889	86.10	43,331	11,169,655	312,125
1937	205,264	92.30	25,290	11,366,780	316,522
1938	211,229	92.60	23,706	N. G.	330,398
1939	216,477	93.65	20,932	"	337,346

Source: Oak Bay Treasurer. Financial Statements:
 1928-1939.

TABLE XIX (Cont'd.)

OAK BAY, B. C. Selected Financial Statistics:
1928-1939. #1

Year	Receipts' Total	Expenditures' Total	Mill Rate	Sinking Fund Surplus
1928	\$283,587	\$287,215	27.0	\$47,856
1929	312,103	312,010	27.0	49,380
1930	316,366	338,471	27.0	46,694
1931	331,935	327,972	27.0	42,275
1932	317,210	327,972	26.5	38,682
1933	298,462	300,412	26.0	41,975
1934	307,546	304,750	26.0	50,825
1935	308,816	309,085	26.0	27,324
1936	315,248	310,721	25.6	29,118
1937	336,977	315,905	25.0	26,116
1938	334,964	337,971	25.0	29,899
1939	339,619	339,619	25.0	

Source: Oak Bay Treasurer. Financial Statements:
1928-1939.

TABLE XX

OAK BAY, B.C. Selected Financial Statistics: 1929-1939. #2
 (Major Expenditures, Revenues and Receipts.)¹

Year	Roads	Office & General	Licences & Fines/Fees	Capital Depreciation	Sinking Funds Available	Water Revenue	Water Expenditure	School Expenditure ³
1929	\$16,537	\$11,961	\$4,517	\$35,218	\$389,144	\$58,190	\$50,524	\$192,699
30	25,890	12,280	4,026	31,615	412,809	53,519	45,359	146,032
31	17,143	12,171	4,300	19,237	430,708	49,371	45,371	109,607
32	18,833	13,056	2,965	21,418	424,079	50,622	39,444	100,942
33	15,410	11,235	2,777	29,046	386,268	51,784	38,660	91,550
34	14,074	11,609	2,927	18,074	383,716	55,688	51,152	90,829
35	15,020	12,542	3,201	15,908	370,760	59,605	42,975	92,174
36	16,357	12,101	3,001	8,315	375,389	59,446	43,993	95,914
37	17,420	13,281	3,915	10,214	408,693	58,337	46,775	97,077
38	19,566	13,333	4,147	24,220	380,247	67,357	52,346	96,412
39	17,720	14,300	3,850	204,382	328,729	69,848	53,526	98,596

NOTE: 1. Not all costs are included here. Police, Fire and other less costly items are omitted.
 Source: Oak Bay Treasurer. Financial Statements. 1929-1939.

2. "Capital Appreciation" in the double ledger system maintained at the time, equals "Capital Depreciation" for the above years. To make the most sense out of this list, consider these monies as being used for updating equipment and for other replacements. The figure \$204,382 in 1939 is for a major waterworks expansion.

3. See also Table VIII.

TABLE XXI

OAK BAY, B. C. Municipal Expenditures by Items: 1936.

Item	Cost	Percentage
Schools	\$ 91,257	29.5
Sanitation	47,533	15.3
Highways	46,305	14.9
Waterworks	44,332	14.3
Charities	17,821	5.6
Fire Protection	15,068	4.8
General and Sundries	14,546	4.7
Policing	12,725	4.1
Recreation	12,188	3.9
Work Departments and Sundries	4,753	1.6
Public Health	2,181	.7
Housing	2,011	.6
TOTAL	\$310,720	100.0%

Source: Oak Bay, Treasurer, Financial Statement, 1936.

TABLE XXII

SAANICH, B. C. Selected Financial Statistics: 1928-1940.

Year	Asset Surplus	Expenditure	Revenue over Expenditure	Investments (Par Value)	Office Costs	School Costs	Teachers Salaries
1928	\$152,510	\$124,789	\$2,633	\$219,355	\$9,358	\$98,578	\$68,794
1929	128,371	119,641	3,623	107,839	7,973	99,767	69,839
1930	107,619	140,932	-11,785	74,966	9,066	116,220	83,406
1931	102,333	151,421	-7,713	87,699	10,425	129,234	91,981
1932	110,464	133,935	-8,422	117,629	8,622	135,009	101,456
1933	N. G.	N. G.	N. G.	N. G.	9,620	124,870	N. G.
1934	173,639	165,432	-1,516	105,000	8,640	112,159	81,085
1935	153,329	178,674	-16,083	95,500	9,252	114,171	82,418
1936	156,813	181,878	-11,225	115,500	9,729	110,741	82,876
1937	145,432	253,275	-22,196	145,837 ¹	9,899	110,949	81,986
1938	131,508	224,142	-20,329	190,500	9,498	120,437	89,235
1939	134,575	231,032	-14,948	233,500	8,687	135,607	85,569
1940	153,679	243,407	-16,014	263,500	8,494	140,182	86,276

1 Market Value

Sources: 1. Saanich, B. C. Financial Statements: 1928-1940.
2. B. C. Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Annual Report, 1933.

TABLE XXIII

SAANICH, B. C. Selected Social Services Financial Statistics: 1928-1940.

Year	Police	Fire	Public Health	Hospitals	Charities/Grants	Work Relief	Municipal Share	Provincial Share
1928	\$10,228	N. G.	N. G.	\$15,688	\$8,721	-	-	-
1929	11,512	"	\$19,261	13,957	8,438	-	-	-
1930	13,448	"	19,103	19,103	13,065	\$13,137	\$6,568	\$6,568
1931	13,402	"	13,963	N. G.	10,268	86,129	37,036	48,993
1932	12,986	"	14,501	14,328	8,191	91,173	19,994	71,199
1933	12,642	6,459	N. G.	N. G.	9,650	N. G.	N. G.	N. G.
1934	12,337	N. G.	12,552	15,578	8,863	91,871	31,478	60,392
1935	13,128	"	12,133	16,803	10,048	94,491	22,492	56,789
1936	12,073	"	12,124	17,601	12,419	100,054	22,237	76,482
1937	11,752	"	12,355	15,422	12,914	44,821 ¹	8,964	35,856
1938	14,295	11,360	12,778	13,548	13,265	34,926	6,985	27,941
1939	14,572	14,157	11,187	15,952	12,006	36,373	7,274	29,098
1940	15,145	27,549	12,998	16,679	11,884	15,846	3,169	12,677

Source: Saanich, B. C. Financial Statements: 1928-1940.

1 Termed "Work Relief" in the period 1937-1940; but called "Direct Relief" prior to those years.

TABLE XXIV

SAANICH, B. C. Property Taxes, Trade and Building Statistics: 1928-1940.

Year	Mill Rate	% Taxes Collected	Total Tax Arrears	New Dwellings	Value Thereof	Total Permits	Value Thereof	Trade Licences
1928	N.G.	90.30	\$33,960	N.G.	N.G.	N.G.	N.G.	\$2,480
1929	"	90.72	32,272	"	"	"	"	2,397
1930	28.0	91.04	30,578	"	"	358	382,199	2,691
1931	28.0	87.87	39,713	"	"	556	394,521	2,592
1932	42.0	82.67	58,039	"	"	431	304,368	2,354
1933	42.0	79.78	78,889	"	"	N.G.	N.G.	2,191
1934	42.0	81.57	77,018	142	194,140	361	242,457	2,192
1935	42.0	82.21	76,917	154	195,145	373	275,186	2,439
1936	42.0	83.58	71,271	176	249,185	387	292,314	2,439
1937	42.0	85.03	61,581	193	341,602	417	407,638	2,522
1938	42.0	86.30	56,124	262	481,508	531	552,503	2,654
1939	42.0	85.93	56,339	235	484,930	499	551,052	5,126
1940	41.0	88.69	48,641	387	812,899	677	895,125	5,118

Sources: Saanich, B. C. Building Inspector's Reports and Municipal Financial Statements: 1928-1940.

TABLE XXV

SAANICH, B. C. Municipal Direct Relief Costs: 1936-1940.

Year	Municipal		Provincial		Transients	Single Men	Single Women	Total Cases	Total Cases with Dependents
	Married	Dependents	Married	Dependents					
1936	242 ¹	583	21	44	47	49	29	359	1033
1937	210	470	16	31	18	54	36	331	871
1938	176	382	13	33	56	40	34	265	674
1939	202	428	9	29	-	54	41	309	765
1940	139	254	5	11	-	52	52	251	514

1 In all cases these are monthly average figures.

Year	Gross Cost Medical Assistance ²	Gross Cost All Relief Cases	Amount Paid by Provincial Government
1936	\$3,594	\$100,054	\$76,482
1937	3,961	89,179	68,905
1938	3,713	71,958	46,275
1939	4,267	72,592	55,350
1940	4,291	58,884	44,064

2 Yearly Totals. Data for years 1932-1935 not listed separately.
Source: Saanich, B. C. Financial Statements. 1936-1940.

TABLE XXVI

SAANICH, B. C. Donations, Charities, and Grants: 1932.

Allowances - Cash	-----	\$3,376.30
Armistice Committee and Canadian Red Cross Society	-----	50.00
Aged and Infirm Women's Home	-----	420.00
B. C. Branch of the S. P. C. A.	-----	10.00
Children's Aid Society - Victoria	-----	905.68
Children's Aid Society - Vancouver	-----	42.84
Firemen's Mutual Benefit Society	-----	10.00
Good Roads League	-----	10.00
Maple Rest Nursing Home	-----	270.00
Saanich Agriculture Society	-----	200.00
Saanich Police Charity Fund	-----	50.00
Salvation Army	-----	150.00
Social Welfare Exchange	-----	180.73
T. B. Veterans' Association	-----	10.00
24th May Celebration Committee	-----	100.00
Union of Canadian Municipalities	-----	25.00
Union of British Columbia Municipalities	-----	75.00
Vancouver Island Horticultural Society	-----	50.00
Victoria Chamber of Commerce	-----	25.00
Funerals	-----	645.00
Special Nursing Care	-----	95.00
Ambulance	-----	15.00
Care of Special Cases	-----	376.17
Victoria-Saanich Beaches and Parks Committee	-----	1,100.00
TOTAL	-----	8,191.72

Source: Saanich, B. C. Financial Statement. 1932.

TABLE XXVII

VICTORIA CITY. Civic Debt and Tax Statistics: 1930-1940.

Year	Debt	Extension Securities	Brokerage	Interest	Mill Rate	% of Taxes Paid	Assessment Rates	
							Land	Improvements
1930	\$487,534	230,921	6,500	19,000	41.0	91.00	100%	60%
1931	527,541	299,540	5,000	25,000	40.5	-	"	"
1932	560,039	314,774	6,500	52,500	42.0	-	"	"
1933	472,024	324,642	-	39,400	41.5	83.32	"	"
1934	429,809	236,456	27,500	26,000	41.0	-	"	"
1935	488,928	269,213	15,000	23,000	40.5	-	"	"
1936	558,227	262,609	22,000	26,000	40.0	-	"	65%
1937	643,929	-	25,000	16,000	40.0	-	"	"
1938	544,066	-	12,000	21,500	-	-	"	"
1939	519,282	-	5,000	21,500	-	-	"	"
1940	627,818	-	-	25,000	41.0	-	"	"

Source: City of Victoria By-Laws, 1930-1941. Nos. 2498-2989. Also City of Victoria Auditor's and Mayor's Annual Reports, 1930-1940.

TABLE XXVIII

VICTORIA CITY Values of Building Permits Issued:
1922-1940 Plus, Junior Police
Constables' Salaries: 1930-1940.

Year	Victoria City	Junior Police Constables' Salaries: 1930-1940
1922	\$1,033,004	-
1923	1,050,160	-
1924	838,103	-
1925	466,877	-
1926	618,239	-
1927	2,424,761	-
1928	2,601,293	-
1929	3,742,681	-
1930	3,862,681	\$142.50 per month

- Sources: 1. City of Victoria, Building Inspector, Annual Reports: 1922-1930.
2. City of Victoria, Financial Statements: 1930-1940.
3. B. C. Department of Municipal Affairs, Annual Reports: 1931-1940.

TABLE XXVIII (Cont'd.)

VICTORIA CITY Values of Building Permits Issued:
1922-1940 Plus, Junior Police
Constables' Salaries: 1930-1940.

Year	Victoria City	Junior Police Constables' Salaries: 1930-1940
1931	737,160	\$142.50 per month
1932	389,673	142.50 per month
1933	340,136	135.38 per month
1934	432,112	121.84 per month
1935	518,463	121.84 per month
1936	584,517	125.50 per month
1937	760,695	125.50 per month
1938	864,118	131.78 per month
1939	805,470	142.50 per month
1940	1,767,120	142.50 per month

- Sources: 1. City of Victoria, Building Inspector, Annual Reports: 1922-1930.
2. City of Victoria, Financial Statements: 1930-1940.
3. B. C. Department of Municipal Affairs, Annual Reports: 1931-1940.

TABLE XXIX

VICTORIA CITY Development of Municipal Services:
1932-1939.

	1932	1939
Mileage of paving of sheet asphalt paving ---	56.842	56.842
Mileage of paving of wood block pavements ---	1.594	0.851
Mileage of paving of concrete pavements ---	1.653	1.653
Mileage of paving of macadam pavements ---	33.569	34.631
Mileage of paving of vitrified brick pavements ---	.460	0.460
Mileage of paving of unpaved streets ---	51.796	49.588
Mileage of paving of asphaltic concrete ---	<u>4.589</u>	<u>6.489</u>
Total Mileage of Streets ---	150.503	150.514
Total Mileage of asphaltic concrete sidewalks ---	0.918	0.918
Total Mileage of concrete sidewalks ---	138.244	138.575
Total Mileage of boulevards ---	65.920	65.920
Total Mileage of crush rock and gravel sidewalks ---	134.359	135.653
Total Mileage of sewers ---	N. G.	12.140
Total Mileage of water mains in City ---	144.03	139.367
Total Mileage of water mains in Esquimalt Municipality ---	20.59	N. G.
Total Mileage of water mains in Victoria West ---	10.799	N. G.
Total Mileage of water mains in Sooke District ---	12.05	N. G.
Total Mileage of water mains in Flow-Line Sooke Lake to Humpback ---	27.25	N. G.
Total Mileage of surface drains --	103.561	103.561

Sources: City of Victoria, Engineer's Annual Reports, for 1932 and 1939.

TABLE XXX

VICTORIA CITY Education Attendance and Expenditures: 1929-1940.

Year	Attendance (Av.)			Teachers	Net Ordinary Expenditure	Student Total ¹ Rate 1929=100
	Vic. Coll.	High Sch.	Total			
1930	253	1156	6079	207	\$484,784	98.2
1931	270	1156	6034	196	465,109	97.3
1932	289	1208	6041	187	454,991	97.4
1933	243	1240	5889	191	450,839	95.0
1934	230	1255	5668	193	417,339	91.4
1935	214	1256	5490	186	425,595	88.6
1936	192	1272	5325	184	431,026	85.9
1937	193	1213	5168	180	396,963	83.3
1938	218	1123	5193	163	398,746	83.7
1939	222	1172	5031	168	339,391	81.2
1940	235	1160	5006	167	398,752	80.9
1929	242	1234	6198	168	466,577	100.0

Source: Victoria Board of Education. Reports: 1929-1940.1 Population for Victoria: 38,750 as per 1930 Census.

TABLE XXXI

VICTORIA CITY Unemployment Relief Sheet: 1932.

Direct Relief		\$205,430.82
Sundry Relief Works	\$121,668.33	
<u>Less</u> Contributions and Bonds Handed Back	<u>1,227.50</u>	<u>325,440.83</u>
Parks		5,987.41
Medicines, Drugs, Dentists, etc.		3,760.47
Painting City Hall		345.60
Removal of Garbage and Clearing Lots		3,628.15
Schools, Night Watchmen		11,285.26
Cordwood Account		1,603.80
Human Interest Bond Sellers		42.00
Rotary Club Decorations		43.55
Work Done under Human Interest Bond Campaign	522.00	
<u>Less</u> Bonds Handed Back	<u>181.25</u>	<u>341.75</u>
Roadway, Exhibition Grounds	388.37	
<u>Less</u> Contributed by Rotary Club	<u>305.00</u>	<u>33.37</u>
		352,943.01
<u>Less</u> Sales of Wood		1,642.55
<u>Less</u> Paid by Dominion and Provincial Governments		
1932 Account	91,762.56	
1933 Account	<u>169,368.49</u>	<u>261,131.05</u>
		90,169.41
Unemployment Relief Office		29,872.12
Human Interest Bond Campaign Expenses		<u>100.00</u>
		<u>\$120,141.53</u>

Source: City of Victoria, Financial Statement, 1932.

Tipped in H. Ward '72
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