

Vadym Tkachenko*V. N. Karazin Kharkiv National University (Kharkiv, Ukraine)***The Cold War in the Programs and Activities of the Left-wing Political Parties and Trade Unions in Canada (1956-1962)**

The aim of the article is to show the ideological transformation of the left part of the Canadian political spectrum from the post-stalinist shifts till the Cuban missile crisis. The presented material can be used in further studies of the Cold war from the ideological approach. The results of the study can contribute to the better understanding of the Cold War history in Canada, regarding the global confrontation as a conflict of not only the superpowers but also the ideas. The article is also a case study of political parties, making an account of factors which caused organizational instability and changes in their ideological orientation. The main results: it has been found that there was a significant right-wing ideological shift in the Canadian Labour movement and Social Democrats as well. On the other hand, our study shows how the Communists were able to keep their ideological background stable and overcome the organizational weakness of 1956-59, even if the price was paid in losing some people the among their ranks.

The article shows a wide range of factors that influenced that drift. Concise conclusions: It is shown that overall the Canadian left were weakened during this period. The most powerful leftist party, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, has shown a denounce of some Marxist theses in the 1956 conference, and that led it to further centrist transformation, united with the labour movement in this drift. The Cold war influenced this shift in many cases, as the Left program documents consistently show the distancing from the communist regimes which are claimed as totalitarian. The Communist Party of Canada was left as a one, and reasonably weak, pro-soviet power, remaining somewhat orthodox in its doctrinal ideological beliefs. Their activities were crippled as well due to societal opposal to them as a rival Cold war side. Originality and scientific novelty of the current article are based on the fact that, for the first time, the attempt has been made to give an account of program changes of the Canadian Left while considering the factors which led to them (or their absence). For the first time there has been made a comparison of those changes which gives us possibility to characterize Canadian political climate during the subsequent period.

Keywords: *Social Credit, CCF, NDP, Leftists, Communists, Cold War*

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Мета статті – показати ідеологічну трансформацію лівої частини канадського політичного спектру від постсталінських зрушень до кубинської ракетної кризи. Представлений матеріал може бути використаний у подальших дослідженнях холодної війни з ідеологічного підходу. Результати дослідження можуть сприяти кращому розумінню історії «холодної війни» в Канаді, розглядаючи глобальне протистояння як конфлікт не лише наддержав, а й ідей. Стаття також є тематичним дослідженням політичних партій із врахуванням факторів, що спричинили організаційну нестабільність та зміни їх ідеологічної спрямованості. Основні результати: виявлено, що в канадському робітничому та соціал-демократичному рухах відбулися значні ідеологічні зрушення вправо. З іншого боку, наше дослідження показує, як



комуністи зуміли зберегти свою ідеологію і подолати організаційну слабкість 1956-59 років, навіть якщо ціною була втрата деяких людей у своїх рядах.

У статті показано широкий спектр факторів, які вплинули на цей дрейф. Стислі висновки: Показано, що в цілому канадські ліві були ослаблені в цей період. Найпотужніша ліва партія, Кооперативна Федерація Співдружності, продемонструвала на конференції 1956 року відхід від деяких марксистських тез, що привело її до подальших центристських перетворень, в яких вона була поєднана з робітничим рухом. Холодна війна вплинула на цей зсув у багатьох випадках, оскільки ліві програмні документи послідовно показують дистанціювання від комуністичних режимів, які називаються тоталітарними. Комуністична партія Канади залишилася єдиною і досить слабкою прорадянською силою, зберігаючи певну ортодоксальність у своїх доктринальних ідеологічних переконаннях. Її діяльність була також суттєво зменшена у масштабах через протидію суспільства як прихильникам сторони-суперниці Канади в «холодній війні». Оригінальність та наукова новизна даної статті ґрунтуються на тому, що вперше зроблено спробу розглянути програмні зміни канадських лівих з урахуванням факторів, які до них (або їх відсутності) призвели. Вперше проведено порівняння цих змін, що дає можливість охарактеризувати канадський політичний клімат у досліджуваній період.

Ключові слова: Соціальний Кредит, CCF, NDP, ліві, комуністи, «холодна війна»

Introduction.

Problem definition. The Cold War had a significant impact on the left-wing movements in the world and in Canada particularly. The reality of global confrontation had to be responded by parties and trade unions in the light of their relation to the USSR. In the second half of 1950s it was further shifted considering changes occurred in the Eastern bloc– the 20th CPSU congress and Destalinization policies, on the one hand, and the bloody suppression of the Hungarian revolution in 1956. Our review is limited to 1962 because we wanted to show the whole transformation of Social Democrats and the labour movement which ended with the formation of New Democratic Party and approval of its 1961-62 programs. However, we had not touched the matter of Cuban missile crisis because its significant influence which would require a very thorough analysis and change our case further. We also analyzed the impact of the Cold War not only as geopolitical, but ideological confrontation. This meant that it was not only an arms race but also a reputation challenge, a struggle to improve own image and undermine those of the rival side. Therefore, we included some changes not only in stances on international politics, but rather on domestic social policies which have played an important role on the domestic front of the global confrontation.

The Aim of the Study is to reveal the ideological shift of the Canadian left-wing parties and its vectors, as well as analyze the factors that stood behind it, and to reveal the changing attitude and role of

trade unions in the left-wing movement. Research methods which were used include structural and functional analysis, synthesis, comparative analysis, generalization and historical genesis analysis.

Historiography of the problem consists mainly of the Canadian works considering topics close to ours. This list includes “Analysis of membership education : a study of the CCF Party in B.C., 1933-1961” (Carle, 1982), “The Impact of Cold War Events on Curriculum and Policies, and the Protection of Children in Postwar Ontario Education, 1948-1963” (Clarke, 2020), “The communicative ecology of social democracy: The case of the CCF/NDP” (Classens, 2008), “Stanley Brehaut Ryerson: Marxist Historian” (Kealey, 1982), “Hegemony secured: Social Credit and the crippling of the Alberta left” (Penner, 2017) The NDP: Manitoba’s Natural Governing Party? (Wiseman, 2008). Some works were aimed at the labour movement, showing the transformation of trade unions during this period. The examples are “Class conflict and political factionalism: a history of Local 213 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, 1901-1961” (McDonald, 1986), “Canada’s Cold War in Fur” (Sangster, 2008). However, those studies were focused on cases somewhat distant from the overall ideological shifts, considering only single-party cases and often the single province examples. Primarily, their focus was placed on organizational or electoral changes (in case of the political parties).

Sources. The article is based on the program documents of organizations considered, which were used to show main ideological attitudes.

This includes the 1933 and 1956 Co-operative Commonwealth Federation programs, 1961 and 1962 New Democratic Party programs, 1957 Social credit Party Program. We also included memoirs of the CPC members to show the inner situation in the party and the background of its split. Official (governmental) materials were also taken into account with the goal to analyze how the political establishment viewed described changes in the left-wing ideology and activities.

The Main Material and Results.

The second half of the 1950s brought changes to the communism and, in the broad perspective, left-wing movements in Canada as a whole. They were based on the death of J. Stalin and the change of Soviet leadership. This was followed by a shift in the ideological climate of Soviet totalitarianism. Practically the main event in this context was the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, which split the communist movement in Canada into those who accepted the ideological revision, those who remained in their old positions and the ones disappointed with their previous activities. One way or another, the new period marked the weakening of communist activity in the country. A new blow to the reputation of the USSR and related organizations was dealt by the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. At the same time as the Soviet leadership formally renounced the "extremes" of the Stalinist model, its deconstruction was planned to be done only from above, being carried out with a strict control of the Soviet political elite. Thus, in the world and the Canadian communist movement, one can observe the disappointment of the Social Democrat reformists with the policy of the USSR, since they had hoped for (a) much more significant changes.

These developments have led to a decline in Canadians' assessment of the potential threat from the Communists. Reductions in the communist activity because of organizational divide, public remorse and other signs of weakening have shifted the focus of attention. For example, Canadian historian Frank Clark argues that it was the twentieth congress of the CPSU and its ideological consequences that shifted the perception of the "communist threat" – its character changed in the eyes of Canadians: from internal danger caused by the communist activists to a nuclear threat from the USSR (Clarke, 2020, p. 142). This was facilitated by the growing danger of nuclear war.

Canadian Communist John Boyd said in his memoirs: "Speaking of 1956, I often ask myself why I didn't leave the Party at the time of the split. I certainly felt very much like doing so at the time. I agreed with most of the criticisms that were made by MacLeod, Salsberg, Penner, Binder and Edna Ryerson, and especially John Stewart, whom I

admired and respected very much. I was very much on their side in the arguments that were presented, although I also felt badly about the fact that the Party was being rent asunder. I was with them ideologically, but I found it hard to actually leave the Party. It would have been a heart-wrenching experience for me. All my family, including my wife's side of it, were loyal Communists, especially my father, who had been an ardent Communist all his life. I would have been renounced by my family and close friends and become a virtual pariah among them" (Boyd, 1999, p. 21). D. Boyd went on to say that even for those who remained, the dramatic events of the Twentieth Congress and the Hungarian Revolution led to change: "after 1956 my attitude to the Party changed considerably. I became much more critical of its policies in discussions. I questioned a lot of things". (Boyd, 1999, p. 21).

With tensions rising during the Cold War, Canadian communists or their relatives were treated as responsible. For example, there had been numerous cases of psychological pressure on students who were associated with the Communist Party or distributed its ideas and symbols. Such people were deprived of the right to attend classes for a certain period of time, subjected to public obstruction and suffered from obscene words addressed to them (Clarke, 2020, pp.137-138.). Similar things were observed in high school. For example, during Tim Buck's visit to the University of Vancouver, he was pelted with fruits and vegetables. The student newspaper published an interview with the participants of the meeting, in which they promised to "prepare bigger and better tomatoes" for the next visit of the leader of the Communist Party (Buck Meeting, 1955).

Another blow to the party's reputation was dealt by the position of its member of Jewish descent, Joe Salsberg, who, during his visits to the USSR in the second half of the 1950s, formed a negative attitude towards the Soviet Union. D. Salsberg's position was determined by the anti-Semitic measures of the USSR – ideological campaigns of the late Stalinist years, the closure of Jewish cultural institutions and restrictions on emigration to Israel.

Even in those circumstances, the party leadership led by Tim Buck continued its pro-Soviet course, despite the numerous losses of its supporters. Articles made by prominent communist activists James Endicott and Dyson Carter became a source of Canadian anti-state and anti-capitalist propaganda. We should also note that formally Endicott was not a communist, but ideologically he belonged to the same part of the political spectrum and was characterized by CPC Chairman T. Buck as "partisan". The reason for this situation was his Christian views, which contradicted certain party principles. However, this propaganda placement was mostly not in Canadian, but rather in Eastern



European and Soviet publications, which were not published in the country (Black, 1988, pp.153-171). In 1959, the Labor Progressive Party reverted to its former name, the Communist Party of Canada, which therefore distanced itself from the Socialist Reformers.

In the late 1950s, the party returned to public life on a new level. In 1959, it more than doubled its membership, organized the Marxist Training Center, reorganized its youth section, and revived the French-language newspaper. In 1961, the Canadian magazine *Maclean's* called the party's leadership "tough, doctrinal survivors." (The Slow Comeback, 1961).

The scale of the old-style propaganda, which was financed from Moscow, was also growing. As the Attorney General of Canada noted in 1960, "A Communist Party 'statement' containing the usual propaganda urging neutrality, disarmament and peace, the nationalization of United States-owned industry in Canada and Canadian trade on a worldwide basis was adopted at a National Committee meeting in Toronto last thanksgiving week-end. The 'Canadian Tribune' has now announced that a quarter of a million copies of the statement will be distributed in Canada. Despite the fact that the Communist press in Canada has suffered serious losses in recent years and, according to available information, seems barely able to continue, it appears that sufficient funds are always available for the distribution of propaganda, even on such a large scale as this." (Secret Memo, 1960). As we can see, the law enforcement agencies expressed doubts about the origin of the material base of the party's operation – alluding to Soviet aid. However, in addition to this, the energy of the party organizers played an important role. An example of this is the Canadian Marxist historian Stanley Ryerson, who in 1959 claimed responsibility for the World Marxist Review and became chairman of the Center for Marxist Studies in Toronto. He was the editor of the Marxist Quarterly from 1961 to 1969 (Kealey, 1982, pp.133-171) and in such manners supported the influence on the left intellectual community.

The other left-wing movement which has significantly changed in its priorities and ideology was the Social Democrats. Undoubtedly, the 1956 Winnipeg Declaration on the Principles of the Commonwealth Cooperative Federation (CCF), which led to a major turn of the Canadian Social Democratic Party to the right and its shift from anti-capitalist rhetoric, had a serious impact on the country's left. The previous program document, the 1933 Regina Manifesto, aimed at radically transforming the country's socioeconomic system, stating: "We aim to replace the present capitalist system, with its inherent injustice and inhumanity, by a social order from which the domination

and exploitation of one class by another will be eliminated, in which economic planning will supersede unregulated private enterprise and competition, and in which genuine democratic self-government, based upon economic equality will be possible." (The Regina Manifesto, 1933). Even if those theses looked somewhat radical, we should also understand that CCF was a law-abiding party which stated that only constitutional methods were to be used in the struggle for country's leadership. The new program has seriously changed the rhetoric. Although the party claimed in 1956 that "Canada Still Ridden by Inequalities", it noted that "Canada is a better place than it was a generation ago, not least because of the cry for justice sounded in the Regina Manifesto and the devoted efforts of CCF members and supporters since that time." (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, 1956).

Also, the rhetoric regarding foreign policy has changed under the influence of the Cold War. The 1933 program was not only pacifist but also anti-capitalist: "genuine international cooperation is incompatible with the capitalist regime which is in force in most countries... Canada must refuse to be entangled in any more wars fought to make the world safe for capitalism". The League of Nations in this document was also called the League of capitalist Great Powers (The Regina Manifesto, 1933). The new document significantly changed the position: "The CCF reaffirms full support for the United Nations and its development into an effective organization of international cooperation and government. The world must achieve a large measure of international disarmament without delay and evolve a system of effective international control and inspection to enable the prohibition of nuclear weapons. The CCF believes in full international cooperation which alone can bring lasting peace (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, 1956). Next the text condemned totalitarian practices, which the authors treat as equal to the "old imperialism" and state that they "must disappear" (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, 1956). It should be noted that pacifism has significantly lost its position in the program, and in general the attitude to the country's foreign policy has changed. The government was accused only of relying too much on defense spending to prevent the threat of communist expansion. Also, one of the main tools necessary in Canada's foreign policy was considered a "generous support of international agencies to provide assistance to under-developed countries on a vast scale" (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, 1956). It is noteworthy that there was no position on NATO participation and defense spending at all, despite the fact that the party advocated nuclear disarmament under the auspices of the UN, the course to reduce the armed forces

under those conditions was unlikely, and the CCF understood it.

There was also no criticism of the country's political system. Moreover, it was glorified: "The CCF has confidence in Canada and its people... The CCF believes in Canada's federal system... it can safeguard our national well-being and at the same time protect the traditions and constitutional rights of the provinces" (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, 1956). Next, compared to 1933 theses of "The establishment of a planned, socialized economic order", the 1956 program "recognizes that in many fields there will be need for private enterprise which can make a useful contribution to the development of our economy".

From our point of view, this shift illustrates the weakness of the Canadian Social Democracy. As of the late 1950s, they were unwilling to offer clear alternatives to the policies of other parties. The further consolidation of the Social Democratic and workers' movements showed not a strengthening but a weakness on the "home front" of the Cold War. At the same time, Canadian politicians, even without the significant participation of moderate leftists under the pressure of socio-economic problems, responded to the challenges of the time.

Further distancing from the communism was also characteristic of trade unions of Canada. According to Joan Sangster, the mid-1950s were characterized by continued persecution of communist trade union activists and their expulsion from trade unions (Sangster, 2008, pp. 11-13). The merger of two powerful trade unions, the TLC (Trades and Labor Congress of Canada) and the CCL (Canadian Congress of Labor), into the Canadian Labor Congress (CLC) in 1956 also increased pressure on communist activists. For Communist-led groups outside the CLC this led to their further marginalization. On the other hand, the merger with Congress for the communist-led trade unions was approved by the CPC leadership, did not provide infiltration since the purges were done. A characteristic feature of such cases was that the Communists had to act not only in the light of the specific circumstances of the struggle within the labor movement, but also considering party directives. As Muni Taub, a communist trade union activist, stated, he thought it was necessary to protect "larger family of labour". Canadian historian Joan Sangster, however, thought, that, having invested their lives in the party, they were not going to consider that those merges were questionable (Sangster, 2008, pp. 11-13). At the same time, 1956 was the year of the twentieth congress of the CPSU, which led to the withdrawal of many trade union activists from the Communist Party and a break with past activities. The CLC formed the Committee on Political Education, which "initiated discussions

with free trade unions, farmers' organizations, the cooperative movement, the CCF, and other political parties, except those controlled by fascists or communists." (Carle, 1982). In this way, unwanted persons were not only deprived of membership in the relevant organizations, but also excluded from the labor movement.

Internal conflicts led to the weakening of trade unions. Even after the expulsion of the Communists, disputes continued between supporters and opponents of the cleansing of the ranks. It should be noted that the position of the former, as shown by the situation with the Canadian branch of the International Commonwealth of Electricians, was justified by the danger of establishing Communist control over trade unions, as it had happened in Eastern Europe (McDonald, 1986, p. 10).

In 1961, the Canadian Labour Congress, together with the Commonwealth Cooperative Federation (CCF), formed the New Democratic Party (NDP), which became a next-generation alternative to the communist organizations. However, this organization did not receive widespread public support and enjoyed relative popularity only in the West (Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba) (Penner, 2017, p. 54). It failed to move liberals or conservatives from their positions in Canadian politics. The reason was that the issues that raised the popularity of the left in the first half of the twentieth century were slowly losing its relevance. These problems had been (at least partly) resolved during the Keynesian transformations of the Canadian liberal governments in the previous decades – by this we mean the construction of the welfare state. In this light, the electoral base of the Left was slowly decaying. According to Canadian historian Nelson Wiseman, as of the 1960s, it was difficult for the Social Democrats to distinguish themselves from the liberals of the federal party, Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau, and from the provincial Conservatives, the Red Tories, such as Duff Roblin, and George Johnson (Wiseman, 2008, pp. 8-9). As stated by Michael Classens, who have studied this particular transformation, the NDP was a centrist party compared to the CCF (Classens, 2008).

In its party program in 1962, the NDP insisted on the need for Canada to withdraw from NORAD, but not because of the anti-US position. Instead of that, NDP was arguing that the agreement was aimed at preventing attacks using strategic bombers, and, with the development of missile weapons, a joint command had lost its meaning. The party did not support leaving NATO, but believed that the Canadian government should promote the demilitarization of Central Europe and further promote the dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The program stressed that Canada could not



remain neutral "in the struggle between democracy and totalitarianism". The party's position on the People's Republic of China was interesting. The political force promised to recognize China, as the attempt to isolate the country increased international controversy. The program made it clear that recognizing China "does not involve approval of China's system of government". It was also planned to support China's accession to the United Nations, as "the United Nations cannot be truly effective so long as a major world power is denied membership." (Draft Program, 1962).

Thus, although the first main NDP document had an anti-communist foreign policy stance, it was nonetheless different from conservative and liberal programs in its anti-military orientation and its focus on solving international problems through UN mechanisms. In 1963, a second election program was adopted, which added to the above the intention to help end the Vietnam War and provide material assistance in rebuilding the country after that, because "the real enemy of world peace is not conspiracy, but human misery" (New Democratic, 1963); in this question NDP followed the programs of its predecessor – CCF.

Another organization that dispersed the electoral potential of the left was the Social Credit Party, which focused on the broad development of the welfare state, with a focus on building the health care system. Characteristically, the party was not left-wing and ideologically difficult to classify. This was due to a synthesis in her ideology of the concept of social credit, which emerged in Britain in the 1930s, and Protestant views. According to the program of the Federal Party in the 1957 elections, this political force was "is in favour of social reform but is opposed to state socialism" (Make Canada, 1957). The purpose of these transformations was not only to improve a welfare state in certain

directions, but also to undermine an electoral base of communist or socialist movements and parties. As the program stated, "Social Credit will establish Christian democracy, that is freedom so emphatically that Canadians, living in security, will prove the superiority of their way of life to Communism-or any other 'ism'" (Make Canada, 1957). Thus, in the general political spectrum of the country, the Social Creditors were a political force whose ideological basis was not Marxism, but they had also considered extensive social policies like housing, farmer subsidization, old age pensions, national health plan etc. Those measures were targeted primarily on the hired workers.

Conclusions. Thus, in the second half of the 1950s and early 1960s, there were significant changes in the structure of the left movement in Canada. For example, the Labor Progressive Party, and since 1959 the Communist Party of Canada has been unable to regain its position after the 1956 split. Even the efforts of some organizers in 1959-1961 could not bring the party to a new level. This situation was also explained by the fact that a number of issues, including the problems of further development of the welfare state, were reflected in the programs of other parties. The pressure on the Communists or their sympathizers in the labor movement continued, turning them into marginal associations based on personal ties. During this period, one can observe an ideological drift to the right of Canadian Social Democracy, which led to the abandonment of many socialist and Marxist principles and the formation of the New Democratic Party. The communist world became "foreign" to Canadians, and the complexity of East-West relations during this period significantly narrowed the range of opportunities for mental and psychological rapprochement.

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