

## *Chapter 2*

# *Two Steps Forward... 1944-1949*

**T**he CCF had emerged as a left-wing populist movement during the depths of the Depression. With strong support from farmers and the small labour movement affiliated with the CCL, they were elected on a platform of social reform. As part of the attempt by the mostly agrarian-based party to secure labour support, they developed a program for reformed labour legislation. Following the elections, the new government announced its intention to pass a trade union act which would make it compulsory for employers to bargain collectively with the labour union selected by the majority of their employees and granting unions the right to strike.

Most significantly, the government stated that the provincial civil service would be covered by the new Act. For the first time in Canadian history, public employees would have the right to affiliate with a labour union of their choice and to bargain collectively with their employer — the Saskatchewan Government.

### **The Struggle for Recognition**

The initial response of the SCSA was nonchalant. The executive intended to make representations to the government on civil service reform and to continue their role as polite civil servants making requests of their paternal employer. However, in early August, 1944, the Canadian Congress of Labour, the militant industrial labour central, announced that it was launching a campaign to organize provincial government employees into their organization. The CCL called for a general meeting of provincial civil servants for August 4.

The association responded immediately, issuing a press release stating that civil servants were satisfied with the SCSA, that there was no need to unionize and detaching themselves from the CCL initiative. Meanwhile, the CCL meeting attracted 75 civil servants and a provisional organizing committee of six persons was formed.

The Regina *Leader-Post*, a Liberal-supporting newspaper, entered the fray supporting the association in its rejection of unionization. In an editorial on August 9 the newspaper argued that civil servants might "sacrifice all individuality to arbitrary union regulations" and called upon the Government, who had already declared their neutrality on the issue, to tell the CCL to get lost.

With several full-time organizers at their disposal, the CCL was aggressively canvassing association members. By mid-August the CCL had leafletted many government buildings, had achieved a presence at Saskatchewan Telephones and had targeted other sections such as the Saskatchewan Power Commission (later to become the Saskatchewan Power Corporation) and mental hospitals in Weyburn and North Battleford.

Concern over CCL activities prompted the association president, A.T. "Bert" Fuller, to arrange a meeting of the SGSA\* Central Executive with Carl Berg and Phil Hoffner of the TLC on August 27. The craft-based TLC offered the association complete autonomy if they affiliated and stated that the TLC "had no intention of commencing a membership campaign amongst the Civil Service." The association made no commitment then but waited until August 29, when they held a meeting with Premier Douglas to hear his views on what changes would be necessary for the association to be recognized as a "bona-fide Employee's Organization."

"The Premier indicated that he was a firm believer in the benefits of Trade Union Organization, being a member himself, and criticized our Association for not having affiliated with, or established a Dominion Federation of Civil Servants. It was pointed out to him that up to the present time, only the Federal Government employees are organized on a Dominion-wide basis, but that our Association has

*"Attention was drawn to recent press reports and meetings in connection with the proposed organization of the Provincial Government employees into a Local Union of Canadian Congress of Labor. The official view of the Association was that at the present time, we see no need for unionization of the Service, and feel that for the present year at least, the Government should be given an opportunity to implement its promises to the Civil Service..."*

Provincial Executive Minutes  
August 14, 1944

*"There is no doubt", Mr. McAuslane said, "that Mr. Dawson's organization (SCSA) is by no means a bona fide employees' organization but has served the same purpose for the former Liberal government as a company union serves the purposes of the management."*

*"It is obvious," Mr. McAuslane alleged, "that he does not speak for the rank and file civil servant, and now that the civil servants may choose their own organization, I do not doubt they will choose a legitimate trade union to represent them without fear of reprisal."*

Report on CCL Provincial Meeting  
*Leader Post*, August 7th, 1944

*"Many members of the Association in Regina and elsewhere throughout the province no doubt feel that the time has arrived to safeguard their interests through affiliation with a recognized labour organization. Our great need in this connection is education. Most of us lack even a rudimentary conception of a labour organization or its real function; to many the term is synonymous with the word 'strike'."*

Editor's Notes  
*The Dome*, August 1944

\*SCSA changed its name to Saskatchewan Government Services Association in early 1944 but reverted to to SCSA later in the year.

## Civil servants hear unionist

Formation of a bona fide trade union comprising the 3,600 civil servants in Saskatchewan would rectify the injustices that have existed in the civil service and provide greater efficiency, A. A. McAuslane, Ottawa, first vice-president of the Canadian Congress of Labor, told a gathering of provincial government employees in the city hall Friday night.

A union would permit civil servants to come together with the government and thresh out all their problems, he added, and would eliminate from the minds of employees the fear that they might lose their jobs whenever there was a change of government.

The meeting, attended by about 75 civil servants, was the first attempt to organize Saskatchewan government employees into a union. Chairman was A. F. Langton, Moose Jaw.

Mr. McAuslane said he had conferred with government members about the matter and had received a warm reception. "The C.C.F. has pledged itself to support trade unions," he said. "Speakers for the party time and again have said throughout Canada that the C.C.F. would do all in its power—if elected—to assist in organizing the unorganized."

Among the many things a civil servants' trade union would strive for were better working hours and the raising of salaries, Mr. McAuslane said. He had been told that certain government employees work 10 and 12 hours a day. All civil servants would be classified once the union was formed. The government would be asked to pay all employees in a certain classification a uniform wage.

He pointed out that, although the C.C.L. had been organized only three and one-half years ago, it had grown from 50,000 members to 300,000 at present.

During the question period, Mr. McAuslane said the dues to belong to the C.C.L. were \$1 per month per person, with a \$2 initiation fee. Of the \$1 per month, 50 cents would remain in the local organization and the remaining 50 cents would go to the C.C.L. to be used in other organization work. He stressed that all money paid to the C.C.L. remained in Canada.

R. J. Keyes, Regina, who said he was not a civil servant, suggested that employees should refrain from organizing for several months to give the new government a chance to improve their salaries. Another speaker said many civil servants were in favor of becoming unionized but were afraid.

Application cards were distributed. Mr. McAuslane asked for volunteers to form a provisional committee. About six names were obtained.

endeavoured to start on an organization of Provincial Civil Servants across Canada.

In the matter of recognition of our Association, the Premier went on to express his opinion that some re-organization of our Executive Committees might be necessary if we were to affiliate as a body with a Trade Union already established, and that there was only one way in which the Civil Service of this province could embarrass the Government, and that was for us to fail to take advantage of the legislation which the Government is presenting for the benefit of employees throughout the province."<sup>1</sup>

An Executive meeting held on August 30 discussed union affiliation and "It was then moved by Sandstrom/Geddes that in view of circumstances which have arisen and information from the Premier as to Labour Legislation which is to be brought forward at the October 1944 Session, the Central Executive is of the opinion that the time has come to suggest to our membership affiliation with the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY."

The SCSA had arranged a special meeting of the Regina Local the next night where the Executive's decision was announced to the approximately 640 members in attendance. The meeting was also addressed by Wm. McGruther, President of the Civil Service Association of Alberta (TLC) and by Carl Berg, Western Vice-President of the TLC. A resolution expressing complete confidence in the Central Executive was "received with loud acclaim, and was adopted by a standing vote of fully 95% of those present."

With the Regina meeting boosting the Executive's confidence in their affiliation decision, they arranged a letter and ballot to be sent out on September 7 to Association members and arranged meetings in Weyburn and North Battleford in the meantime, to counteract CCL activity at the mental hospitals.

**REGINA LOCAL**  
OF  
**The Saskatchewan Government  
Services Association**

WILL HOLD A  
*General Meeting*  
OF ALL  
**Provincial Government  
Employees**  
IN THE  
**COLONIAL BALLROOM**  
Hotel Saskatchewan  
ON  
**Thurs., Aug. 31**  
at 8:00 p.m.

TO DISCUSS CURRENT PROBLEMS WITH MEMBERS  
OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE

*"Wm. McGruther, CSA of Alberta, TLC) also pointed out again that with Trade and Labour Affiliation, each group is absolutely autonomous and that the organization as a whole is absolutely non-political and non-sectarian; cannot call any group out on strike at any time for any purpose, but instead, has demonstrated that it is opposed to strikes, and sends out its organizers to any point at which a strike is threatened in an effort to prevent such action."*

Report on Regina Local Meeting  
August 31, 1944

*"An employee is defined by the Act as any person in the employment of an employer, except any person having authority to employ or discharge employees, or regularly acting on behalf of management in a confidential capacity ... Until more definite information has been made available on the definition of "employee" executive members of Locals should stay put and continue to carry on."*

*The Dome*  
December, 1944

*"Is Communism staring us in the face? Are we losing the right of free speech and free thinking? We should at least wait until the war is over and the boys are back to take their places in civilian life before we take any rash steps. We should stick to the Association, until such a time as it cannot give us the service of the past ... The C.C. of L. will tell you that the Association hasn't given employees anything so far as working conditions and salaries are concerned ... Surely, most of the staff see through this ruse, and with a little thinking and common sense, will work to eradicate this menace."*

Article in *The Dome*  
October-November, 1944  
by a Member of a Mental Hospital Staff

The Association's argument in favour of the TLC and against the CCL were that the TLC was apolitical (the CCL had endorsed the CCF as "labour's political arm") and could therefore work under any government and that the TLC allowed complete autonomy for the association. Undoubtedly the conservative character of the TLC was also more appealing to the SCSA leadership and other members who adhered to the traditional civil servant mentality.

When the ballots returned, the association membership had voted 88.4% in favour of affiliation with the TLC (the CCL wasn't offered as an alternative). On September 22, the Association applied for affiliation with the TLC and the next day the SCSA was accepted "into the fold" of Canada's largest labour central. The association then applied to the Wartime Labour Relations Board to be the sole bargaining agent for the entire civil service in Saskatchewan, but weren't granted it since the government had yet to enact the appropriate legislation.

When the Trade Union Act was passed in December, 1944, it included in its jurisdiction as promised "His Majesty in the right of Saskatchewan", i.e. the provincial government. In early 1945 the Association's application was heard by the new Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board (LRB). But opposing the SCSA's application were the United Telephone Workers of Canada (CCL) and the United Civil Servants of Canada (CCL) who had applied for certification at the Department of Telephones and for mental hospital employees in Weyburn and North Battleford respectively. The CCL was awarded Telephones but the LRB turned down their application for the mental hospitals on the grounds that they weren't an appropriate bargaining unit. It appeared that the association had become the bargaining agent for the entire provincial civil service except Telephones. But this wasn't the end of the matter.

The CCL was mad, having had majority support in the mental hospitals and then being denied certification. The CCL approached Tommy Douglas and somehow convinced him to appear personally before

the next LRB hearing on their behalf. The association representatives were astounded when Premier Douglas appeared and asked the Board, many of whom were government appointees, to re-hear the Mental Hospital case, which they promptly did.

When they did, Douglas responded to the Association's argument that a unified civil service under the SCSA would result in a more efficient service and would benefit the employer. The premier stated that the government had no problems whatsoever with dealing with two separate entities within the civil service. He essentially told the Board that they had made a mistake. The Board apparently agreed with him and amended their original order and awarded the mental hospitals to the CCL.

Whatever happened to the Government's neutrality? For politicians, politics always comes first. What arrangements had been made between the Premier and the CCL or what future debts the CCL paid, one can only guess. The LRB decision, though, was to affect jurisdictional disputes for many years to come.

Despite this incident, the overwhelming majority of the provincial civil service was now under the jurisdiction of the SCSA and the Government was required to bargain collectively with them.

### Getting Started

Now that the SCSA had officially become a trade union, it was faced with major difficulties in adapting to its new role.

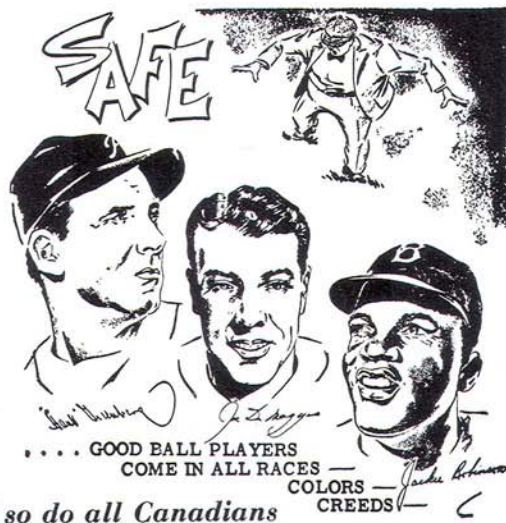
Initially they had to ensure that the more obvious management members withdrew from the association if they were to be recognized as an employees' organization. Many leading members and ex-leading members therefore quit the Association. They also helped to project a new image being promoted among provincial employees of the association as a more dynamic organization.

Financially, the association was in pretty bad shape before certification, having only had \$640 in their

*"Our old friends from Battleford and North Battleford were really missed. Deep regret was expressed at the news that the Battlefords Local had ceased to exist and had not seen fit to send delegates to the Convention ... Our Association could not assume responsibility for such promises to these temporary employees as made by the C.C.L. with a result to our present disadvantage."*

Convention Highlights  
The Dome, January, 1945

## Join the Union Team!



and so do all Canadians

*"This agreement is the first of its kind to be adopted in Canada, and possibly on the North American continent.*

*The agreement marks a milestone in the long and arduous journey our Association has made toward the goal of a better and more stable civil service. In it, we may not have achieved all we had hoped for, all we had set out to accomplish. Nevertheless, we have taken a giant stride forward."*

President's Message  
The Dome, July-August, 1945



coffers. They had no full-time staff and the leadership had very little experience in union affairs. The Annual Convention held in December, 1944, approved new Association membership fee of \$.50 a month; previously it had been only \$1.50 per year. The convention also supported hiring a full-time general secretary at \$2,500 a year and called upon the government to provide employees with a cost-of-living bonus to meet the cost of rising prices.

Bill Leonard from the Civil Service Association of Alberta spoke to the convention on the issue of job classification and must have impressed the membership for he was stolen from Alberta and hired as the association's first General Secretary. Leonard was awarded the many difficult tasks involved with the association's new role, including fighting the "raid" by the CCL to assisting in negotiations and servicing and collecting dues. He was to work with Gertrude Beach, the SCSA's first stenographer, in the association's office in the Legislative Building. Both the room and their only typewriter were provided without charge to the Association by the Government, and perhaps it was a good thing that the CCL didn't learn of this.

This change in the SCSA met with approval from the average public employee as 2,400 of them voluntarily joined the SCSA and applied for dues deduction—600 more than before labour affiliation. New employees joining the civil service after certification were required to join as a condition of employment.

With no formal negotiations underway for a first contract, the association, following Convention direction, requested a cost-of-living bonus. In February, 1945, the government provided a \$12.50 to \$20.00 per year bonus as well as a \$30 per year increase for lower paid employees. The urgency of getting a first agreement was apparent and the Provincial Executive struck a committee to draw up proposals for a draft agreement. They examined model industrial agreements and others to apply what they could to public employees. Other sections of the SCSA set up committees for their own negotiations.



*A new departure in the relationship between Government and its employees was made on August second, when a collective bargaining agreement was entered into between the Government of this province and the Civil Service Association, representing a majority of the civil servants of Saskatchewan. Heretofore, governments have been prone to set standards of conduct to which private employers were required to adhere, but by which they themselves frequently refused to be bound. Minimum wage legislation, apprenticeship laws, safety regulations and other similar provisions have generally benefitted employees in private industry, but have totally ignored the civil servant. This new agreement however, firmly establishes the principle that this Government intends to abide by standards higher even, than those required of private employers. In its relationship to the civil service, the Government of Saskatchewan now seeks to become a model employer. It has taken this step with the object of improving the conditions of work of its own employees, and out of a desire to raise the standard of workers throughout the country. Members of the civil service may expect to benefit materially through this Agreement; labour in the province may look to it as the materialization of one of our declarations of policy.*

*Statement by Premier T.C. Douglas on new Agreement, The Dome, July-August, 1945*

The very first agreement reached by SCSA members was reached between the Saskatchewan Power Commission and their employees, members of SCSA, May 10, 1945.

The Public Service contract committee had been researching and, with the assistance of Dr. Morris Schumiatcher (back then a CCF supporter), presented the government with a draft agreement. After a few meetings with the government, history was made August 2, 1945, when an agreement was reached and the first Public Service Agreement was signed.

The Agreement provided for:

- union recognition
- equal pay for equal work regardless of sex
- overtime rates
- 35½ hours, 6-day work week for office employees
- maximum 44-hour work week for other employees
- minimum 3 weeks vacation
- cumulative sick leave benefits
- a grievance procedure
- automatic annual wage increase
- promotion by seniority
- no dismissal without good cause
- a one-year agreement, and
- much more

This Agreement represented a fantastic step forward for provincial government employees. No longer would they be subject to the whims of department heads or paternalistic governments. Provincial employees now had a collective bargaining agreement protecting their rights. Across the country, provincial government employees were watching Saskatchewan and witnessing the advantages of union organization and free collective bargaining.

But all was not rosy. The agreement did not provide for an immediate job classification and pay plan—one of the association's primary goals. Instead the agreement stated that "The Government agrees to employ the service of reputable technical consultants

who would research and draw up a position classification plan." A dispute arose over who would be hired as the consultants, with the SCSA insisting on the independent Public Administration Service (PAS) based in Chicago, while the government first wanted a non-specialist consulting agency and later proposed that specialists from the Federal Government do it. The association response was that the "Feds" were not consultants, they were another government, "another employer."

Although the initial agreement had been signed in August, the dispute over consultants dragged into December and the membership was getting very, very restless. Their job classification and pay rates were at stake and nothing was happening.

The government finally accepted PAS, who then proceeded to conduct a comprehensive survey of the public service. The pay plan and classification plan weren't completed, however, until October, 1946. Employees had requested a cost-of-living bonus in the meantime but had been turned down by the government. Eventually the new plan was to be brought into the negotiations for a new 1945-48 agreement.

The government used the pay increases included in the PAS recommendation to blackmail the association into accepting an increase in the hours of work from 35½ hours in a 6-day week to 37½ hours in a 5-day week. The association stated that "In fact and in truth the five day 37½ hour week was accepted under pressure from the Government and not by agreement...the policy of the Congress (TLC) has always been to give praise where praise is due and to not hesitate to criticize anti-labour practices whenever and wherever present. As an affiliate of the Congress we hold that it is our clear duty to express our disapproval of the increase in hours."<sup>2</sup>

While the establishment of a classification and pay plan (in February, 1947) was a major accomplishment, some of the rates that were changed and the way the government used it in negotiations left a sour taste in the association's mouth. Perhaps the CCF government wasn't as sympathetic to labour as they proclaimed.

## What We HAVE:

### Trade Union Act: gives you

- Collective Bargaining
- Checkoff
- No dismissal without cause

### Agreement: gives you

- Classification
- Pay Plan

### Civil Service Act: gives you

- Three Weeks Holiday with Pay!
- Sick Leave With Pay!



## What We NEED!

### Democratic Control

- Opportunity for membership to vote on all major questions

### Job Security

- Vigorous prosecution of grievances
- Promotion based on seniority plus merit
- No pre-empted positions

### A Strong Union

- Educational program
- Revision of constitution



**SUPPORT CHANGE SECURE ACTION**

My father was a civil servant in Swift Current, and he looked with disdain on the SCSA during his period in the 30's and 20's and considered it little more than a social club and I am sure that Wally Sandstrom, Ivan Burrell and all the rest of them would have been very happy for it to continue that way so when the Trade Union Act was passed they were forced to make a move. If they didn't, then the membership would've.

So they moved rather quickly to affiliate themselves and took the TLC as the lesser of two evils; as a central organization which would not interfere with their cozy way of running things...

Pretty soon a group of left-wing CCF'ers in the civil service ... got together and decided that the only way they could bring this thing to its proper fruition was to try to take control of the executive in the elections; to run people, to raise money and get them well publicized.

"In a sense, we didn't go into the election to win it, as much as we did to educate the membership about the issues involved.

As a result there was more consciousness, not very widespread, but some more consciousness of the class structure within the civil service itself....

Wally Sandstrom and the rest of them were just giving themselves and myself a big raise and the poor maintenance workers and that type ... got a much smaller amount of money."

"It was the middle management level, the aspiring bureaucrat who felt that this was a way to get the attention of the bosses. It was the "chief clerk" kind of level who were professional bureaucrats, after all that was how they had attained their position under a liberal government, by being an efficient professional bureaucrat, i.e., "don't rock the boat!", "know your place! stay in it!", so that any organization that that group created was based on that kind of philosophy — "we're not here to embarrass the government, we're not here to fight for our rights — we're here to ensure that everything stays calm and that we then personally get recognized because we're good bureaucrats". And of course that was exactly what the CCF wanted too. The

*CCF wanted a different social, political, economic program but it wanted to build it on the civil service institution of "loyalty" and "diligence" and "for Christ's sake, don't rock the boat!" So I'm sure that the CCF leadership — Douglas Fines and the rest of them were very pleased when Ivan Burrell and the rest of them won that election. They didn't want a lot of hor-headed progressives demanding new rights, new responsibilities for the civil service. They wanted a civil service that would do what it was told."*

*"I'm sure that people like Wally Sandstrom, Ivan Burrell and the rest of them were convinced that the whole bunch of us were Communists just imported from Russia. They were absolutely hysterical every time we made even a modest suggestion about improvements in working conditions. They were just an ideal bunch of McCarthyite followers. They had all the elements within them about left-wing activities ... and all of them felt very very threatened, in a job sense, when a CCF government came because they weren't socialists, they weren't very progressive-minded people."*

Bill Harding

Member of SCSA Reform Slate of 1946

*Whereas, we, the Local No. 8 are extremely dissatisfied with the conduct and attitude of the Provincial Executive with the various locals in regards specifically to:*

- (1) Their meagre dissemination of information of matters of general union interest;*
- (2) Their lack of proper consideration of resolutions and motions presented by various locals;*
- (3) Their unsatisfactory handling of grievances.*

*Therefore, it is resolved that the Local No. 8 do pass a Motion or censure on the Provincial Executive's attitude on these matters.*

Resolution from

Swift Current Local, 1947.

The next year's negotiations proved to be no easier. Bill Leonard explained that, "We were not totally happy with it but our objective was to put the classification plan and the pay plan into the first agreement.... Later we were to regret this...because in March, six weeks after that February agreement was signed, the Federal Government took off wartime Wage and Price Controls which had been in effect from March 15 to November 1, when our contract came up for renewal. The cost-of-living Index advanced 16 points. Believe me, were we caught out, having signed an agreement.... This precipitated the first Conciliation Board we ever had with the Government. And out of that Board we did achieve a cost-of-living bonus.<sup>3</sup>

## Reform Movement

When the SCSA became a union in 1945, it continued to maintain many of the old attitudes and practices. Members found that they had little say in major decisions made between conventions, especially in respect to contract ratification which was made by the executive and not the members. The association was also perceived as not aggressively pursuing grievances or of adequately informing the membership on issues. The association leadership was mostly the "old-timers" who had become involved in the SCSA back in the 1920s and '30s.

At the same time, when the CCF was elected, many young CCF members went to work for the new government hoping to take part in constructing the new society promised by the CCF. To many of these young activists, the association leadership represented an obstacle both to improving the member's welfare as well as to promoting social change through government policies.

A group of these left-wing CCF members from the Regina Local met October 12, 1946, and decided that they must run a slate of candidates in the upcoming Provincial Executive elections. Led by Hugh Harvey, one of the few experienced trade unionists in the

association, they organized a slate under the slogan "Support Change, Secure Action" (SCSA). Their platform promoted:

- younger members in leadership positions
- more democratic control
- trade union educational campaign
- new constitution
- more aggressive action
- more control from the branches

This group organized leafletting of government buildings and worked with contacts in many outside centres.

For their part the incumbent leadership, never before challenged by an organized opposition, decided to run their own slate. They emphasized past accomplishments and the "factionalism" of their opposition and promised to "maintain the high standards of the SCSA."

As the campaign proceeded (at this time the Provincial Executive were elected by ballot by the general membership), a high interest developed in the election and the future direction of the association. Candidates from the two slates travelled around the province to various locals presenting their views to the membership. The reform group were subjected to destructive rumours, in particular that they were CCL supporters who, when elected, would change the SCSA affiliation.

When the election was over and the ballots counted, the incumbent leadership had won easily—the reform group getting only 30% of the vote.

The group continued to oppose and criticize the leadership following the election through 1947, but by 1948 many of them had been promoted out of scope or transferred elsewhere, ceasing to operate as an organized opposition.

Interestingly, the next annual convention changed the rules governing the election of the Provincial Executive so that they would now be elected by the

*"(Mr. Browne, Regina) rose to suggest that in this situation, the Association throw down the gauntlet to the government in defence of the 35 ½ hour week and the retention of the pay proposals of P.A.S."*

SCSA Convention Minutes  
January, 1947

*"the aim of this radical group at Estevan was not just to gain control of our Branch but that it was the opening through which they fully intended to attack the main body of the SCSA, was very definitely confirmed."*

Chas. V. Fidgett  
SCSA Secretary-Treasurer's  
Report on trip to Estevan  
re: Dominion Electric and CCL,  
January 28, 1947.

*"Beware of forces that would try to divide you from your fellow employees. You are employees of the Power Commission and are not civil servants. It is true, that you have belonged to the Civil Service Association, but ask yourself just one question - Has it really ever meant anything to you?"*

CCL to Regina Office,  
Sask Power Commission  
July 17, 1948.

*"... we have brought in the Trade Union Act ... and other Acts ... to give various groups the chance for self-protection against the old vested interests of Capitalism. We did not pass these measures in order to create a new class of privileged persons.*

*Against this general background, we must therefore adopt the general policy that there is no possibility of the Insurance Workers or any other Government employees securing a level of wages substantially out of line with their contemporaries in this province."*

T.C. Douglas to CCL President  
A. Mosher.

convention delegates rather than the membership-at-large.

Other events of this period included the initiation of the first national organization of provincial government employees in 1945 resulting in the establishment of the Canadian Council of Provincial Employee Association (CCPEA) on a permanent basis in 1947. By this time the provincial employee associations in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba had affiliated with the TLC.

The 1948 Public Service Agreement negotiations achieved adjustments for 22 classes and continuation of the 1947 cost-of-living formula. Inability to win strict seniority in regard to promotions prompted the association president, Walter Sandstrom, to resign in protest. He later withdrew his resignation, but following his term he refused to be active in association affairs again.

The first provincial employee strikes also occurred in 1948. The Prince Albert Box Factory, nationalized by the CCF government and organized by the CCL, was forced to strike against an intransigent management. Similarly, the recently founded Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office, also organized by the CCL, struck against the Government over wages and working conditions. Clearly the CCF's image as a "model employer" left much to be desired even in these early years.

The CCL had also not given up on organizing public employees already in SCSA (called "raiding"). When the government nationalized two privately-owned power companies in Estevan and Moose Jaw to be placed under the Saskatchewan Power Commission, both the CCL and SCSA sought to represent them. A group of young militants were supporting the CCL, but they lost an LRB-sponsored vote by one vote. However, now that they were part of the Power Commission, CCL sympathizers sought to organize the entire Commission into the Electric Utilities Employees' Union (EUEU-CCL). The initial attempt failed, but in 1948 both the CCL and the

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers raided SCSA members at the Power Commission. A tough-nosed manager at the Power Commission had resisted attempts by the SCSA to resolve outstanding complaints, so it was not surprising that when the LRB ordered a vote to be held to choose between the EUEU (CCL) and the SCSA, the CCL union won. This and other jurisdictional divisions in the provincial civil service were to have an effect on collective bargaining, especially in later years.

Under the CCF, the Saskatchewan Government had considerably expanded its services. New departments such as Labour, Social Welfare and Co-operatives and Co-operative Development were established and many others grew in size and scope. The Association grew alongside this development until in 1949 it had more than 3,000 members and constituted Saskatchewan's largest trade union.

The years 1944-49 were historic and hectic years for the SCSA. Despite all the problems, weaknesses and conflicts, provincial government employees took two enormous steps to advance and improve their interests—certification as a union, and winning through free collective bargaining their first agreement. For over 20 years no other public employees, either in other provinces or federally, would be able to achieve so much.

