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**Scenes of Berlin: Fascism and Anti-Fascism in
Toronto during the Summer of 1938**

Abstract

Four significant fascist rallies took place in Toronto in the summer of 1938: John Ross Taylor's Canadian Union of Fascists, Joseph Farr's Nationalist Party, and then two rallies to establish the National Unity Party—a national fascist party fusing Farr's group, Adrien Arcand's Quebec-based Parti National Social Chrétien, and other fascist groups from across the country. This article examines these fascist groups and their rallies, as well as the anti-fascist resistance. It focuses on the protests organized by the Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee consisting of the League for a Revolutionary Workers' Party, the Toronto Libertarian Group, and working-class Jewish organizations. In examining these actors and events, the article seeks to demonstrate the complex dynamic of coordination and competition amongst fascist and anti-fascist actors.

Résumé

Quatre rassemblements fascistes importants ont eu lieu à Toronto au cours de l'été 1938 : la Canadian Union of Fascists de John Ross Taylor, le Parti nationaliste de Joseph Farr, puis deux rassemblements visant à créer le National Unity Party — un parti national fasciste fusionnant le groupe de Farr, le Parti national social chrétien d'Adrien Arcand, basé au Québec, et d'autres groupes fascistes de tout le pays. Cet article examine ces groupes fascistes et leurs rassemblements, ainsi que la résistance antifasciste. Il se concentre sur les manifestations organisées par le Comité provisoire antifasciste, composé de la Ligue pour un parti ouvrier révolutionnaire, du Groupe libertarien de Toronto et d'organisations juives de la classe ouvrière. En examinant ces acteurs et ces événements, l'article cherche à démontrer la dynamique complexe de coordination et de concurrence entre les acteurs fascistes et antifascistes.

“The scenes on Shuter Street that night were more reminiscent of Berlin than of Toronto,” wrote historian Pierre Berton in *The Great Depression*.¹ On the evening of July 4, 1938, the blue-shirted followers of Adrien Arcand and Joseph Farr crowded Toronto's Massey Hall. This new National Unity Party was the merger of fascist parties from across Canada, confident in their movement's future. As speakers took to the stage parroting familiar talking points from Nazi Germany, anti-fascist rallies convened at Queen's Park, Maple Leaf Gardens, and the streets just one block away. While Arcand and Farr raged against imagined Jewish conspiracies and called for the forced expulsion of Canadian Jews, young women in the crowd outside took off their sweaters to reveal anti-fascist slogans written on their shirts. William Krehm, an anti-fascist organizer recently released from prison in Barcelona, took to a soapbox as the crowd chanted, “Down with Fascism!”² Toronto's police arrested Krehm and three others that night. The fascist rally continued unmolested, apart from a few

hecklers inside the hall.

Arcand's July 4 rally was the largest but only one of four consequential fascist rallies held in Toronto that summer. The first was John Ross Taylor's Canadian Union of Fascists, followed by Farr's Nationalist Party rally with Arcand as a visiting guest. The third was the National Unity Party's comparatively quiet founding rally on July 3, followed by the more dramatic Massey Hall event the next day. This article examines these rallies, demonstrating how fascist and anti-fascist elements coordinated and competed for support and resources.

Historiography

The term "fascism" is an often-problematic label as it may be rhetorically stretched to include a wide variety of authoritarian, conservative, corporatist, nativist, populist, or racist movements. This article uses historian Stanley G. Payne's typological definition of fascism which incorporates three elements: the fascist negations, ideology and goals, and style and organization. Ideology and goals include the creation of a new nationalist authoritarian state with a regulated national economic structure (not merely the preservation of the "old" order), radically changing the nation's relationship with other powers, and the pursuit of an idealist creed. As for style and organization, Payne includes an emphasis on aesthetics and ceremony, attempts at mass mobilization, positive views of and willingness to use force, an emphasis on masculinity and male dominance, a positive view of young people as agents of change, and a tendency toward "an authoritarian, charismatic, personal style of command." The fascist negations include antiliberalism, anticommunism, and anticonservatism.³

Despite the recurring theme of antisemitism in fascist movements, it is interesting to note that antisemitism is excluded from Payne's definition. Payne notes that while German Nazism was particularly antisemitic, this was not the case in all forms of fascism.⁴ However, in practice, Payne's definition very easily covers recurring themes in antisemitism: conspiracy theories linking Jews to both capitalist and communistic forces. Antisemitism often falls within the fascist negation of anticommunism.⁵

English Canadian historians have largely underexplored the related topics of antisemitism and fascism in the interwar period. For example, Lita-Rose Betcherman's *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf: Fascist Movements in Canada in the Thirties* examines Canada's fascist movement and remains the leading text on the topic fifty years after its publication.⁶ Subsequent literature on post-war fascism, like anthropologist Stanley R. Barrett's *Is God a Racist?* shed further light on their antecedents, as does Martin Robin's *Shades of Right: Nativist and Fascistic Politics in Canada, 1920-1940*. Such works have added other racist groups—which are not necessarily fascist—to the narrative, such as the Klu Klux Klan.⁷

French-Canadian historians have most ably explored the history of fascist movements, especially in Montreal where Arcand, “le Führer canadien,” gained influence. For example, Hugues Théorêt’s *Les Chemises Bleues: Adrien Arcand, journaliste antisémite canadien-français* and Jean-François Nadeau’s *Adrien Arcand : Führer Canadien* have significantly added to our understanding of Arcand’s activities, namely of his *Parti National Social Chrétien* (PNSC).⁸ These works make significant use of Arcand’s own writings and speeches.

As for Toronto, scholars have gravitated towards the more dramatic Christie Pits riot of 1933. This riot was the subject of a monograph by Cyril Levitt and William Shaffir—which also demolished the myth that Canadians were ignorant of the scale of state-led antisemitism in Hitler’s Germany—and recently of a graphic novel by Jamie Michaels, illustrated by Doug Fedrau.⁹ The initiating attacks were clearly antisemitic and drew on Nazi iconography, but the absence of written materials makes it difficult to discern if these antisemites actually conformed to Payne’s definition of fascism. The rallies of 1938, however, produced a larger written record which better lends itself to such analysis showing that both the National Unity Party (NUP) and the Canadian Union of Fascists (CUF) met the necessary criteria.

Nigel Copsey’s *Anti-Fascism in Britain*, arguably the first academic treatment of the concept, defined “anti-fascism” as “a thought, an attitude or feeling of hostility towards fascist ideology and its propagators which may or may not be acted upon.”¹⁰ Michael Seidman has defined antifascism (without a hyphen) more narrowly, framing it first as a movement that prioritized its opposition to fascism and thus made other former enemies acceptable allies; second, “refused conspiratorial theories which blamed Jewish and plutocratic plotting for negative social, economic, and political developments”; and third, rejected pacifism and accepted the role of the state in opposing domestic and foreign fascisms.¹¹ Either definition encompasses a wide range of actors, yet a large proportion of scholarship on anti-fascism has focused on the international communist movement. Collected works like the 2010 *Varieties of Anti-Fascism*, edited by Nigel Copsey and Andrzej Olechnowicz, and the 2021 *Anti-Fascism in a Global Perspective*, edited by Kaspar Braskén, Nigel Copsey, and David Featherstone, have broadened the analysis to look at how anarchists, anti-colonialists, civil society, intellectuals, political parties, and social democrats resisted fascism.¹² Such disparate groups often had very different motivations for combatting fascism, and could disagree widely on the most effective means of confrontation and resistance. Some Canadian anti-fascists travelled to Spain to take up arms against Spanish Nationalists, while others saw public displays of anti-fascism as unduly drawing attention—and consequently support—to the fascist cause.

The above studies have only briefly, if at all, examined the clash between fascist and anti-fascist groups in Toronto in the summer of 1938. Théorêt's *Les Chemises Bleues* and Nadeau's *Adrien Arcand: Führer Canadien* mention these events, but their focus is instead on how Arcand rebranded the NUP in terms of rhetoric and symbols.¹³ Pierre Berton's *The Great Depression* describes the night at Massey Hall, but ignores the rallies that preceded it.¹⁴ This article adds to the existing scholarship by providing a detailed examination of the fascist rallies in Toronto in the summer of 1938 and the anti-fascist resistance. Although a broader study of civil society's reaction to the fascist rallies is in order—particularly that of the Jewish Labor Committee—this study explores the rhetoric of the fascists themselves and focuses on the Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee (also known as the Provisional Committee for Anti-Fascist Action) as its anti-fascist protagonist, with an emphasis on the convening League for a Revolutionary Workers' Party (LRWP). This article uses the LRWP records from the personal papers of members William Krehm, James Potts, and Aubrey Joel. The author also interviewed William Krehm, as well as eighteen children of LRWP members.

***Le Fasciste canadien unifié* and the League for a Revolutionary Workers' Party**

The League for a Revolutionary Workers' Party (LRWP) was a small but immensely dedicated Marxist-Leninist group. The organization broke from the Communist League of America (Opposition), better known as Trotskyists, in 1934. New Yorker B.J. Field (real name Max Gould), a Wall Street consultant and former confidante of Leon Trotsky, founded the organization and remained its international secretary.¹⁵ In New York, he attracted only small numbers to his local branch but remained at the head of the organization. The Toronto group was the largest and most active branch with one hundred or so members, almost exclusively young Jews, about half men and half women, born in North America to parents who had fled Eastern Europe at the turn of the century. William Krehm, born in Toronto to working-class Jewish parents from Ukraine, was the acknowledged leader of the Canadians.

Formal Judaism was absent from the LRWP writings and practice. Still, as a group, they displayed the intellectual rigour in Marxism-Leninism that one might expect from a group raised in the study of Talmud and unrestrained by the Stalinist decrees defining acceptable debate among Communist Party members. Field, the son of a Polish rabbi, adored debate as a means of reconciling his formal knowledge of Keynesian economics with his newfound interest in Marxism-Leninism. However, such discussions and the intellectual rigour expected of its members also left the group isolated. Few workers were interested in either their brand of militant Marxism-Leninism or in devoting hours and hours to study and debate. Internally, however, this dedication bred a sense of community. Many members married within the

Toronto branch and developed lasting relationships that endured decades beyond the LRWP.¹⁶ Susan Joel, daughter of two prominent leaders of the organization, told the author that her parents often described the organization as “the synagogue of the LRWP.”¹⁷ For some, the LRWP was a secular proxy for the Jewish community their parents brought from the old country and reasserted in Toronto.¹⁸

The LRWP intersected with the broader anti-fascist movement in several ways. First, as dedicated Marxist-Leninists, they saw bourgeois states as an enemy. Fascism was, in part, both the antithesis of Marxism-Leninism and an amplification of the worst elements of capitalism. The LRWP newspaper, *Workers' Voice*, cautioned “it would be suicidal to ignore the [fascist] movement at this stage because of its numerical weakness; its future strength lies in the imperative needs of the capitalist system.”¹⁹ Capitalism’s failings, they argued, were fuelling fascist reaction. Second, the LRWP held an internationalist outlook and saw the rise of European and Canadian fascism as a singular problem. They participated in anti-Nazi marches and free speech rallies, and also sent B.J. Field and William Krehm to Brussels to attend the International Congress Against War and Imperialism—a visit which led to Krehm’s subsequent activities in Barcelona. Anti-fascism was part of their revolutionary ambitions. Third, as a predominantly Jewish group, the members of the LRWP knew antisemitism as a fact of life and were well attuned to the particularly antisemitic brand of Canadian fascism then growing in strength.

By 1937, Montreal’s fascist leader Adrien Arcand had his own newspaper, *Le Fasciste canadien*, and worked as the editor of *L’Illustration nouvelle*. These were useful platforms for spreading his ideas and communicating with his followers. He did not benefit from positive treatment in the pages of Montreal newspapers. In Toronto, however, where he only became a public figure in late 1937, he received some positive media coverage. In December 1937, the *Globe & Mail’s* Ken McTaggart described Arcand as a “brilliant young Canadian.”²⁰ The *Toronto Daily Star*, the centre-left of Canada’s national dailies, continued this trend in February 1938 when it printed a piece on Arcand and his family. The article described Arcand as a charming family man and featured a photo of Arcand, his wife, and their two young boys. Arcand is wearing a quasi-military uniform, and his wife is sporting a Nazi armband. Arcand was sufficiently flattered by the photo spread that he had it reprinted in the pages of *Le Fasciste canadien*.²¹ Torontonians still knew little about Arcand, and what little they had seen was largely positive.

In late 1937, LRWP member Israel Levine (now writing as David Martin, the name he would use publicly for the rest of his life) secured an interview with Arcand at his office at *L’Illustration nouvelle*, presumably with the intention of shifting the English-language discourse on Arcand.²² Martin described Arcand as tall, angular, and disinclined to speak about himself. His organization, Arcand claimed, stood for “God,

family, private property and personal initiative.... We believe that the Jews are responsible for all the evils of the world today. Through the two Internationals that they control, the proletarian and the financial, they provoke economic crises and revolutions with a view to taking world power."²³ The PNSC, according to Arcand, would take power through elections, after which they would immediately abolish all other parties.²⁴ He admitted to helping former Prime Minister R.B. Bennett with his "propaganda" campaign in Quebec, but he stated that his party would "have to give Mr. Bennett and the Conservative Party as clean a licking as anybody else."²⁵ They would use violence, he said, only if law and order broke down entirely as it had during the Spanish Civil War. Arcand framed Francisco Franco's rebellion as a necessary action against the democratically elected Second Spanish Republic. Liberalism, he said, was "an instrument of world Jewry."²⁶ For Arcand, democracy was only a means of achieving power.

Martin pointed out the absurdity and contradictions among many of Arcand's positions. Martin asked Arcand how he could claim that Jews controlled global finance when "there is not a single Jew on the board of directors of a single Canadian bank or mortgage company or of a single public utility company, or of the rail or ocean transportation companies. . . You say the Jewish financiers inspire the communist movement. But communism is opposed to the entire capitalist class. Jewish capitalists fight just as bitterly against communism and the workers' movements as do the Christian capitalists."²⁷ Arcand replied that, "The Jews do not work openly," stating that they used the levers of capitalism to foment crisis and set the conditions for communist revolution.²⁸

Martin concluded the interview by asking, "What do you intend to do with the Jews? Kill them off?" Arcand replied that he would send them all to Madagascar, adding "I have nothing against the Jews as long as they leave us alone. I would like to see them all together and happy. Palestine would be all right, but it is too small and there are other complications."²⁹ Martin asked Arcand, as a joke, "We could put you down as a Zionist, then?" Arcand laughed, waved his arms, and said, "The greatest Zionist in the world!"³⁰

Martin wrote the interview results in an article in *The Nation* in February 1938. He gave a truthful yet remarkably different interpretation of Arcand than the *Globe & Mail* or *Toronto Daily Star*. Within this one interview, most elements of Payne's definition of fascism come to light: explicit anticommunism, antiliberalism, and anticonservatism; the pursuit of a radically different form of government after taking power; positive views regarding the use of force; and an idealist creed. In expressing these points in Arcand's own words, Martin's article itself serves as an act of anti-fascist resistance, of "bearing witness" to Arcand's world view and sharing it with a broader, non-Marxist-Leninist audience. Arcand appears to speak freely and

seems entirely unaware that he is speaking with a Jewish man, let alone a Marxist–Leninist revolutionary.

The March edition of the PNSC's *Le Fasciste canadien* announced significant developments for the fascist movement.³¹ The PNSC secured its first office—1,600 square feet on Saint–Laurent Boulevard, a prestigious location—which they would staff twenty–four hours a day. *Le Fasciste canadien* also printed an agreement with two other Canadian fascist groups to establish a national movement. The first was William Whittaker's Canadian Nationalist Party in Winnipeg. The second was Joseph Farr's group of the same name in Toronto.³² Farr claimed involvement in the Toronto fascist movement as early as the 1929 Swastika Clubs, but his public life seemed to begin with the PNSC announcement.³³ Whittaker came to fascism later but had allegedly been in correspondence with Arcand since 1932 and an infamous public figure since 1933.³⁴ Actual membership numbers of both groups are unclear, but their meetings were small enough that most took place in private homes.

The three parties of the *Fasciste canadien unifié* agreed to nine points in principle. Most addressed their proposed “corporatist” form of government to replace democracy. Relevant here was the intention to declare Canada to be a Christian state and to eliminate public displays of atheism, subversion, anti–nationalism, immorality, and “*judéo–communisme*,” and restricting citizenship to “the white race” and “emancipated Indians.”³⁵ The constitutive elements of Payne's definition of fascism are apparent in these statements, Arcand's comments to David Martin, and the performative aesthetics of the rallies.

The Canadian Union of Fascists and the Provisional Anti–Fascist Committee

Toronto was home to more than one fascist movement, and Joseph Farr had not been Adrien Arcand's initial choice for an Ontario partner. In the summer of 1937, twenty–four–year–old John Ross Taylor established a National Christian Party (NCP) in Toronto following secret meetings with Arcand.³⁶ Taylor and Arcand initially enjoyed a partnership—Taylor's group was created as the Ontario PNSC—but the relationship did not last. Taylor briefly ran for provincial office in the predominantly Jewish riding of St. Andrew's. He stood no chance of winning, but that was not the point. For Taylor, this was an opportunity to make a name for himself with hateful antisemitic leaflets and wearing swastikas at press interviews.³⁷ Not long after dropping out of the race, however, the Canadian Union of Fascists (CUF) announced its own alliance with Taylor. The CUF and NCP retained their own names and symbols, but CUF leader Charles Brandel Crate was cross appointed as the NCP's secretary.³⁸ Text from Taylor's election leaflets began appearing in the CUF's newspaper, *The Thunderbolt*,

in December; Arcand publicly partnered with Farr in March; and Taylor was consistently identifying himself as a member of the CUF by the spring.³⁹

The reasons for these divisions amongst fascist groups are not clear. However, when anthropologist Stanley R. Barrett questioned Taylor more than forty years later, Taylor praised Arcand as the best citizen Quebec had ever produced. The divide, he said, was not personal but rather religious: Arcand was Catholic, and Taylor was an ardent Christian Scientist (although he later converted to Catholicism).⁴⁰ Though a member of the Orange Lodge and presumably holding some anti-Catholic sentiments, Farr did not let religion stand in the way of his alliance with Arcand. Even before Farr joined with Arcand, the LRWP newspaper, *Workers' Voice*, observed that members were leaving Taylor to join Farr.⁴¹

The LRWP girded itself to take on a leadership role against Taylor's rallies. In February 1938, *Workers' Voice* stated, "If Taylor and his henchmen should attempt to march in the streets of Toronto this summer, the workers must give them what the English workers gave [Oswald] Mosley,"⁴² referring to the anti-fascist resistance to a 1936 British Union of Fascists (BUF) parade in London's East End. Known as the Battle of Cable Street, the anti-fascists physically prevented the BUF march from proceeding despite a strong police escort. In May, Taylor announced his plans to stage a rally at Massey Hall, one of the largest venues in the city. The LRWP called for a united front of labour organizations to pursue "a program of militant action against fascism."⁴³ United fronts were a popular concept, but they were more manageable in theory than practice. Mainstream political parties, even the socialist Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), wanted little to do with overt revolutionaries like the LRWP, and the Communist Party of Canada consistently condemned any action by the Trotskyists (former or current, affiliated or unaffiliated).

Despite these obstacles, when Spanish Republican authorities detained the leader of the Canadian LRWP, William Krehm, in Barcelona following the "May Days" of 1937, the LRWP organized a modest united front. The group included the Toronto Libertarian Group and the Industrial Workers of the World (the "Wobblies").⁴⁴ The Wobblies are well known, but the Toronto Libertarian Group requires some introduction. Created by Emma Goldman during a visit to Toronto in 1934, the group consolidated Bulgarian, Dutch, English, Jewish, Russian, and Swedish anarchist groups and individuals. The Toronto Libertarian Group, like the LRWP, was small but active in anti-fascist organizing within anarchist networks.⁴⁵ The anarchist, IWW, and LRWP United Front for the Defence of Workers' Rights in Spain proved to be a prototype for the Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee in the summer of 1938.

The Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee held its first meeting just days before Taylor's scheduled rally in June. The committee's membership was much the same as

the United Front for the Defense of Workers' Rights in Spain: the LRWP and their Revolutionary Youth League, the Toronto Libertarian Group, several youth branches of the Workmen's Circle, a Jewish working-class organization with a focus on mutual aid, and some independent, interested individuals. However, the Wobblies had declined the invitation.⁴⁶ The Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee agreed to host a rally to demonstrate against Taylor and to establish a picket line in front of the meeting hall.⁴⁷

The CUF rented Prince's Hall, a small auditorium on the third floor at the corner of Bloor Street West and Croft Street.⁴⁸ Taylor's original plans to rent Massey Hall had fallen through as they had not been able to attract an audience large enough to make it worthwhile. Only 26 people attended Taylor's rally. Five police officers protected them inside the hall as a crowd of 200 or 300 people protested outside.⁴⁹

The rally outside the hall was initially quiet, apart from chants of "Down with Fascism!" But, according to police reports, the crowd became unruly when Taylor, clad in his quasi-military black-shirted uniform, appeared in the hall doorway at about 8 p.m. The crowd surged towards the hall and began to chant louder, shout epithets, and throw tomatoes.⁵⁰ The *Toronto Daily Star* reported that Inspector Hans Majury, the senior police officer on site, "without warning" directed his officers to disperse the crowd: "A girl picketer vigorously resisted a police officer, but finally gave way to firm pressure." The police called for reinforcements and were soon joined by "a half dozen mounted police officers" and 40 more arriving by car.⁵¹ The police arrested two protestors: a man named Galpin for throwing two tomatoes at Constable Fred Foxton and LRWP'er Harry Smith for shoving Constable Clarence Collins.⁵² A plain-clothes officer was struck with a sign but was not injured.⁵³ Dorothy Giesecke-Rogers of the Toronto Libertarian Group reported to Emma Goldman that the police had been very rough with the protestors—two police officers threw her "violently against a car bumper thereby [resulting in her] losing quite a sliver of skin from my shin," while others were struck in the face with "billies."⁵⁴ Giesecke-Rogers was perhaps the "girl picketer" who had given way to "firm pressure."

The CUF meeting continued. Taylor told the small crowd, "When we get control of Canada, farmers will represent farmers, manufacturers their own businesses, and so on. Then you will have economic democracy as you haven't got it today. Our slogan is Canada first."⁵⁵ Taylor continued, saying that Canada was on the verge of a Bolshevik-style revolution and had no army strong enough to resist the communists. Despite claiming that his group was uninterested in persecuting "any people or creed," Taylor put little effort into masking his antisemitism. He described Jews as "octopi strangling the financial structure of Canada" and attempting to control the entire world.⁵⁶ He also conflated Judaism with Bolshevism, claiming that the Jews of the Soviet Union controlled 97% of the government.⁵⁷

Workers' Voice described the Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee's protest as "the first resounding victory in the struggle against the fascists."⁵⁸ It was a questionable claim, given that the meeting had taken place regardless, but they had made their stance known and drew a crowd. However, there was little time to celebrate. They paid the bail of the two arrested men and prepared for the next fascist rally scheduled just days later. The committee held several open-air rallies over the weekend to raise awareness of the rising tide of fascism. The police broke up at least three of these rallies. At another, they arrested one soapbox speaker, but this did not end the rally. Other speakers took their place, and the rally continued for another hour and a half.⁵⁹

Joint Rallies

Farr and Arcand continued their move towards unification into the spring of 1938. On May 2, Arcand and the commander of his protective legions, Joseph-Maurice Scott (a former major in the militia and now a coal and insurance salesman), went to Toronto to attend a Nationalist Party meeting.⁶⁰ The Toronto group photo shows only ten people present, including the two Montrealers. However, the *Le Fasciste canadien* article indicates more were there, stating that the number of "legionnaires" in their fascist shirts was more imposing than the month before.⁶¹ Three days later, Farr was in Montreal with Arcand and Scott — he can be seen in a group of more than 350 primarily uniformed PNSC members in the swastika-festooned basement of the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, seated in the front row with Scott, Arcand, and Arcand's wife.⁶² Farr claimed that his Nationalist Party would soon have more than 25,000 members.⁶³ According to a Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) report, "reliable information" suggested that the group had as many as 500 members in Toronto and growing rapidly.⁶⁴

Farr and Arcand planned their first joint rally in Toronto for June 9. Farr began the rally by referring to Jews as "kikes" and "undesirables," claiming that Jews controlled business monopolies. At the same time, gentiles went unemployed, more than half of University of Toronto graduates were Jewish, and the U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had advisors who "are in control and service of Jewry," as were some Canadian Parliamentarians. In juxtaposition to the supposed powers of the Jews, he told his followers: "You men have nothing! You have no jobs! You have no future! You cannot look forward to married life! You have been denied speech freedom in your own country!"⁶⁵ Arcand also spoke, although his comments went unrecorded despite the presence of a *Toronto Daily Star* photographer and reporter. The *Star* photographed Arcand, Farr, and Scott, giving the fascist salute in front of Nazi flags.⁶⁶

As the fascists exercised their freedom of speech inside the hall, the protestors outside were denied the same. The Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee assembled 200 protestors in a gathering immediately south of the hall. Some carried signs with anti-fascist slogans. Krehm and other speakers mounted their soapboxes to give their speeches. They threw neither tomatoes nor punches this time. The newspapers described the protestors as angry but orderly. Photos indicate they took great pains to stay off the roads and ensure a clear path on the sidewalk remained for passers-by.⁶⁷ Nonetheless, perhaps because a plainclothes officer had been struck by a sign at the rally three days earlier, the police took the protestors' signs. One photo printed in the *Globe & Mail* shows a woman struggling to keep her sign as a police officer takes it away. Moreover, when the protestors marched north along Dovercourt towards the Foresters Temple, 40 police officers kept the crowd moving, not letting them gather around the entrance as they had at the Prince's Hall.⁶⁸

The location of Farr's rally, both the building and the neighbourhood, merits a brief examination. The rally was at the West End Independent Order of Foresters Temple at the corner of Queen Street West and Dovercourt Avenue. The Foresters owned the building, but several groups paid rent and took turns using the space, including the Parkdale Recreation Club, the Loyal Orange Young Britain Association, and a Ukrainian nationalist organization.⁶⁹ Given that Farr was an Orangeman and that *Le Fasciste canadien* showed attendees meeting in the "Ulster Room," the Loyal Orange Young Britain Association was likely the initial means by which Farr gained access. The neighbourhood did have a high proportion of Jews, leading Lita-Rose Betcherman to write that the fascists had selected the neighbourhood deliberately as a provocation.⁷⁰ However, this assessment likely gives too much credit to Farr's ability to come and go as he wished. The RCMP noted that Farr was having trouble renting halls due to renters finding his politics distasteful and his lack of funds.⁷¹ Indeed, apart from the one-time Massey Hall rally on July 4, all of Farr's meetings and rallies up to that point appear to have been conducted in the same place.

The Massey Hall Rally

Arcand, Farr, and their allies prepared for their national convention to cement their alliance from Nova Scotia to British Columbia. They planned to conduct their first convention in Kingston, but faced opposition first from Queen's University professors and then a unanimous vote by city council to ban any fascist use of city buildings for meetings or its streets for any procession. The meeting in Kingston seems to have become a point of pride for the fascist leaders. Arcand initially dismissed the resistance as inconsequential and said that they would conduct the meeting in Toronto instead, then declared that they would go to Kingston anyways to demonstrate their ability to do so, and then secretly held the meeting in Toronto while pretending it

had taken place in Kingston.⁷² Although Arcand and party representatives insisted they had held their meeting at a secret location in Kingston, RCMP records show that the convention was quietly held in Toronto—in the Foresters Temple again—and that the delegates had driven to Kingston for no other purpose than to claim they had successfully met in that city in defiance of the city council.⁷³

The RCMP report on the convention shows that it was neither as large nor unified as the image it tried to present to the public. Between eighteen and twenty delegates attended. William McDuff came from Nova Scotia, and Daniel O’Keefe from New Brunswick. Seven Montrealers attended, as well as one representative from nearby Valleyfield and another from Lachine. From Ontario, two Torontonians joined Farr. From Western Canada, John Schio and either one or two more people represented Saskatchewan; John S. Lynds, John C. Cole, and perhaps one more came from Manitoba. Finally, C.S. Thomas attended from British Columbia.⁷⁴ The Manitobans objected to Arcand’s leadership because as “a French Canadian and a Roman Catholic, [he] may not be acceptable to the English speaking and Protestant followers particularly in the West.”⁷⁵ Nonetheless, following the debate, Arcand was elected the leader and Farr its secretary. They adopted a burning torch in place of the swastika as their symbol and drafted a program. The National Unity Party (NUP) was born.

The NUP claimed to promote the “unity of Canada for all Canadians—with some exceptions.”⁷⁶ Jews — “obviously,” Arcand told a reporter—would not be allowed to join.⁷⁷ The “unity” envisioned by the NUP was strictly among French and Irish Catholics and English-speaking Protestants. After sending a sarcastic letter of thanks to the mayor of Kingston (announcing their intention to return the following year), telegraphing the governor general with “a message of loyalty to King and Country,” and speaking to reporters and posing for photographs at the LaSalle Hotel in Kingston, the NUP leadership returned to Toronto for more meetings in the Foresters Temple.⁷⁸ On July 3, seventy members listened to speeches from Arcand and two visitors from the United States: George Deathrage from West Virginia and Robert Edward Edmundson from New York.⁷⁹

The Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee did not know about these additional meetings at the Foresters Temple, but they were aware of the planned Massey Hall rally on July 4. They petitioned the mayor to intervene and stop the rally, but unlike the mayor and city council in Kingston, he declined to intervene. The Massey Hall rally was framed as a matter of free speech—in recent years, the Communist Party had rented the hall without issue, so he saw no reason to take active steps to oppose any other legal group. As a member of the Massey Hall board, he would vote against the rental but would stop short of using his mayoral powers to prevent the meeting from occurring.⁸⁰

To Krehm's disappointment (but not surprise), the CCF and the Communist Party refused to directly confront the fascists on the day of their Massey Hall rally. Instead, the CCF would protest at Queen's Park, and the Communist Party—acting through the League for Peace and Democracy, formerly the League Against War and Fascism—would hold a rally at Maple Leaf Gardens.⁸¹ *Workers' Voice* criticized, "That is how Stalinism and the CCF fight Fascism. When the Fascists grow strong and begin to make a real bid for the streets, these gentlemen will also be 'luring' their rank-and-file away from the scene of action, and preventing them 'from losing their tempers.' This is what their brother-under-the-skin did in Germany with well-known results."⁸² The League for Peace and Democracy filled Maple Leaf Gardens with 10,000 people. The CCF rally at Queen's Park was the smallest of the three. The Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee's protest would be the hardest to ignore.

The first edition of the NUP newspaper, *Le Combat national*, claimed 2,500 people attended the Massey Hall rally, 850 of whom joined the party that day.⁸³ This was, by a significant margin, the largest such event in Ontario up to this point. It dwarfed any rallies held at the Foresters Hall, likely because the date, location, and controversy had been a news item for months. Ticket holders saw banners proclaiming "Canada for Canadians," and decorations featuring beavers and Union Jacks. Blue-shirted stormtroopers with swastikas emblazoned on their armbands roamed the aisles; they had not yet stitched armbands with the newly selected emblem of a burning flame.

Joseph Farr spoke first; "Ladies and gentlemen—I am speaking in Toronto. We have to fight a tremendous battle. In the city today the Jew controls. I say in their monopolies they control both our men and our property. They control our men and our business. They control everything we have."⁸⁴ Farr went on to quote several impossible statistics. For example, he claimed 15,000 Jews had come to Canada between 30 December and 1 May, compared to only 300 British people. In reality, fewer than 10,000 Jews entered Canada between 1933 and 1945.⁸⁵ Paradoxically, Farr described an "infestation" where the Jews were both poor and powerful, communist and capitalist. Jews, Farr claimed, had a monopoly on industries ranging from dairy to jewelry, cartage to insurance, and "99% of the rackets."⁸⁶ Thomas from British Columbia, Lynds from Manitoba, O'Keefe from New Brunswick, and Arcand also gave speeches.⁸⁷

The Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee's rally began at about 8 p.m. at the corner of Albert and Yonge, less than a block from Massey Hall. The crowd numbered somewhere between 500 and 900.⁸⁸ Krehm was the primary speaker. He stood atop a portable stand on the south side of Albert Street. As he began his speech, the women protestors removed their jackets to reveal anti-fascist slogans written on their white sweaters. They presumably adopted this tactic after the police had stripped them of their signs at the last rally—taking signage was one thing. The protestors knew that police would be reluctant to remove a young woman's sweater.⁸⁹

Police on foot and horseback surrounded the protesters. Krehm shouted, “Down with fascism, down with the police, and down with the police commission.” Another source quoted him and the other speakers calling, “Down with the brutal police; they are fascist tools!”⁹⁰ At this point, the protestors had committed no crime apart from blocking traffic. The police reported that “the temper of the crowd was getting ugly,”⁹¹ and so it was necessary to break up the assembly.

Police Constable Wilfred Gillen waded into the crowd, approached Krehm, and ordered him to step down from his platform three times. Krehm ignored him, so Gillen arrested him.⁹² James Potts pushed Gillen and began yelling at other members of the crowd to help him stop the arrest; Potts said that he merely demanded to know for what crime the police arrested Krehm.⁹³ Wilfred Gray came to assist Krehm and Potts. Gillen arrested Gray, as well.⁹⁴ Standing nearby, David Martin—Arcand’s interviewer, also known as Israel Levine—saw the arrest and protested. According to Sergeant Andrew McKinney, Martin started shouting statements against the police and fascism, telling the crowd they must not let the police break up the rally. Martin denied making such statements, claiming instead that he was shouting, “On to the Labor Temple!” He said the plan had been to march to the Labor Temple on Church Street if the police or rain broke up the rally. Both versions are likely true, given that the most likely route from Albert and Yonge to the Labor Temple would pass right in front of Massey Hall. McKinney arrested Martin.⁹⁵

Even as the police arrested Krehm, Potts, Martin, and Gray, police officers atop horses moved to disperse the crowd. It was hardly a charge, but the horses caused injuries. The police continued to patrol around Massey Hall through the night to prevent other crowds from forming. *The Globe & Mail*, the conservative Toronto daily newspaper, applauded the police’s work in calming the demonstration. The paper reported that if they had not, “it is believed most of the anti-fascist group would have marched to Massey Hall and attempted to create trouble for Adrian Arcand and his followers.”⁹⁶ Betcherman noted that Toronto’s newspapers “might have been covering different events,” with the *Globe & Mail* heaping praise on the police and describing the rally as well received and the *Toronto Star* being more sympathetic towards the protestors and critical of the fascists inside.⁹⁷

The four arrested anti-fascists waited in cells until their trial. Krehm, Martin, and Potts were all well-known members of the LRWP. Potts had joined the LRWP while he was a student at the University of Western Ontario. He was Presbyterian, and as such was among the few non-Jewish members of the group. Gray’s name is not present in the surviving LRWP records, nor is he mentioned in the Toronto Libertarian Group’s correspondence prior to his arrest. Regardless, each benefitted from the Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee’s fundraising and further work by the New York LRWP’s Provisional Defence Committee for Anti-Fascist Fighters.⁹⁸ They each post-

ed \$500 in bail until their trial on 15 July.⁹⁹ Martin and Gray pleaded guilty to their charges, but the court dismissed Martin's charges, and the Crown withdrew Gray's.¹⁰⁰ Krehm and Potts pleaded not guilty, but after a brief trial, the court convicted them of obstructing a police officer and fined them \$25 each.¹⁰¹

The Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee faced criticism for their peaceful protest. The NUP described the protestors as "the Jews and the organizations that they control," "Judeo-communist forces," and the "the forces of Israel and Moscow," stating that the protestors had planned to enter the meeting and break it up by force. *Le Combat national* said that four people—"including two Jews"—were arrested trying to get the crowd to attack the hall.¹⁰² They concluded that "[i]f the Reds did a poor job in spite of their money, their organization, and their 'big guns,'" the NUP's success was all the more impressive given that they had almost no money, but their people were "rich in spirit." It claimed, "National unity is born, it is on the march, and nothing will stop it."¹⁰³ The NUP had framed itself as the underdogs in the conflict and used the identity of their opponents as evidence of the depth of a "Judeo-Bolshevik" conspiracy.

Anti-fascist groups outside the Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee condemned their actions. Stewart Smith, a Toronto alderman and influential leader within the Communist Party, criticized the Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee in print and on the radio. The League for Peace and Democracy, through which the Communist Party exerted considerable influence, wrote the *Globe & Mail* that it was "definitely committed to the principle of freedom of speech" and was in no way implicated in the protests. The Communist Party accused the Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee of being in the direct employ of Hitler, alleging that the protests were designed to encourage support for the fascists.¹⁰⁴

The Communist Party's criticisms of the anarchists and the LRWP were practically inevitable, given their formal hostility towards anarchism and Trotskyism. However, the Socialist Policy Group, the Trotskyist caucus within the CCF, also mocked the Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee's actions. Earle Birney, a Trotskyist organizer and later a celebrated Canadian poet, soon penned an article on behalf of the Socialist Policy Group.¹⁰⁵ Birney wrote, "a few Fieldites [referring to founder and International Secretary, B.J. Field], bravely cooperating with nobody and anxious for publicity at any price, managed to get themselves arrested by the cops detailed to preserve the democratic liberties of Monsieur Arcand." However, in the same article, he implicitly admitted that at least the LRWP had done *something*. The Socialist Policy Group's parallel attempt to assemble "a united defense organization and workers' guards" was "a voice crying in the wilderness" within the CCF.¹⁰⁶ Anti-fascist groups agreed that they needed to counter fascism; they did not agree on how this goal could best be achieved.

Towards a definition of Canadian fascism

In looking at the actions and words of Arcand and Farr before and during the Toronto fascist rallies during the summer of 1938, the constituent elements of Stanley G. Payne's typological definitions of fascism can be observed: the fascist negations of antiliberalism, anticommunism, and anticonservatism; the desire to establish a new nationalist authoritarian state and not merely the reassertion of the "old order;" and a style focused on pageantry, ceremony, and dedication to a charismatic leader.¹⁰⁷ Although less detail is available regarding Taylor's program, what is available aligns with Payne's definition as well. Furthermore, although antisemitism is not part of Payne's definition, it is clear that antisemitism was a central theme in these variants of Canadian fascism.

Although Toronto newspapers carried positive stories about Adrien Arcand as late as the winter of 1938, the English-speaking Torontonians could not claim ignorance of Arcand's movement by the summer. David Martin's article, rallies, and Arcand's own words in newspapers informed the public of the details of this movement. While some were attracted to fascism, it failed to gain a mass base in Toronto: knowledge of its ugliness eroded support and galvanized many to action. It would be tempting, although simplistic, to focus on the Berlin-like scene at Massey Hall as an indicator of fascism's hold in Toronto at the time. After all, while up to 2,500 people attended that NUP rally, 10,000 attended an anti-fascist rally at Maple Leaf Gardens at the same time, with hundreds more marching in the streets.

The Provisional Anti-Fascist Committee chose to confront the known CUF, Nationalist Party, and NUP rallies head-on, marching in the streets and risking their safety and arrest. They attracted support from anti-fascists more than their own membership. In marching, they attracted supporters but also detractors who thought they were helping the fascists more than stopping them. Reasonable people may disagree on the appropriateness or effectiveness of the tactics employed, but these anti-fascists should nonetheless be remembered as part of the broader effort to oppose the spread of fascism in Canada. The summer of 1938 was a moment in Toronto's history when fascism and antisemitism seemed at their strongest, but it was also a moment when anti-fascism was even stronger. There is still much to be learned from further analysis of anti-fascism and the interactions between various actors involved in the cause.

1

Pierre Berton, *The Great Depression, 1929-1939* (Toronto: McLelland & Stewart, 1990), 461.

2

On Krehm's experiences in Spain generally, see Michael Petrou, *Renegades: Canadians in the Spanish Civil War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 148-57.

3

Stanley G. Payne, *Fascism: Comparison and Definition* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980), 7; Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 6-7.

4

Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945*, 11. Regarding the treatment of Jews in the Italian fascist experience, see Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci, *L'Italie Fasciste et La Persécution Des Juifs* (Paris: Perrin, 2007); Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci, "D'une Persécution l'autre: Racisme Colonial et Antisémitisme Dans l'Italie Fasciste," *Revue d'histoire Moderne & Contemporaine* 55, no. 3 (2008): 116-37.

5

For the broader context regarding the idea of "Judeo-Bolshevism," see Paul A. Hanebrink, *A Specter Haunting Europe: The Myth of Judeo-Bolshevism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 5-11. Regarding the historiographical treatment of the topic, see Tony Michels, "On Jews and Taboos in American Communist History," *American Communist History* 14, no. 3 (2016): 249-55.

6

Lita-Rose Betcherman, *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf: Fascist Movements in Canada in the Thirties* (Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1975).

7

Stanley R. Barrett, *Is God a Racist? The Right Wing in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987); Martin Robin, *Shades of Right: Nativist and Fascist Politics in Canada, 1920-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). See also more recent works on racist movements in Canada that provide historical context to their examinations of contemporary groups, such as Barbara Perry and Ryan Scrivens, *Right-Wing Extremism in Canada* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 23-27.

8

Hugues Théorêt, *Les Chemises Bleues: Adrien Arcand, Journaliste Antisémite Canadien-Français* (Quebec: Septentrion, 2012); Jean-Francois Nadeau, *Adrien Arcand: Führer Canadien* (Montréal: Lux, 2010). Both works are published in English as *The Blue Shirts: Adrien Arcand and Fascist Anti-Semitism in Canada* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2017) and *The Canadian Führer: The Life of Adrien Arcand* (Toronto: Lorimer, 2010). See also Hugues Théorêt, "Influence et Rayonnement International d'Adrien Arcand," *Globe: Revue Internationale d'études Québécoises* 18, no. 1 (2015): 19-45; Jonathan Tremblay, "La Contribution Des Conservateurs à La Longue Survie Des Organisations Fascistes d'Adrien Arcand," *Globe: Revue Internationale d'études Québécoises* 18, no. 1 (2015): 47-64.

9

Cyril Levitt and William Shaffir, *The Riot at Christie Pits* (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys, 1987); Jamie Michaels and Doug Fedrau, *Christie Pits* (Winnipeg: Dirty Water Comics, 2019). See also Cyril Levitt and William Shaffir, "The Christie Pits Riot: A Case Study in the Dynamics of Ethnic Violence - Toronto, August 16, 1933," *Canadian Jewish Historical Society Journal* 9, no. 1 (1985): 2-30.

10

Nigel Copsey, *Anti-Fascism in Britain* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 2000), 4.

11

Michael Seidman, *Transatlantic Antifascisms: From the Spanish Civil War to the End of World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 2.

12

Nigel Copsey, "Preface: Towards a New Anti-Fascist 'Minimum,'" in *Varieties of Anti-Fascism: Britain in the Inter-War Period*, ed. Nigel Copsey and Andrzej Olechnowicz (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2010), xiv-xxi; Kasper Braskén, Nigel Copsey, and David Featherstone, "Introduction: Towards a Global History of Anti-Fascism," in *Anti-Fascism in a Global Perspective: Transnational Networks, Exile Communities, and Radical Internationalism* (Routledge, 2021), 7.

13

Nadeau, *Adrien Arcand*, 223-47; Théorêt, *Les Chemises Bleues*, 192-232.

14

Berton, *The Great Depression, 1929-1939*, 461-63. See also Daniel Panneton, "How to Build an Antifascist Movement," *The Walrus*, 3 June 2020.

15

Regarding Field, see Bryan D. Palmer, *James P. Cannon and the Emergence of Trotskyism in the United States, 1928-38* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2022), 461-86; Alan M. Wald, *The New York Intellectuals: The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left from the 1930s to the 1980s* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 107-9. See also Jeffrey B. Perry, "Pseudonyms: A Reference Aid for Studying American Communist History," *American Communist History* 3:1 (2004), 74.

16

Of the eighteen children of the LRWP members interviewed by the author, fourteen came from families where both of their parents had met through the LRWP.

17

Susan Joel was the daughter of Aubrey Joel and Rae Cowan. Cowan's father had changed their name from Cohen upon immigrating to Canada. Author's interview with Susan Joel, 6 September 2018.

18

For other cases and analysis regarding Jewish affinity for Marxism-Leninism, and for activism serving as a replacement for the religious Jewish community, see Ruth Frager, "Communities and Conflicts: East European Jewish Immigrants in Ontario and Quebec From the Late 1800s through the 1930s," in *Canada's Jews: In Time, Space and Spirit*, ed. Ira Robinson (Brighton, MA: Academic Studies, 2013), 60-65; Ira Robinson, *A History of Antisemitism in Canada* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2015), 85-94; Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 79-90; Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 287-359; Tony Michels, "Socialism and the Writing of American Jewish History: 'World of Our Fathers' Revisited," *American Jewish History* 88, no. 4 (2000): 521-46.

19

"Fascism in Canada," *Workers' Voice*, 21 February 1938.

20

Ken W. MacTaggart, "Largest Fascist Unit is led from Quebec," *Globe & Mail*, 2 December 1937; Ken W. MacTaggart, "Fascist Unit Has an Organ Printed Here," *Globe & Mail*, 8 December 1937.

21

David Griffin, "Fascist Ministry Named for Canada," *Toronto Daily Star*, 10 February 1938; "Le chef du P.N.S.C. avec sa femme et ses enfants," *Le Fasciste canadien*, March 1938. See also Betcherman, *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf*, 106-7.

22

David Martin, "Adrien Arcand, Fascist—An Interview," *The Nation*, 26 February 1938. Copies reviewed by the author had largely disintegrated and were missing small sections. The page citations that follow refer to the draft copy of the article held by the Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives in Montreal, Adrien Arcand Collection, Box 1, File 4- Correspondence before 1945, Arcand Interview.

23

Arcand Interview, 4.

24

Arcand Interview, 5-6.

25

Arcand Interview, 8.

26

Ibid.

27

Arcand Interview, 11.

28

Arcand Interview, 12.

29

Two months later, Arcand's *Le Fasciste canadien* printed an editorial on the Madagascar "solution," comparing Jews to lepers and mosquitoes who carry malaria: to eliminate the diseases of high capitalism and communism, they needed to be removed. The need to move all Jews to Madagascar, the article claimed, was a necessity for the good of humanity. "Madagascar, réponse à l'idéal des Juifs," *Le Fasciste canadien*, April 1938.

30

Arcand Interview, 15.

31

Regarding the perceived growth of the movement at this time, see Bulletin No. 883, 9 February 1938, Bulletin No. 884, 17 February 1938, Gregory S. Kealey and Reg Whitaker, eds., *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, The Depression Years, Part V, 1938-1939* (St. John's, NL: Canadian Committee on Labour History, 1997), 61, 71.

32

"La Fusion des Trois Principaux Partis Fascistes du Canada," *le Fasciste canadien*, March 1938.

33

Frederick Edwards, "Fascism in Canada," *Maclean's Magazine*, April 15, 1938, 10; Robin, *Shades of Right*, 194.

34

"William Whittaker," *Le Combat nationale*, November 1938; Betcherman, *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf*, 65-67, 69, 71; Robin, *Shades of Right*, 199-200; Kenneth Grad, "Civil Law Alternatives in the Fight Against Hate Speech: The Case Study of the Marcus Hyman Act," *Canadian Jewish Studies* 33 (2022): 13-50.

35

"La Fusion des Trois Principaux Partis Fascistes du Canada," *le Fasciste canadien*, March 1938.

36

Communist Party stalwart, Fred Rose, gave specific information about Taylor and Arcand's meetings in a pamphlet. The meeting took place at 847 Bay Street on August 23, 1937. Attendees included Arcand, Dr. Gabriel Lambert, J. Papineau, I. Clement, and a man from Cambellton, New Brunswick under the assumed name of Dr. Day. Rose does not state the source of this information. Fred Rose, *Fascism over Canada: An Exposé* (Toronto: New Era Publications, 1938), 21.

37

"Swastika-Wearing Youth to Run in St. Andrew as Anti-Semitic," *Globe & Mail*, 20 September 1937; "Would Prosecute Speaker for Anti-Jewish Platform," *Toronto Daily Star*, 28 September 1937.

38

"National Christian Party Affiliates with C.U.F.," *The Thunderbolt*, November 1937.

39

The CUF's headquarters was in Toronto, where it also printed *The Thunderbolt*, but the newspaper's content showed that it was almost exclusively a product of a Regina-centred organization. It contained nearly no Toronto content, and the January edition included only two advertisements for products entirely unavailable in Toronto: Dr. H. Haele's "curative earth," exclusively sold from Massig's drug-store in Regina, and power from North West Electric. "La Fusion des Trois Principaux Partis Fascistes du Canada," *le Fasciste canadien*, March 1938; John Ross Taylor, "The Problem of Jewry," *The Thunderbolt*, December 1937; John Ross Taylor, "The Problem of Jewry, Part II," *The Thunderbolt*, January 1938.

40

Barrett, *Is God a Racist?*, 23.

41

"Fascism in Canada," *Workers' Voice*, 21 February 1938.

42

Ibid.

43

"Fascism Coming to Canada?" *Workers' Voice*, 1 May 1938.

44

Regarding the formation of the united front, see "Canadian Notes," *Labor Front* (October 1937).

45

Travis Tomchuk, *Transnational Radicals: Italian Anarchists in Canada and the U.S., 1915-1940* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 73, 103, 169. See also reminiscences recorded in Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 77-79, 184-85, 329.

46

"LRWP Gives Lead in Anti-Fascist Fight," *Labor Front*, 15 June 1938.

47

Ibid. See also the letter from Dorothy Giesecke-Rogers, of the Toronto Libertarian Group, reporting events to Emma Goldman in Barcelona. Emma Goldman Papers, Folder 84, letter from Giesecke-Rogers to Goldman, 6 June 1938.

48

Although the newspapers identified the venue as Princess Hall, the city directory listed it as Prince's Hall, situated above Prince's Hardware at 527 Bloor Street West. See Street Guide, *1938 Toronto City Directory* (Toronto: Might Directories Limited, 1938), 3.

49

"Fascists Clash with Foes, Two Placed Under Arrest," *Toronto Daily Star*, 4 June 1938; "Anti-Fascists Battle Police with Tomatoes," *Globe & Mail*, 4 June 1938.

50

Ibid.

51

Ibid.

52

"Fascists Clash with Foes, Two Placed Under Arrest," *Toronto Daily Star*, 4 June 1938; "Officer Was Tomato Target when Anti-Fascists Rioted," *Toronto Daily Star*, 14 June 1938; "Obstructed Officer for Street Meeting," *Toronto Daily Star*, 14 June 1938; "Two Sentences Sequel Anti-Fascist Riot," *Globe & Mail*, 15 June 1938.

53

"Anti-Fascists Battle Police with Tomatoes," *Globe & Mail*, 4 June 1938.

54

Emma Goldman Papers, Folder 84, letter from Giesecke-Rogers to Goldman, 6 June 1938.

55

"Fascists Clash with Foes, Two Placed Under Arrest," *Toronto Daily Star*, 4 June 1938.

56

Ibid.

57

Ibid.

58

"Fascism Invades Toronto," *Workers' Voice*, 1 June 1938. Although dated 1 June, this copy of *Workers' Voice* appears to have been printed a few days later. The inexperienced volunteers set the type by hand, so errors of this kind were common.

59

Ibid.

60

"Chefs de Québec et Ontario," *Le Fasciste canadien*, June 1938; "Activités de mai," *Le Fasciste canadien*, June 1938.

61

"Groupe de quelques officiers fascistes ontariens et québécois," *Le Fasciste canadien*, June 1938.

62

Betcherman, image 12; Robin, image 4; Nadeau, *Adrien Arcand*, 220–21. Journalist Israel Medres attended the rally and recalled, "I felt as though I was not in Montreal, but in some city in Germany." Israel Medres, *Between the Wars: Canadian Jews in Transition*, trans. Vivian Felsen (Montreal: Véhicule Press, 2003), 98–99.

63

Bulletin No. 891, 13 May 1938, Kealey and Whitaker, *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, The Depression Years, Part V, 1938-1939*, 164.

64

Bulletin No. 892, 25 May 1938, Kealey and Whitaker, 180.

65

Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library, Fascist Ephemera, Folder 6, Joseph Farr, Canadian Nationalist Party Speech, transcribed by R. Holly, 9 June 1938.

66

"Arcand Foes Scattered by Waiting Police," *Globe & Mail*, 7 June 1938.

67

Ibid.

68

Ibid.

69

The hall could therefore be accurately called several things and has been the source of some confusion. For instance, historian Martin Robin described training at the "Temple Hall" and a meeting at the "Ukrainian Hall"—but these were the same place; Robin, *Shades of Right*, 194, 267. The Foresters, Parkdale Recreation Club, and the Loyal Orange Young Britain Association are all listed in the city directory. The RCMP Security Bulletins note the presence of a Ukrainian nationalist organization. The bulletins refer to it as the

Sitch Hall or the Hetman Organization Hall, the two being related nationalist organizations. In addition to Farr's connection to the Loyal Orange Young Britain Association, it seems that Farr was sub-letting from the Ukrainians; in November 1938, they refused his use of the hall until he paid \$60 owing. The NUP office moved to 40 Pearl Street. Bulletin 904 further states, "Besides the fact that Farr has become personally objectionable to the Ukrainians in the Toronto branch, there is every indication that they are losing interest in the National Unity Party and it appears probable that they will soon cease to have any connection with the organisation." Bulletin No. 896, 20 July 1938, Bulletin No. 904, 1 November 1938, Kealey and Whitaker, *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, The Depression Years, Part V, 1938-1939*, 230, 331; *1938 Toronto City Directory*, 60, 112, 213, 238, 1103.

70

The *Globe & Mail* alluded to a similar conclusion at the time, describing the neighbourhood as "in the heart of a section that is bitterly opposed to fascism." See "Arcand Foes Scattered by Waiting Police," *Globe & Mail*, 7 June 1938; Betcherman, *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf*, 113.

71

The RCMP reported that the Nationalist Party lacked funds and was financially disorganized. Additionally, although the hall manager accepted the deposit for the June 6 meeting, he later refused to rent the facility to him because, having learned that "the Communist Party" intended to oppose the meeting, "he did not want to have the hall wrecked and the furniture broken." Farr could not find another hall and was evidently able to convince the manager to honour the original agreement. Bulletin No. 893, 7 June 1938, Kealey and Whitaker, *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, The Depression Years, Part V, 1938-1939*, 193.

72

"Professors Protest Kingston Convention," *Globe & Mail*, 14 May 1938; "Kingston Solons Oppose Fascist Conference," *Globe & Mail*, 28 May 1938; "Kingston to Ban Fascist Conclave," *Toronto Daily Star*, 31 May 1938; "No Parades for Fascists in Kingston," *Globe & Mail*, 6 June 1938; "Toronto May House Fascist Convention," *Toronto Daily Star*, 6 June 1938; "Fascists Reverse Plan—Will Meet in Kingston Instead of Toronto," *Globe & Mail*, 22 June 1938; "Won't Let Fascists March at Kingston,"

Toronto Daily Star, 27 June 1938; "Parades of Fascists In Kingston Barred," *Globe & Mail*, 30 June 1938; "RCMP Officers to Watch Kingston Fascist Rally," *Globe & Mail*, 1 July 1938.

73

Bulletin No. 896, 20 July 1938, Kealey and Whitaker, *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, The Depression Years, Part V, 1938-1939*, 231.

74

The list combines the names provided in *Le Combat national* and the RCMP Security Bulletin. The latter was heavily redacted and indicated only Farr and Arcand by name; the redactions do, however, indicate the number of people from each location. "L'unité nationale surgit de la convention de Kingston," *Le Combat national*, July 1938; Bulletin No. 896, 20 July 1938, Kealey and Whitaker, 230.

75

Bulletin No. 896, 20 July 1938, Kealey and Whitaker, 231.

76

"Fascists Dub Themselves National Unity Party," *Globe & Mail*, 4 July 1938.

77

"Police Play Hide-and-Seek with Fascists in Kingston," *Toronto Daily Star*, 4 July 1938.

78

"L'unité nationale surgit de la convention de Kingston," *Le Combat national*, July 1938; Bulletin No. 896, 20 July 1938, Kealey and Whitaker, *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, The Depression Years, Part V, 1938-1939*, 232.

79

"Les délégués entendent MM. R.E. Edmonson et George Deathrage," *Le Combat national*, July 1938; Bulletin No. 896, 20 July 1938, Kealey and Whitaker, 232.

80

"Must Not Submit to Threats," *Globe & Mail*, 9 June 1938.

81

"Meet to Counteract Fascists' Assembly," *Toronto Daily Star*, 24 June 1938; "Uphold Fascists' Free Speech Rights," *Toronto Daily Star*, 25 June 1938; Betcherman, *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf*, 122-23.

82

"Demonstrate Against Fascists!" *Workers' Voice*, 25 June 1938.

83

"Un début triomphal à Massey Hall!" *Le Combat national*, July 1938.

84

Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library, Fascist Ephemera, Folder 7, Joseph Farr, National Unity Party Massey Hall Meeting Speech, transcribed by R. Holly, 4 July 1938.

85

Irving Abella and Harold Troper identified 5,000 Jews entering Canada in this period. Subsequent research by Justin Comartin at the University of Ottawa has identified 8,787. Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None Is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), vi; Justin Comartin, "Humanitarian Ambitions- International Barriers: Canadian Governmental Response to the Plight of Jewish Refugees" (MA, Ottawa, ON, University of Ottawa, 2013), 38.

86

Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library, Fascist Ephemera, Folder 7, Joseph Farr, National Unity Party Massey Hall Meeting Speech, transcribed by R. Holly, 4 July 1938.

87

"Un début triomphal à Massey Hall!" *Le Combat national*, July 1938.

88

500 in most sources, including "Remand Anti-Fascists," *Toronto Daily Star*, 13 July 1938; 800 in "\$500 Bail Renewed," *Toronto Daily Star*, 5 July 1938; 800-900 in "Police Rout Anti-Fascists, Arrest Four," *Globe & Mail*, 5 July 1938.

89

"Four Jailed as Police Rout Anti-Fascists, Many Desert Arcand," *Toronto Daily Star*, 5 July 1938.

90

"Police Rout Anti-Fascists," *Globe & Mail*, 5 July 1938.

91

Ibid.

92

"Remand Anti-Fascists," *Toronto Daily Star*, 13 July 1938.

93

Ibid; "Two Plead Guilty to Obstructing Police," *Globe & Mail*, 15 July 1938. Potts successfully kept his family name out of the press by identifying himself as James Elliott. However, his full name was James Elliott Potts.

94

"\$500 Bail Renewed," *Toronto Daily Star*, 5 July 1938; "Police Rout Anti-Fascists," *Globe & Mail*, 5 July 1938; "Four Men Out on Bail After Demonstration," *Ottawa Journal*, 5 July 1938.

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"\$500 Bail Renewed," *Toronto Daily Star*, 5 July 1938; "Police Rout Anti-Fascists," *Globe & Mail*, 5 July 1938; "Four Men Out on Bail After Demonstration," *Ottawa Journal*, 5 July 1938.

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"One Dismissed, One Withdrawn," *Toronto Star*, 15 July 1938; "Two Freed, Two Fined After Obstruction Charge," *Globe & Mail*, 16 July 1938; "Two Plead Guilty to Obstructing Police," *Globe & Mail*, 15 July 1938.

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"Fined \$25 for obstructing," *Toronto Daily Star*, 15 July 1938.

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"Un début triomphal à Massey Hall!" *Le Combat national*, July 1938.

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Ibid.

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H.A. Potter, "Not Implicated," *Globe & Mail*, 4 July 1938.

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See Earle Birney, *Conversations with Trotsky: Earle Birney and the Radicals 1930s*, edited and with a critical introduction by Bruce Nesbitt (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2017), 204-209; "National Program for the CCF," *Socialist Action*, October 1938; Bryan D. Palmer, "Maurice Spector, James P. Cannon, and the Origins of Canadian Trotskyism," *Labour/Le Travail* 56 (Fall 2005): 145.

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E. Robertson [Earle Birney], "Is French Canada Going Fascist?" *New International* (October 1938).

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Payne, *Fascism: Comparison and Definition*, 7; Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945*, 6-7.