PRAYERS, PAMPHLETS AND PROTEST: WOMEN AND RELIEF IN SASKATOON, 1929-1939

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PRAYERS, PAMPHLETS AND PROTEST:
WOMEN AND RELIEF IN SASKATOON, 1929 - 1939

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by
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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the practice and application of relief policy in Saskatoon during the years of the Great Depression. The research focuses particularly on the effect of relief policy on the lives of women, and the effect, in turn, of women's activities on relief.

The thesis argues that the Canadian relief system was based primarily on specific principles derived from the British system of relief, principles based mainly on moral judgements and economic concerns. These principles, largely considered failures in Britain by World War I, continued to influence relief policy in Canada until the experiences of the Depression proved their inadequacy. In Britain they failed because they did not meet their objectives of reducing the escalating costs of relief and controlling the labour of men. The economic depression of the thirties revealed similar failures in Canada.

Using Saskatoon as a case study, the activities of those on relief - in particular, the women who found themselves on relief and the women in various organizations who attempted to supplement and subsidize the inadequacies of relief - are examined. Their activities are considered to be fundamental to the emergence of a community consensus which rejected the moral and economic principles of relief. The consensus was that the relief system should be replaced
by a national and centralized system of unemployment insurance and other welfare programs. The establishment of this understanding was an outcome of the direct and widespread experience with an outmoded relief system inherited from Britain.
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And finally to my family, who love and support me no matter how distracted and preoccupied I become, who have tolerated me living in the past for the last five years: Davinia, Natasha and Shelley, thank you.

I would like to dedicate this work to the memory of Mrs. Olive Young who symbolises all the women of Saskatchewan, who survived the depression years with so much with strength, dignity and grace, and to Brian Krempian who continued the struggle for the rights and dignity of the poor and unemployed until his death, and to Professor Mary Hallett and Professor Geoffrey Bilson who left too soon.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One: Relief in Saskatoon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two: Women on Relief</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three: Women Delivering Relief</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four: Conclusions</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 3</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 4</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 5</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 6</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preface

Chapter one briefly examines the main principles of relief policy which developed in Britain and which were adopted in Canada. The chapter then examines the conditions of relief administration in Saskatoon and how central the British principles were to the city's operation of relief. The impossible task facing the local city council, their strategies to attempt to meet the competing demands for economy and the overwhelming numbers in need is revealed. Also covered is the activities of various organizations which endeavoured to influence city council's policies and decisions. The chapter is based on city records (including the records of the relief department), council and relief board minutes, newspaper accounts, and other secondary sources. A change in perception regarding public responsibility for relief and the move toward national and central responsibility for unemployment can be discerned in this chapter.

The realities of relief, and the activities of women receiving it are the focus of chapter two. The difficulties facing women, the need for their contribution to the family income and support, and the variety of strategies they adopted are examined. Included is a brief examination of married women's employment, and the debates, both local and
national, which surrounded this issue. Census records and other statistics are used, as are reports of the National Council of Women, Chatelaine, and city hall records. Also, extensive use was made of the local media's coverage of women's activities. The evidence, though limited, is stark enough to suggest that women in the thirties were not passive or invisible actors. Women operated with distinct clarity, based on a growing understanding of their roles and rights in society, and with great courage and creativity.

Chapter three also focuses on women and includes material unavailable in other secondary sources. The activities of women in Saskatoon who were not on relief, but who attempted to alleviate the conditions of relief for others are studied. A brief sketch of the women's movement, and women's organizations on the national level is incorporated. Two welfare surveys of the city, commissioned by the Local Council of Women, the minute books and other records of local organizations, and popular media coverage of their activities were used for this chapter. The chapter argues that women involved in supplementing and supporting public relief with their own private efforts worked extremely hard to provide material and spiritual comfort to other women. Furthermore, the chapter demonstrates that they made determined attempts at social reform.

The conclusions are presented in chapter four. The picture of women actively engaged in a world that operated
Chapter 1
The Development and Practice of Relief in Saskatoon

When considering relief in Canada it is important to understand and appreciate the principles of the British relief system which preceded the introduction of the British welfare state. Relief in Saskatoon in the 1930s was inadequate and disorganized. A significant reason for this was the long standing and deeply rooted association of Canadian public policy with that of Britain. In spite of local conditions and differences between the two countries, relief policy in both countries was remarkably similar in approach and application in the early twentieth century.

In Britain, however, there was a growing acceptance of public responsibility to provide a basic income as a right of the unemployed. By 1909, this included the development of distinct and separate social welfare services, and the recognition of unemployment as a public problem, rather than a private and personal failure. Canada did not undertake an assumption of public responsibility on the same scale until the experiences of the depression precipitated a realization that the nineteenth century British principles which still governed relief in Canada did not meet the need for relief.

This chapter begins with a brief description of the major principles which governed British relief prior to World War I and which were also adopted in Canada. In particular, some of the problems these principles created,
particularly in regard to women, are identified. The rest of the chapter consists of a discussion of the practice of those principles in Saskatoon. The chapter will focus on Saskatoon City Council's attempts to deliver relief using a system based on British principles during the depression, and the efforts of local individuals and organizations to change it.

Relief has been defined as charitable aid given to the needy, usually in the form of food, clothing, shelter and warmth. The principles which guided the provision of relief in Britain, however, were concerned less with relief and more with an attempt to control the problems administrators believed caused the need for relief. An examination of the development of relief policy in Britain shows that by the nineteenth century the major principle underlying relief laws was an attempt to force people to work. This was achieved either by instituting punitive penalties for those who failed to work, or by coercive measures which compelled people to work in work houses or at meaningless tasks.

A second principle which influenced the delivery of relief in Britain was "less eligibility": the idea that relief was only given at a subsistence level. This would make relief less attractive and lower paid than the most menial paid work available locally and encourage unemployed people to prefer any available job over relief.
Another principle of British relief was "moral rehabilitation". This principle reflected middle class fears that the poor would grow indolent and parasitic if relief was more comfortable than earning a living; therefore, relief was expected to instill and reinforce habits such as thrift and industry. These traits were perceived by the authorities as necessary components of a useful working class.

The principle of working for relief was related to the concept of instilling good work habits. Working to repay relief reinforced both the moral lessons of industry and the notion of relief as a temporary charitable measure that had to be earned.\(^4\)

Judging who qualified for relief, the "deserving" and "undeserving" categories of relief recipients, was another British principle exported to Canada. A moral standard was used to determine who was fulfilling his or her social role and, as a consequence, was entitled to relief support. Widows and the blind, for example, who needed poor relief through no fault of their own were considered deserving cases. Young, able bodied and healthy men who "refused" to work were not.

Determining who was eligible for relief by moral standards also served the dual purpose of cutting costs, as did the residence requirement. The residence requirement, which was first developed in the sixteenth century, was used
to determine eligibility for relief based on whether the applicant "belonged" to the relief authority or not. It was frequently used to disqualify recipients and to force them to move elsewhere.

Problems with a relief system governed by these principles were clear. In particular the principles had specific implications for women. In fact, these principles, with their emphasis on moral or economic objectives, generally denied the reality of the lives of the working poor. The labour of working class men, for example, was regulated by the labour market, not by making relief less attractive than the lowest paid work available. The problem relief failed to address was what to do with the unemployed when there was no work available. Subsistence levels of relief had a stronger impact on the women and children who were the great majority of those on relief for long periods of time. Subsistence level relief could and did affect the health and welfare of women and children.

Many of the moral characteristics expected to be reinforced by relief were unrealistic. For example, thrift - the skill of saving from earnings for periods of unemployment - was impossible for most poor people who experienced difficulties in "making ends meet" on the wages they earned.

In many poor families, the family income came from the combined efforts of all family members including wives and
children. Relief laws, however, focused on the male breadwinner and insisted on treating women and children as being dependent on their menfolk. In fact, women were assigned the dual responsibility of maintaining the home and respectability on inadequate and irregular wages, and supplementing those wages through their own labour. In many cases, it was women who provided the bulk of the family's income and security.5

The work for relief principle and the work house test also had devastating effects on women, who could be forced to enter the workhouse, even if they had employment of their own. They could be denied relief if their husbands refused to enter the workhouse. A poor choice in a husband could condemn a woman to a lifetime of being branded as being the same as her husband since the relief laws failed to define women as independent beings.6 For women who were the sole head of the family these principles also created problems by forcing them to work when they had little or no help with family responsibilities.

The residence requirement as a qualifying factor for receiving relief also worked against women. Women in need of relief because of widowhood or desertion, for example, found themselves disqualified from support by their husband's parish, which could claim that the parish of the wife's birth was really responsible for her and her children. Meanwhile, the parish of her birth could disclaim
responsibility for her, saying she and her children had become the responsibility of her husband's parish through marriage. Rigid application of the residence requirements saw women and their families moving back and forth across the country, refused aid by parishes imposing residence requirements. This regulation was particularly hard on widows in need of relief who could be forced to go from the parish where they had lived with their husbands to the parish of their husband's birth, where they knew no one.7

The principle of designating recipients as "deserving" or "undeserving" also affected women negatively. Women who were "unmarried mothers", or who left their husbands, were considered undeserving of relief because they were not fulfilling their roles as proper women.8

In general, all the principles of relief treated women as a dependent and invisible class. Relief policy was designed for "the able bodied labourer with the family dependent upon him."9

The second set of problems relating to relief principles was their overall failure. If the major objective of the bureaucrats in charge of relief was to reduce relief costs to a minimum, to discourage people from using it and to encourage the growth of useful "moral" habits, then they failed dismally. Relief costs continued to escalate. The more expensive type of relief, out relief or outdoor relief (providing cash or relief supplies to people in their own
homes), continued to be the major source of all relief. Indoor relief, or the workhouse form of relief, was supposed to instill positive working habits, but the meaningless nature of the work and the inability of many work houses to provide any work undermined much of this objective.

Making relief physically, economically and morally degrading did not end the need for it. Conditions created the need for relief, and compelled people to seek relief as a last resort in spite of the inadequacies of the system. The principles of relief were proven failures and were abandoned in Britain in the early twentieth century.

These principles were not abandoned in Canada. Saskatoon provides an excellent example of these British principles in action. All relief efforts were governed by the principles central to the British system. The result was a relief system that was poorly funded. These inadequately conceived public programs were supplemented by well meaning individual efforts.

Saskatoon, in 1929, was a relatively young city, but it had remarkably strong ties to Britain. Statistics on the ethnic origins of the population reveal an overwhelming number of its population identified themselves as British. (see Table 1.1)
Table 1.1 Ethnic Origins of Saskatoon's Population 1911-1931

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>1931</th>
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<td>81.5</td>
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<td>2.9</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1.2</td>
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<td>4.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian and Eskimo</td>
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<td>0.9</td>
<td>424</td>
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<td>25739</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>43291</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Census of Canada, 1911-1931

Citizens who identified themselves as British far outnumbered those from any other country. Moreover, these citizens held the most prominent economic and social positions in the early years of the city, a pattern that would remain unchanged for decades.

British influences were also reflected in the differing views about relief which appeared in Saskatoon's early history and continually re-emerged in all kinds of local issues. As was true of late nineteenth century England, some citizens of Saskatoon favoured state assumption of the provision of community services, including relief. But the views of these people were opposed, as in England, by those who believed that individuals had to assume responsibility for themselves and should not expect help from the public purse.
The values of the latter group were reflected in the policies of the local government. Social welfare programs were not developed and little was spent even on necessary community services such as sanitation and public health. By-laws to raise money to provide for indigent and unemployed men were turned down by rate payers, and the Council was compelled to turn to local charities to direct relief efforts.

During Saskatoon's early years public relief was not a major concern. Informal relief, "neighbourliness", was expected to take care of most of the relief needs that arose. Widows would have their crops planted. Neighbours would rally to help with raising a house or barn. Newcomers would be welcomed and helped to settle in.

Relief was needed, however, and informal organized relief efforts did emerge, in spite of the reluctance of authorities to provide it. For example, the first organized welfare agency, established in 1909 through voluntary effort and a little financial support from the provincial and local governments, was the Children's Aid Society.

The refusal of the Saskatoon City Council to fund adequate relief services meant, in effect, that relief was subsidized by local citizens. However, the same British principles underpinned the work of volunteers. Relief was a shameful last resort, an act of charity. It was not designed to support but to rehabilitate: to encourage the recipients
to seek self support as soon as possible. Those who contributed to financial expenses associated with volunteer relief were convinced that relief budgets as a whole should be kept as low as possible, resulting in minimal relief provisions.

The relief which was granted by public authority was generally for the "deserving" cases, such as widows and their dependents or invalid cases. In November 1927, for example, 49 families in Saskatoon were on relief - comprised of 56 adults and 134 children. Reasons for applying for relief were listed as: Sickness, (9 families); Old age (10 families); Deserted wives (5 families); Widows (12 families); Husband in jail (1 family); and Unemployment (12 families). These latter cases were a particular feature only of the winter months as unemployment was not cited as a reason for relief appeals in the summer and autumn. The regular seasonal employment of an agricultural province during summer and harvesting months took many families off the relief rolls.

Relief in Saskatoon in 1929, provided by voluntary, private and municipal agencies and designed to handle seasonal unemployment and the charitable needs of the community, was challenged by the onslaught of numbers. Private and public relief efforts were governed and influenced by British principles of relief provisions. The
onset of the depression also challenged the assumptions governing relief.

In Saskatoon, the Relief Officer reported twice each month to the City Council on the numbers receiving relief and the costs. His first report was a record of the weekly statistics for relief, his second report was a record of the previous month's totals. Each report included the figures for the same period in the preceding year. Once a year he reported the annual statistics to the new Council.

His reports show that there was a steady increase of relief numbers and costs after 1929. In November, 1930, the numbers on relief were over three times the figures for November, 1929, with over 100 families on the relief rolls. Five months later, in April 1931, over five hundred families were on relief. The figures stayed in the hundreds throughout the summer months. By early 1932, relief was costing $1,000 a day and the monthly cost of relief was almost equal to the yearly total for 1929. From a average total of 36 families on relief monthly in 1929, The Council was coping with 1,800 families a month on relief in early January, 1932. Towards the end of January that same year there were 2,000 families on relief. Only 750 of these families were supported by work on the Broadway Bridge and the daily cost of relief was $1,000. At this point the city began to threaten to cut relief for everyone.
The City Council was concerned with the rapidly increasing cost of relief. The reaction of City Council members to the numbers of unemployed was to cut the expense of relief by any means possible. The city's priority was to maintain a balanced budget.

In 1929, the provincial legislature, recognizing winter relief costs would be beyond the financial capacity of municipalities, had introduced a bill which granted them the power to borrow money from the banks and to use those funds to grant aid in certain cases. This did not meet the demands so the provincial government appealed to the Dominion Government. By September 1930, the Dominion Government had introduced the Unemployment Relief Act which was designed to provide federal-provincial financial assistance to the municipalities. This assistance was first given as a fixed share of relief costs, and after 1934, as monthly grants-in-aid, the amounts varied from month to month.

In the first three years of the depression, Saskatoon focused its relief efforts through various projects as public works for relief as well as direct relief programmes. After public work projects proved too costly, direct relief became the major form of relief.

In spite of the growing numbers and costs of relief, the overwhelming attitude in the city at the onset of the depression was that the depression of the 1930s, like others
before it, would be short-lived and temporary. Relief was simply a minimal bridge between periods of employment. This concept was used to justify the policies of Saskatoon's City Council. For example, in 1932, the Mayor expressed the belief that relief would not be necessary, if the unemployed would only learn the lessons of thrift. The local newspaper affirmed this position in its coverage of the Mayor's views. The Mayor stressed the importance of savings in times of employment, as protection for times of unemployment:

Saskatoon unemployed who took jobs in the harvest and those working on the bridge were told they would be cut off the relief lists as their wages should suffice the necessities of life. The city relief officer would then decide how long a period should lapse after the work was over to be reinstated again. The size of the family in addition to the amount of earnings would be the determining factors. Anyone who spent money recklessly would be expected to take the consequences.25

The Mayor and Council were convinced the need for relief would be lessened by the exercise of "positive virtues." Obviously, the Council could not understand the impossibility of making ends meet on a day to day basis on the limited incomes available to the working class, which precluded the ability to include savings in a domestic budget.

The task of managing family income and stretching limited wages to accommodate the needs of a growing family was left to the women in the family. Within most marriages men were the family providers, women the family managers.26
Failure to "make ends meet" was mostly attributed to the poor domestic management skills of women rather than the failure of men to earn adequate wages. In many cases married women were able to resort to a variety of strategies to stretch or supplement their husband's income, even in periods of employment. Family budgeting in general, left women with "too much to do and not enough to do it with." 

In spite of the growing costs associated with relief, the Council did not seem to worry about unemployment relief, nor the problems faced by those on relief. The Council was able to adopt this attitude because of the assumption that all relief problems would be solved when the economy recovered.

This opinion was reflected in other sources. For example, in 1929 and 1930, while editorials and stories in the local paper referred to the New York stock market crash and the international problems it was causing, the writers did not seem to believe these events would affect Saskatoon. The Saskatoon Star-Phoenix generally led a chorus of praise for a self satisfied "Saskatoon is growing" theme. The paper also tended to castigate those who did not believe in the picture of a prosperous Saskatoon unaffected by the "temporary mild disruption" caused by events in the "East." For example, to reassure those who might worry about such things as shortfalls in the crop, which would adversely affect the city's economic health, an editorial stated:
Saskatoon is growing steadily and there is no sign that investors or others expect the short crop to check the city's advance even temporarily.  

The value of building permits, another sign of economic well being had nearly reached the six million dollar mark in 1929, and was still over five and a half million in 1930. Among the new buildings were a nurse's home, a new power plant, a new federal building, and a new police department. As population grew, so did crime; another measure of "Saskatoon's growth towards cityhood." Bank clearings shattered city records, "a striking indication of the volume of business taking place." These stories tended to support a general attitude of optimism, and reflected the pride and complacency current at the time, even though overall costs for relief related expenditures for the city were high, even in 1929. (See Appendix 1 for Estimated Relief Expenditures for the city, 1929). 

In spite of the unprecedented success story the press was recording, civic authorities were still cautious. The notorious ability of winters to inflate relief rolls was well known. Saskatoon, even with a well functioning economy, could not defeat the "natural" cycle of high unemployment over winter months. As winter approached, while denying that unemployment was high and stating there were jobs to be had, the Mayor and Council decided to issue warnings to the unemployed in other parts of the country "that there is
no work to be had and relief will not be given in Saskatoon.\textsuperscript{37}

As City Council members struggled with their plans to deal with unemployment, they continued to worry that plans to support local unemployed would attract unemployed from other areas. The chief constable, while expressing his support for any plans City Council might have, said "do not publicise any scheme, unless other cities have similar arrangements. The first city that does anything definite towards helping out the unemployed, will be flooded with unemployed from other cities".\textsuperscript{38}

A relief plan was developed and relief was given specifically to Saskatoon residents. The need for relief was clear but Council's relief policies seemed a double edged sword, designed to cut numbers on relief and the cost of providing it.

During the first few years of the depression the City Council attempted to alleviate the impact of unemployment using the British principles of less eligibility, and the work test, (demanding work in return for any relief given). Council also relied heavily on other eligibility principles which had been developed in Britain, notably the residence requirement.

The major component of relief for the unemployed were public works projects with wages set at 45c an hour. Direct relief, given in the form of vouchers rather than cash, was
considered a supplement to public work project wages, since the number of hours allotted to men were inadequate to provide a living wage. Direct relief was given to those men not hired onto the public works projects because of physical incapacity. Work was expected in return for any relief given.39 Men were expected to work for their relief "only for the purpose of testing their willingness...as the services being rendered are of no value to the city as the Engineering Department would not employ men to do the work in the absence of the present situation. In other words the work is entirely created for test purposes".40

In the period 1929 to 1933 City Council relied heavily on the emergency funds provided by the Dominion Government and matched by the provincial government to undertake public work projects as relief for the unemployed. This was the British nineteenth century principle in action: those on relief would work for what they received.

The public works project ranged from simple domestic labours such as road or sewer repairs or extensions. Public works projects during these years also included the creation of functional additions to the city, such as the 19th street subway, extensions to the storm sewer system and the Broadway Bridge. Beautiful works such as the Bessborough Hotel and the retention and beautification of the riverbank were also undertaken as relief work projects.
The policy of providing unemployment relief through public works projects had to be abandoned after 1933 when Dominion financial support for such schemes was withdrawn. The growing number on the relief rolls on a year round basis and the relatively high cost of providing relief through work to those in need of relief caused the Dominion Government to seek cheaper methods of providing the bare necessities of life. Because of the Dominion Government's withdrawal the City Council was compelled to adopt a "loaves and fishes" approach to the available relief dollars. How to stretch inadequate funds to feed a starving multitude of thousands, rather than the familiar hundreds, underlined the acceptance of a dole approach to relief. This meant the introduction of direct relief.

Actually, the "loaves and fishes" approach had already been used within the public works programme. For example, one of the public works projects - the sewer works program - could only employ fifty men a week at a point when over 300 unemployed men were on the relief rolls. Strategies for sharing the work equally had to be developed. This meant the wages earned were inadequate and had to be supplemented by direct relief. Priority was given to married men with children and to British born subjects or those in the process of becoming naturalized Canadians.

Another eligibility requirement was based on residency. Priority was given to British born or Canadian born men, who
had been resident in Saskatoon, prior to December 31, 1929. City Council applied these criteria not only to its own employment practices for relief work projects. The City Clerk, on Council's instructions, also wrote to every contractor in the city who held a city relief project contract with City Council. In this letter he asked for the completion of a statistical survey on the nationality, length of residence, marital status and number of dependents of all men employed by the private contractors on the public relief contracts.43

The principle that the unemployed should work for relief was not questioned. What was questioned was the eligibility of those applying for or receiving relief. The major qualification in all policies was the residence requirement. Only bona-fide Saskatoon residents were eligible. This was modelled on the British Laws of Settlement which provided relief only to those born in the parish. Also, only individuals married for one full year were entitled to relief, a requirement intended to prevent hasty marriages based on the anticipation of relief support.44

Many of the policies seemed to have been developed to control anticipated problems of abuse. For example, immediately following a report on a clash of the jobless and police in Prince Albert, a report in the Star-Phoenix of December 12, 1930, under the title "Won't Stand for Abuse in
Relief Plans" stated "Every effort was being made to ensure men given employment [that is; on public work relief projects] were deserving and that the system should not be abused." The report detailed what these efforts included: sending home the jobless who were not Saskatoon residents, checking all applications, hiring a staff of experienced and trained investigators and taking sworn statements before granting of any assistance. The city's relief officer was also quoted in the story, justifying the need for such stringent measures, saying "many who apply for relief and register for [relief] work did not need it." The Relief Officer cited as proof the case of a man who had $1000 in savings who was working on a relief project.

It was clear that City Council was reluctant to assume responsibility for relief. Council relied on the British principles which justified minimal provisions and avoidance of responsibility. From this came the reliance on private organizations to deliver relief services. The amount of direct relief provided by private organizations had at least equalled, if not outweighed that of City Council in "good" years.

The tendency to assume private and charitable organizations were equal to the task was natural. In 1929, the private and charitable organizations covered by a survey were investigating claims for relief, visiting those in need and providing a variety of goods and services. The financial
costs associated with this matched the expenditures of the city. (See Appendix 2 for relief services and the associated costs supplied by the City Relief Department and various community groups in the city for 1929). The Relief Department's annual expenditure for this year was $16,600. The total expenditures recorded by those organizations specifying their budgets was $16,474.48

In fact, reliance on private support for relief was so natural that the initial city relief efforts for unemployment in 1929 were funded through donations from citizens. To quote from the public fund raising letter used to raise the money: "to charge such expense [that is, unemployment relief] against the tax payer would form a dangerous precedent".49 City Council canvassed every industry in the city, asking them to distribute copies of this letter, and collect the subscriptions to the fund, and pass them on to City Hall's relief department.50

Saskatoon had many active voluntary organizations providing various relief services. Most were run by women.51 These organizations ranged from well known and well established groups, such as the I.O.D.E. and the Y.W.C.A., to religious organizations, such as the Catholic Women's League and the Jewish Women's League. Some organizations were quite new and existed only to meet specific needs, such as the Westmount Athletic Association, the Kindergartens for Under-privileged Children and the Playground Association.52
Women's organizations were also involved in running institutions like the Bethany Home for unwed mothers, distributing clothing, cash and food to emergency relief cases, and organizing fund raising activities for deserving projects such as Christmas gifts for the children housed in the children's shelter.\textsuperscript{53}

Other groups and institutions undertook charitable work directed at relief recipients. For example, the Star Phoenix had a Christmas Fund drive which published case histories and appeals for toys, clothes, furniture, food for the "less fortunate."

These groups were overwhelmed by the demand created by the socio-economic crisis of the depression. For example, a correspondent to the Star Phoenix pointed out that the Christmas Fund would not support more than three of the families on relief over the winter.\textsuperscript{54} The Family Welfare Association had only one staff person and an annual budget of $2,500 per year to meet the calls made upon it.\textsuperscript{55}

Within these organizations, women provided much of the impetus and leadership for coordinated relief services. The Local Council of Women (LCW) in Saskatoon was largely responsible for "the greater progress in the development of essential services than in some larger cities."\textsuperscript{56} In 1930, the LCW had initiated a request for a study by the Canadian Welfare Council to investigate the needs of families and individuals in distress, how those needs were being met, and
how to devise machinery to more effectively address those needs.\textsuperscript{57} (Appendix 1 shows the wide range of agencies active in relief services).

After this report, the Local Council of Women was instrumental in forming a Family Welfare Association.\textsuperscript{58} This organization functioned as an additional and independent relief agency in the city, though a substantial proportion of its budget was obtained from a City Council grant; $1,600 out of $2,500 was a direct grant from the city. The remainder came from voluntary donations from the community.\textsuperscript{59} The inadequacy of the group to cope with the demands made upon it was made clear in a later report, published in 1937:

\begin{quote}
This is entirely inadequate even for the present scale of service and with the engagement of an additional social worker, a minimum budget of $5,000 should be considered.\textsuperscript{60}
\end{quote}

The authors of the report supported increasing the resources of the agency, so that it might achieve the goals of promoting family welfare. This was needed since the only staff member undertook administrative duties and extensive public relations work with the public and all the other social welfare agencies in the city, in addition to managing an average of 70 to 80 families at any one time. However, the Canadian Welfare Council was critical of public support as the only source of funding. Public relief needed a strong base of voluntary contributions. Without this any voluntary organization was suspect:
It might be argued with some reason that the voluntary status of a welfare agency which only raises 36% of its income from voluntary appeals is open to question.61

In spite of the inadequacy of staff and resources, by 1936 the Family Welfare Association was responsible for 176 families. While many of these families had been referred by other agencies in the city, the majority had made personal application directly to the Association for relief. (See Table 1.2)

Table 1.2
Family Welfare Association: Source of Referrals 1936

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Referral</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal application</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Departments</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Citizens</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Organizations</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Schools</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Social Agencies</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firms (employers, Law firms)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations of Unemployed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of town agencies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The table shows how closely the public and private relief agencies were prepared to work with one another. Part of this was due to the inadequacy of either to cope alone with the demands, and the reluctance of either to assume sole responsibility.

In spite of apparent inadequacies, these charitable and neighbourly activities connected to relief continued for the
duration of the depression. For example, various groups organized concerts (with free entry for the unemployed) which were supposed to raise funds for relief purposes and the morale of the unemployed. The Canadian Legion asked Council for permission to paint advertising slogans on the side walks in order to provide work and income for unemployed ex-service men.

Volunteer and charitable organizations recognized their inability to cope with the deluge of "needy" cases. These organizations provided an important and large percentage of relief services in the city, but increasingly found themselves forced to request grants from City Council, or to hand over entire projects to the city. The voluntary agencies, though reluctant to abandon their role in relief, found the demand exhausted their private resources.

City Council lost the traditional subsidy that volunteer agencies provided to the city's relief services as these groups became another source of pressure. The agencies were either seeking increased financial support from the city to carry out their work, or applying to Council to take over projects entirely. The normal role of the agencies in raising private funds and delivering services was diminished.

A prime example of City Council's more obvious dependence on voluntary charitable agencies for support in providing relief to the unemployed, and the resulting
transfer of the responsibility from the volunteer sector back to Council was the Clothing Relief Bureau. Clothing relief was organized by six service clubs and was designed to collect cash donations and unwanted clothing from the more affluent and redistribute them to people on relief. The bureau was run on volunteer labour. It received and investigated applications for clothing, employed relievers, (e.g. unemployed shoemakers and tailors) to repair and maintain the articles, and organized the collection and distribution system. By 1931, however, the bureau needed financial support from the city as it could not raise the support to meet the demand on its services. The city cooperated with the bureau by providing operating grants to keep the bureau in operation. By 1933, however, this was inadequate and the bureau had to cease operations, handing over responsibility for clothing relief to the city. A voluntary agency did not have the capacity to deal with the magnitude of the task of providing clothing relief. The location of the bureau - in the basement of City Hall - symbolized the ambiguity of publicly funded but voluntarily run services in striving to meet the needs of those on relief.62

Tension existed between voluntary charitable organizations and Council. Many of the organizations were realizing the inadequacy of their funds and volunteer staff to meet the growing number of "cases." Yet the reluctance of
City Council to provide stable financial support for their work was clear. This was epitomized by the Tag Day Nuisance debate. Tag Days were days declared by the Council when specified local organizations could take to the streets of the city and canvass local citizens directly for funds, giving a "tag" in return. For many groups this was a major and irreplaceable source of income.63 For example, in 1928, 11 tag days had raised $7,500, including Poppy Day which had raised $3,100. During the two months in 1929 that the debate simmered it became apparent Council did not want to accept any responsibility, particularly financial, for the charitable work of these groups. Pressure from some quarters for Council to do just that was evident. A Star Phoenix editorial pointed out it would take only a minuscule increase in the mill rate for Council to fund all the charitable groups, removing the 'nuisance' of tag days and ensuring that all citizens shared equally in the support of charitable work in the city, not just those waylaid on street corners.64 Following the British tradition, Council decided to allow tag days to continue, in spite of the nuisance they represented so that volunteer groups would remain responsible for their own financing.

The caring for citizens on relief, assigned to the municipality by Dominion and Provincial governments had, in practice, become the responsibility of voluntary agencies. The crisis of the 1930s had created demands beyond the
capacity of voluntary agencies. In Saskatoon, City Council felt it, too, could not meet the excess demand and felt overwhelmed by the demand on its time and resources.

It was in the face of this demand that relief became, of necessity, a major focus of City Council. Council was compelled to experiment with a variety of methods for supervising and delivering relief in an attempt to find a cheap and effective relief system.

In spite of, or because of, Dominion governmental inaction Saskatoon tried to develop a relief system for the city which would integrate the provision of necessities and the preservation of "moral character" with low costs. Direct relief, therefore, came in various forms, such as payment for the room and board costs of unemployed single people and the aged or sick. Families received relief for shelter, a term that covered rent, water and light, wood or coal or coal-oil, and for food which included groceries, meat, milk and bread.65

When individuals applied for relief, they did not receive what they needed. That is, not all categories of relief were given automatically to every applicant and it was not free. For example, light and water came under rent relief. However, electricity and water bills were "paid" for by work performed by the household head for the city, and only for a specified amount. Any excess consumption had to be paid for in cash. Food relief was carefully calculated
according to strict diet lists. Clothing was rationed and given according to what the clothing bureau had stocked.

Certain aspects of relief changed over the decade in spite of the unchanging lack of money. In fact, Council's monetary position worsened. The tax base was shrinking, and people could not afford to pay the taxes they owed. (See Table 1.3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% of Tax Paid</th>
<th>% Arrears Paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>80.15</td>
<td>58.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>81.52</td>
<td>68.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>76.17</td>
<td>84.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>68.93</td>
<td>88.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>61.32</td>
<td>72.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>56.34</td>
<td>51.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>54.92</td>
<td>40.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>57.22</td>
<td>42.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>59.76</td>
<td>40.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In spite of the enormous shortfall in tax collection, the city's expenditures were steadily increasing. These were the harsh financial facts of life which, given the priority placed on balanced budgets, dictated Council's attitude of restricting relief payments and services to the minimum.

That any changes in policy could be wrung from Council in the face of such financial restraints is remarkable, as in some years the amount of taxes outstanding surpassed the total annual expenditure of the city. The demands on City
Council's purse were increasing while the major source of income to meet these expenditures was drastically reduced. (See Table 1.4)

Table 1.4
Comparison of Total Annual Expenditure with Net Outstanding Taxes, City of Saskatoon
1928 - 1936

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Expenditures</th>
<th>Outstanding Taxes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>1,023,346.72</td>
<td>640,129.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>1,130,667.59</td>
<td>452,291.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>1,189,873.60</td>
<td>565,138.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>1,250,718.40</td>
<td>772,866.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>1,407,408.36</td>
<td>1,155,068.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>1,240,692.37</td>
<td>1,537,208.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>1,406,543.91</td>
<td>2,054,545.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>1,333,541.29</td>
<td>2,071,395.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>1,315,597.64</td>
<td>1,974,900.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 1.4 reflects the financial facts of life by which the councillors were restrained. Changes to relief in Saskatoon were effected in spite of these real financial limitations, by the persistent and concerted efforts of two very disparate groups whose interests coincided: the local unemployed and their supporters who were very well organized, and local rate-payers and merchants who felt directly threatened by the Council's policy.

There were a variety of organizations of unemployed in the city. These included the Un-Employed Ex-Service Men's Welfare Association, The Fraternal and Protective Association of Unemployed, The Neighbourhood Council Movement, The Married Physically Unfit Unemployed
Association, the Medically Unfit Single Unemployed Association, the Joint Unemployed Committee, the Saskatchewan Welfare Association and the Westside Mass Organizations. All were active in the city at some point during the decade, many of them for the entire period. In addition, many of the neighbourhoods in the city had organizations which either tackled relief issues themselves, or appointed subcommittees to do so. Examples were the Haultain Ratepayers Association and the Nutana Welfare Association. Many labour organizations were also involved, such as the Women's Labour League, the Saskatoon Trades and Labour Council, and various local branches of unions. Other community organizations, such as the Canadian Legion and the Local Council of Women, were also involved in the debates and activities around relief. The organized campaigns which operated during the two year period of the Civic Relief Board demonstrate the level of activity and commitment of the unemployed and other citizens, a level that was evident for the entire decade.

The initial aspects of relief attacked by the organizations of the unemployed were the criteria for qualification. The first criterion was destitution. Applicants had to demonstrate that they had exhausted all other avenues of help, including savings, the resources of family members, and the sale of belongings. Organizations representing the unemployed objected to this and argued that
relief should be supplied when it was needed, not when people were desperate. These organizations also attacked the residency requirement. Applicants had to prove they were bona fide residents of Saskatoon prior to December 31, 1930. The unemployed associations argued for a more flexible policy, a residence requirement based on a fixed period rather than a fixed date. 68

While council members may not have been sympathetic to some of the complaints of the unemployed alone, they were forced to listen when their complaints found support from other groups of citizens. There was a section of the local population which found much to agree with in the suggestions of the unemployed. City Council's policies on food relief most clearly demonstrate how the unlikely union of unemployed and small business developed. Initially, a closed face food voucher - that is, clearly specifying types and quantity of food - was issued by The city's relief department to relief recipients. Complaints about the system were so frequent and vociferous that Council meetings were increasingly taken up by deputations from various organizations and individuals. 69 In response to this pressure, the food relief system was converted to an open face voucher system allowing recipients more freedom and flexibility in budgeting.

However, Council considered that abuses still flourished. Council had considered the possibility of
establishing its own food store as a cost-saving measure, an idea it rejected in June 1931 because of representations from organizations speaking for the city's merchants. In spite of the effectiveness of the arguments against the relief store, the added advantages of central control as a means of increasing efficiency and controlling abuse inherent in a city run operation made the scheme irresistible. A city relief store was established one year after it had been originally defeated.\(^70\) In addition to increasing control over suspected abuses, the city expected to be able to save money with the relief store. In fact, City Council made a profit from the operation of the store: $1,122.54 reported in December of 1932, and $1,038.75 expected in January of 1933.\(^71\)

The response to the policy of a city owned and operated relief store was universal condemnation. The relief recipients objected to many specific problems caused by the store. Individual independence and personal choice were taken away by the store. The travel involved - difficult at the best of times - was painful during the winter months. Additionally, the city's desire to cut costs meant, in the opinion of relievers, that food of questionable quality and limited selection, was sold.\(^72\) Merchants objected to the loss of business and unfair competition represented by a city monopoly of relief business.\(^73\)
Not long after the relief store was started, a relief board was also established transferring the burden of directly administering direct relief from the shoulders of City Council.\textsuperscript{74} Before the relief board was established, all relief matters were addressed directly to Council and its meetings lasted until past midnight. In addition to the regular meeting, extra meetings were necessary each week in order for Council to deal with various delegations, petitions, complaints and problems related to relief.\textsuperscript{75} To handle the growing problem of relief concerns Council established the Civic Relief Board which would deal solely with relief matters, leaving Council free to deal with other civic matters.\textsuperscript{76}

The Civic Relief Board became a very powerful institution. At its first meeting the members decided the relief store should be under its jurisdiction, not, as it had been, a separate city Department responsible directly to Council.\textsuperscript{77} The Board also opened a relief camp to cut wood outside of the city and a wood yard in the city where those on relief could prove their willingness to work and earn their relief.\textsuperscript{78} All relief business, the store, the offices etc., were incorporated into one building by converting an old garage on the corner of 19th Street and 1st Avenue. Meat relief was established and equipment was purchased to permit the opening of a butcher store in the back of this building.\textsuperscript{79} The Board also decided relief was only a loan,
and all recipients would be asked to sign an agreement to repay any relief received as a condition of receiving it.

The board devised an application form. This was a four page document measuring 25 cm by 35 cm. In addition to personal details regarding age, citizenship, marital status and dependents the questions asked covered personal history. Applicants were asked to provide details of work history, residence history, military or naval record, and a statement regarding their liquor and drug use. Applicant were also expected to list all items they owned, or owed money on, and to declare that they were unable to provide their dependents with the necessities of life. 80 (See Appendix 3 for a copy of this original application form).

In response to the policies and attitudes of the Civic Relief Board, the existing and varied organizations of unemployed formed the United Front Council of Saskatoon Unemployed Associations in August 1932. The United Front opposed the butcher shop, the relief store, the voucher system and the management of the relief system by the Relief Board. Individual organizations also continued to protest. The Fraternal and Protective Association of Unemployed Citizens and Ratepayers expressed opposition to the Board on different aspects of the Relief system. The Relief Board, however, rarely listened to the advice of anyone but Mr. Rowlands, the Relief officer.
The members of the Relief Board did not pay attention to the reports of their own investigators. Having hired ten new investigators, they invited them to report in person on the problems and difficulties of their work. The ten men reported that the cash value of the relief orders should be given with every issue, that cash should be given to allow relievers to purchase their own fruit and that the vast majority of relievers would be satisfied with a voucher system, if it could be redeemed at their own store. Additionally, they reported the quality and often the quantity of goods was poor, the diet lists used to determine quantities of food should be expanded and the water allowance was insufficient. More importantly, the investigators reported widespread resistance to signing the relief agreement which the board had decided was imperative to any relief system in the city. People were also rejecting the notion of relief as a loan that must be repaid. Feelings were so strong, the investigators reported, that pockets of organized resistance against the relief repayment agreement were gathering strength among those on relief.81

City Council found itself forced to intervene, after receiving numerous requests to do so. The culmination was a request from the Retail and Wholesale Merchants Associations for the discontinuance of the Relief store and a return to distribution of food through regular retail outlets. A joint meeting of the Relief Board and a sub committee of the
Standing Committee of City Council was called. The Civic Relief Board justified its own existence and rejected an open voucher system by saying the store ensured purchasers were confined to certain items of high food value. It also argued that the city could get lower prices than recipients because of bulk buying power of the store and that abuses, such as substitution and discounting of articles, could be eliminated. The Board also felt some store keepers would reject relief business.\(^82\) City Council representatives retired from this meeting in defeat, accepting the Board's refusal to change any aspect of the system.

In addition to demonstrating its arrogance with the City Council, ignoring the advice of its own inspectors and dismissing requests from local citizens, the Relief Board also demonstrated a lack of compassion for the relief recipients. Requests for street car tickets - to permit people to carry their issue of relief goods home - were refused. The Board stated that parcels of goods could be made up in small easy to manage sizes, that store staff were quite willing to hold any goods that could not be carried away all at once, and goods could be hauled on sleds in the winter.\(^83\) The attitude embodied in the Board's response was reflected in the handling of the various appeals which came before it. Recipients cut off relief were offered not reinstatement, but transportation back to their own municipalities.\(^84\)
The Board members, while believing they were only doing their duty, managed to alienate almost everyone, up to and including the Premier of the province. Initially, the focus of the unrest was on the services the Civic Relief Board controlled and implemented. These were the City Wood Yard, the Clothing Relief Bureau, the City Relief Store and the City Relief Butcher Shop. Over time the intensity and frequency of protests escalated. The body designed to "take the heat off" the City Council was actually generating it.

For example, the Fraternal and Protective Association of Unemployed Citizens and Taxpayers Association wrote to the City Council after an arbitrary and unheralded reduction in the food allowances, as high as 75% in some cases, that members felt they had been transferred from the protective influence of the Council to the "care of a body who have shown an undue poise towards tyranny". The Saskatoon Retail Merchants Association insisted that in 26 years it (the Merchant's Association) had always maintained the city should not enter into competition with the dealers and merchants to whom it granted licenses, and asked for the abolition of the relief store. Relief should pass through regular channels of trade.

A petition requesting that City Council hear delegations of the unemployed on the city store, the Clothing Relief Bureau and the Civic Relief Board precipitated a Public Meeting on March 6th, 1933, scheduled
for the Public Library Auditorium. So many people came out to the meeting that it had to be moved to the Canadian Legion Hall. The agenda included a request from the Retail Butcher's Association to abolish the relief store and the relief butcher store, four items from the Fraternal and Protective Unemployed Citizens Association, a petition regarding the cuts in wages and salaries, and a request from the Saskatoon District Medical Society regarding the payment of medical fees. Speaking at the meeting were representatives from the Retail Butchers Association, the Wholesalers Association, the Retail Merchants Association, the Saskatoon Landlords Association, the Fraternal and Protective Association of Unemployed Citizens and Ratepayers, and members of the Saskatoon Trades and Labour Council and the Pleasant Hill Ratepayers Association. Demonstrating the unity of opinion which had developed among these different organizations, all agreed the city had no right to establish the relief store, that it was not saving the city and its taxpayers' money, that quality and quantity of supplies were insufficient, and that the treatment accorded women and children recipients at the Clothing Relief Bureau was unjust. Many spoke about the unrest caused by the relief store, the spokesman for the Saskatoon Landlord's Association going so far as to say it was breeding communism amongst the people.
In spite of this meeting, little changed and protests continued. The Unemployed Neighbourhood Council Movement approached City Council with a list of demands including the increase of food allowances, the replacement of the Clothing Relief Bureau with a clothing voucher system, the promise of union wage rates for work performed by the unemployed, and the abolition of the relief store. The Unemployed Ex-Servicemen's Association wrote complaining about the Civic Relief Board, and arguing that a separate tribunal for hearing appeals against decisions of the Civic Relief Board was necessary.

The Westside Businessmen's Association had moved its analysis of the City's Relief situation one step further. This group wrote in June 1933 expressing the view that City Council not the relief board was elected to conduct the affairs of the city, and as a consequence, the by-law establishing the Civic Relief board should be abolished. The King George Ratepayers and Residents Association had held this view for some time:

It is not the intention of this Association to hinder in any way or criticize [sic] harshly the Council in their endeavour to settle this vexed question [i.e. the provision of relief]. At the same time it appears to our members that the responsibility for relief was not shouldered by the old council as it should have been, but was placed in the hands of other people [i.e. the Civic Relief Board], who were not given the mandate by the citizens.

This view was ultimately supported by the Premier of the Province, J.T.M. Anderson. He wrote a letter to the Mayor,
dated September 27, 1933, stating he had deliberately held up a letter from the Minister of Forests granting permission to the Saskatoon's Civic Relief Board to open a wood camp in the north of the province. He had done this because "the request should come from the City Council. The Province deals directly with Municipal bodies, i.e. the Council should be responsible for framing all policies in connection with direct relief."94

In August 1933, many of the unemployed organizations had combined into a broad based coalition as their individual efforts to achieve change appeared to be having little effect. The new group was called the Central Council on Unemployment (CCU). The organizations involved in the CCU, beyond those solely formed around unemployment, included the Canadian Legion, the Canadian Defence League, and the Nutana Welfare Association. This united front met with City Council in another public meeting, stating the organizations involved had adopted a united policy because "in the past different delegations had met with indifference and in some cases utmost contempt by the council".95 The presentation included the comment that the Civic Relief Board "appeared to be fashioned after Mussolini's Cabinet" and called for a Judicial Enquiry into the administration of relief. The various presentations also detailed the hardships faced by those on inadequate relief supplies, and the injustice caused by the way the system was run.96
In response to the pressure City Council initiated a plebiscite among the unemployed themselves, asking what kind of relief would be preferred. Held in one week of September, 1933, all relief recipients were required to show their relief identity card and vote on the same day they were assigned to pick up their relief issue. (See Appendix 4 for a photocopy of the original poster used to advertise the plebiscite). The Nutana Welfare Association, The Unemployed Ex-Serviceman's Association and the Saskatoon Workers Association were all permitted to have representatives present at the count of the votes. The results of the plebiscite were overwhelmingly in favour of a cash system for relief. (See Appendix 5 for a copy of the ballot with the results inserted).

The plebiscite was the result of a variety of lobbying tactics. These included regular delegations from individual relievers, organizations of all kinds and small business owners; an investigation by the provincial government in response to letters, petitions, and accusations of political machinations; a report criticising the relief board and its practices and a reminder from the provincial relief officer that "purchases should be through the regular channels of trade." This resistance had provoked the resignation of the relief officer, Mr. Rowlands, early in 1933. The results of the plebiscite resulted in the abandonment of the city store system and the replacement of the Civic Relief
Board with a relief appeal board in 1934. City Council introduced, as a replacement of the City Relief Store and the voucher system, a cash allowance for grocery and meat relief. Money was issued every two weeks. Recipients regained the independence to buy in bulk, at local stores of their own choice and to select and budget for themselves. The amount of money allowed was determined by the old diet scheme of the voucher and relief store system. Only milk and bread remained on the voucher system. Bread was delivered to local neighbourhood stores and milk to the doorstep. The cash system proved so effective that bread vouchers were replaced with cash the following year. Fears that Council had entertained about fiscal irresponsibility by recipients were proven groundless.

The success of the cash program for food relief encouraged demands for further changes. Dentists, doctors and retail druggists initiated similar campaigns through their own organizations and with the support of the various organizations of unemployed, to transfer medical relief onto a cash for services system. An example of the process of achieving change follows. The Westside Businessmen's Association made a request to City Council in May 1935 that prescription and medical supplies should go through the retail druggist. Council responded with a special committee to investigate practices in other western cities. Council
adopted this committee's recommendations to consider any proposal made by representatives of the city's druggists.\textsuperscript{106}

The land settlement scheme was a direct relief policy which also reflected the British inheritance of poor relief principles. The scheme was designed to save money and build character.\textsuperscript{107} With the help of the provincial and Dominion governments, Saskatoon offered a grant (to the maximum of $600) to families willing to settle at Loon Lake as homesteaders. (See Table 1.5).

\textbf{Table 1.5}
\textbf{Comparisons of Applications, Approvals and Costs}
\textbf{Farm Settlement Programme}
\textbf{City of Saskatoon, 1934 and 1935.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1934</th>
<th>1935</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Applications Received</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Applications approved &amp; settled</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Applications approved but declined</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Applications rejected</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Applications ineligible</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Applications withdrawn</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Grant. Available per family</td>
<td>$600</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$350</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cost of Settlement Programme</td>
<td>$10,275</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average cost of relief per month/ per family/ in the city</td>
<td>$24.71</td>
<td>$28.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A further loan of $100 per family was available.


In 1935, Council requested Federal and provincial governments to continue the scheme. The Dominion Government, however, refused. The provincial government offered to
contribute half of the costs, but only if the maximum grant was reduced to $350 per family. In spite of the reduced support Council continued with the scheme, even though the number of families applying dropped sharply. Given the average annual cost of supporting a family on relief in the city, it could safely be presumed that a single expenditure to resettle a family outside the city was cheaper than maintaining them indefinitely on the city's relief rolls. Some critics maintained though, that this was simply because the settlers were transferred to the relief rolls of the rural municipality.

There were financial benefits for the City Council in the scheme. The cost of supporting the 76 families who settled at Loon Lake in 1934 would have been $22,535.52 had they remained in the city. It is important to note the scheme was expected to do more than just save money, however. It was also supposed to rescue families from the stigma of relief and the associated loss of morale and initiative.

The scheme was not well thought out, or easily implemented, as can be discerned from a Star Phoenix special series on the early days of the settlement. The early settlers had moved to land sixty miles from a railroad. The settlers were generally families, with the parents beyond middle age. There had been complaints that the money was insufficient to get on one's feet. Land had to be cleared
before settlers could anticipate becoming self supporting and they required relief in the form of supplies to keep them going. No meat was handed out amongst the relief supplies: "...such abundance of rabbits and birds made it unnecessary." It seems an understatement to include the comment "Life was generally very hard."\(^{109}\)

In spite of the hardships encountered, the settlers were reported in the local media to have no regrets at leaving the city. One of the stories was entitled "Loon Lake People Happy in New Life on Frontier." The reporter concluded the series on Loon Lake by stating "During the whole tour not a single homesteader expressed himself as dissatisfied with the land ...the men who went back to the land do not regret it."\(^{110}\)

These perceptions were not generally borne out by the facts. The R.C.M.P. in Loon Lake reported to the Saskatchewan Relief Commission that people were starving.\(^{111}\) There were also a myriad of problems connected with the conception and administration of the scheme. Land had not been tested for its suitability for farming. Further, the settlers had invaded traditional hunting areas of the local native people when they were unable to feed themselves. The isolation, inexperience, and ill health of many of the settlers worsened already difficult conditions. Many of the settlers remained a relief problem. In many cases the settlers still required relief.\(^{112}\) The benefit for the
Saskatoon City Council was that the relief bill for them belonged to the rural municipality. ¹¹³

A different group which did regret, and violently, Council's money saving schemes for the unemployed were single unemployed men. As early as December 1930, Council decided to establish one central location to provide food and shelter for single men. Council did not want to run such a facility because of the fear of fire, the costs of heating and the dangers of gathering together large groups of idle men in one place. Initially, the Council's Committee on Unemployment had persuaded the Salvation Army to provide food and sleeping accommodations to unemployed men.¹¹⁴ Major M. Jaynes, the Salvation Army District Superintendent was reluctant to do this, as his organization had neither the equipment nor money to run such a service, and only agreed to do so with the financial support of Council to purchase the necessary equipment and the promise of on-going financial support.¹¹⁵ As Jaynes had stated the Salvation Army was already stretched to its utmost and could not do more without additional money and help, City Council donated $500 to allow the Salvation Army to acquire the additional equipment and help needed to run the service on a trial basis.¹¹⁶ This proposal was another example of the Council's reluctance to assume any responsibility for providing direct relief, preferring to re-direct it through voluntary community agencies as charity.
Opposition to this plan was voiced by a variety of groups and individuals and for a variety of reasons. In addition to opposition from the organizations of unemployed, the United Farmers opposed the charitable nature of the solution, and argued that such plans ignored unemployed men as an economic asset, while the Relief Officer wanted the men lodged in a camp where they could be taught a trade.\textsuperscript{117} The plan was soon abandoned, not because of opposition but because of pragmatic reasons. The numbers of single men in need of relief grew beyond the capacity of the Salvation Army to provide for them. Additionally, Council found it too expensive to continue to pay for the charitable system of rooms in the city and meals at the soup kitchen.

In order to provide relief cheaply and control what was seen as a potentially dangerous situation, an unemployment relief camp was set up at the city's exhibition grounds and run by the City. In 1932, the Civic Relief Board took over the camp and an ex-army officer took over as superintendent.\textsuperscript{118}

The change in system did not improve the situation among the Saskatoon unemployed. A list of complaints about life in the camp grew, and even the supervisor of the camp felt abandoned by other levels of government. For example, the Relief Commission neglected to respond to his requests for greater variety of food and spices. City Council refused
to assign peace officers to the camp. The camp was intended as a stop gap measure, to feed and clothe the homeless unemployed until work could be found. The camp at Saskatoon was designed for 600, it was bursting at the seams with over 1,000, and additional men were being housed in downtown hotels. Clothing shortages were also acute.\textsuperscript{119}

Frustrated with the system, unemployed and homeless men had frequently gathered to discuss their grievances at meetings. These meetings frequently changed from peaceful demonstrations into violent protests and confrontations with the police. One example was a riot in November 1932. The front page headline of the local paper, usually reserved for international and national news, declared "Heads Broken in City Riot" in two inch type. The violence was the culmination of weeks of rumours and protests at the idea of transferring unemployed men out of Saskatoon into relief camps in the bush. The men were unanimously opposed to what they termed forced labour camps. The news report of the riot displaced Gandhi and Ireland, which had been vying for the lead headline in the preceding weeks.\textsuperscript{120} The local paper carried reports of these clashes between the unemployed and the police from as early as February, 1930, when a story reported on the protest of police methods used to break up a demonstration by unemployed workers.\textsuperscript{121} In addition, there were frequently stories reporting similar occurrences from other localities.\textsuperscript{122}
Violent protests continued and in November 1932, the Provincial Government took over responsibility for the exhibition grounds camp. In 1933 P. J. Philpott, the Camp Superintendent, resigned, and the new supervisor, L.G. Woodward, designed a scheme to implement new discipline and get rid of the "reds" in the camp. The result was an escalation of protest, including a violent demonstration in which an R.C.M.P. officer was killed when his horse reared and dragged him along the ground. The exhibition grounds camp was closed in May, 1933, and all the inmates transferred to a relief camp at Dundurn, outside of Saskatoon. The protests and demonstrations ended the involvement of the city with a camp for the homeless unemployed. Single and homeless men became the responsibility of the Dominion government.

The complaints continued and only ceased with the closure of all Dominion camps. The authorities had attempted to reassure Saskatoon citizens that conditions in the Dundurn camp were not a cause for the unrest exhibited by the relief campers. For example, the Star Phoenix carried an investigative report, filed by staff who had spent several days at the camp. The stories stated that the inmates of the camp wanted work and wages, but that this was not the purpose of the camps. The camp was to provide a good home and any necessary hospitalization for the men. Lt. Colonel F.W.G. Miles, the camp superintendent, said the home
provided was probably superior to that of 50% of Canadians and any complaints were "merely the outpourings of a few reds and the vaporings of communists" and the majority of men would be content with the camp and the knowledge that 95% of them would have work next spring.\textsuperscript{125} He clearly stated that he wanted the men contented, but not satisfied, for if they were satisfied they would lose ambition. To this end, he believed the agitators were unwittingly providing a good service because they kept the drive and spirit for better things alive. He defended the occupants of the camp in general, saying many were university grads, capable clerks or skilled artisans, that is the majority were a far cry from "bums." The only faults he would admit with the camp were the lack of companionship with the "weaker sex" and the "more cultured side of life."\textsuperscript{126} 

The inmates had a far different view of the camp.\textsuperscript{127} A letter to the editor of the Star Phoenix stated that, on average, one inmate a week was taken to the mental hospital. The letter also detailed the monotony of the food and daily life, the lack of recreation and the desolation of having no hope for the future. The writer also gave examples of discrimination in food - the canned goods went to the staff - and clothing. The author finished by saying most inmates were "honest boys who well remembered the teachings of beloved parents."\textsuperscript{128}
The jobless also clashed with City Council more directly—in council chambers. The organizations of the unemployed had repeatedly approached Council with petitions, requests, delegations and complaints. A newspaper article records one of these confrontations. Early in December, 1930, the Unemployed Association had approached the Council with two resolutions. The first asked that water and light not be turned off on families unable to pay bills because they were on relief. The second read:

That in so far as the Mayor has continually stated that no one in Saskatoon should be permitted to go hungry, then we ask that Mr. Rowland be replaced by a relief officer who will carry out the Mayor's wish.

The debate on the resolutions began with a discussion regarding the eligibility of the Unemployed Association's representative, Mr. S. Forkin, to address the Council. The Mayor said he had already told Mr. Forkin he would not recognise the association, and moved that the deputation not be heard. This was opposed by Alderman Mills. He believed it was the duty of Council to listen to those who came before it. The debate continued and the paper records the Mayor's opinions of Mr. Forkin:

Mayor Hair then stated that Forkin was an agitator and his propaganda among the unemployed was retarding the proper functioning of the unemployed relief programme. He said Mr. Forkin was not able to supply any details of his recent employment and appeared to be an agitator who travelled about creating trouble where a large number of men were unemployed.
The City Commissioner, Mr. Leslie, "confirmed the remarks made by Mayor Hair and stated Forkin had been offered a job and refused to take it." Another alderman "expressed the opinion that some of the ringleaders were not working in the best interests of the unemployed." Finally, the Council allowed the deputation ten minutes to present its case.

Mr. Forkin and City Council continued to have an acrimonious relationship. In June, 1931, Mr. Forkin and eight other elected representatives addressed City Council while six to seven hundred unemployed gathered outside city hall. In their presentation the unemployed delegation demanded work for all unemployed or, failing that, a cash relief payment of $1.00 a day for every adult and 50 cents a day for every dependent. City Council minutes recorded that the name and address of every delegate was taken and the passage of the following resolution:

...that this council is fully aware of the distressed condition of many residents in this city and is willing to do everything reasonable to reduce such distress but in view of the unreasonableness of the requests made by Mr. Forkin we cannot give it [sic] any serious consideration.

The refusal to even consider requests usually emerged when Council perceived the organizations represented to be unruly. For example, the following week Council listened to representatives democratically elected to speak to Council
on behalf of a mass meeting of the unemployed. Following their presentation council decided it would no longer receive representations from "crowds, many of whom are communists."134

Council seemed to impugn the character and reputations of individuals and tried to ignore organizations the councillors did not approve of in order to avoid dealing with the complaints and problems faced by those living with the realities created by its policies. Council wanted to believe the city's relief programme was functioning efficiently, but the chorus of protest prevented this. The activities and persistence of the unemployed had an impact on the local population which also began to become more critical. City Council's relief policies for the single unemployed had not pleased anyone, yet the Council was reluctant to modify them. The solution was to avoid, as much as possible, the responsibility for the single unemployed men. The moving of men from Saskatoon to Dundurn was part of this strategy.

Families on relief, who found themselves caught in a bureaucratic nightmare, were also extremely unhappy with the Council's relief policies. On paper, Council's policies seemed reasonable. In practice, the inadequacies of the policies gave the relief officer too much power and allowed him to make arbitrary decisions.
As indicated earlier, the City Council had a relief officer, with investigative and discriminatory powers to judge who should receive relief. This was done to relieve council of the task of administering relief directly. This meant, in effect, that while the relief policy of the city provided for shelter, food, clothing, and fuel allowances, access was limited by a bureaucrat. For example, it was common for families to be denied relief for rent and told to ask their landlord to carry them until they found work. Frequently, rent relief was not granted until an eviction notice had been served.135

The new Relief Officer, Mr. G. W. Parker, appointed in 1933 by the Civic Relief Board to replace Frank Rowland, was the focus of many complaints. In 1936, a presentation to a Committee of the Council "flayed" the attitude of the relief officer, saying he had invested himself with the powers of the Council, and demanding a reprimand of the officer for his attitude and of the Council for not checking his abuse of power.136 This relief officer had very decided opinions about the unemployed, which he did not hesitate to vent. For example, in one report, he admitted slapping a reliefer across the face, and continued "only his age and size possibly prevented me from hitting this man."137 He also regularly expressed very negative opinions about reliefer organizations. In spite of the many conflicts which he caused, including one with an individual councillor, Mr.
Parker remained the city's Relief Officer for the rest of the decade.

The attitude of the relief officer caused individuals and groups to approach Council directly, yet, as seen above, appeals to Council to change policy were most effective when official organizations were involved in the proposal. In December 1930, a Home and School Association presentation, supported by both public and separate school boards, revealed the plight of malnourished children who were attending school without breakfast and, in some cases, lunch. This situation, it was stated, "had existed every year but not as great as at present." The school boards, whose medical staff reported the need, had no authority to implement any scheme to redress the situation, though private individuals had donated milk. The presentation proposed that City Council fund the provision of half-a-pint of milk every day, free of charge, to children in need. Mr. Andrew Leslie, the City Commissioner, warned that Council might not have the power to implement the scheme and expressed his fears of its affect on the deficit. Nevertheless, the proposal was accepted at a cost of $300 per month, after the city solicitor had ruled that the proposal fell within the definition of poor relief, and as such was within the powers of City Council to implement.\textsuperscript{138} Council provided milk so that "children should, at least, be physically fit to take advantage of their classes"\textsuperscript{139} and
established a special committee comprised of the two chairmen of the two school boards to administer the scheme in a bylaw naming them and assigning the authority to their committee.140

In abolishing the Civic Relief Board, City Council reclaimed the responsibility for administering relief directly. The new Relief Appeal Board was staffed solely by Councillors.141 (See Table 1.6)

Table 1.6
Relief Appeal Board, Oct. 1 - Dec. 31 1935

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appeal</th>
<th># of Appeals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>False Declaration of Earnings</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of Suspension, re: Earnings</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal to Give Relief</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications for re-instatement</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications for fuel</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applications for light and water</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total appeals heard</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Drawn from a handwritten document, C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 302, Relief Board, Misc.

This committee was extremely busy. As a consequence, serving on the committee was an arduous duty. As the table shows an average of 16 appeals were heard per meeting. The Council members rotated through a three month service on the board. The appeal process was very detailed since appeals had to be in writing, in the hands of the City Clerk before the meeting, and the meetings were long and drawn out affairs.

As with the voluntary groups before them, Council came to the conclusion that the provision of relief was beyond its capacity. Fiscally, Council lacked the resources to
provide for the material needs of the growing numbers on relief. Council members were unprepared to cope with the vociferous citizens who were becoming progressively better organized and more actively engaged in opposing local policies.

The Saskatoon City Council did respond to the increasing numbers and the growing political demands. There were, however, manifold problems with the city's approach. First, the councillors had no new answers. They were handicapped by an inability to comprehend the severity, extent and nature of the economic depression. Thus, all policies reflected the short-term and seasonal solutions which had served in other years. Secondly, concerns with balancing the budget ensured that economizing relief services became the priority. Thirdly, even though Council was compelled to abandon what was considered a superior solution to unemployment - work creation through public works projects - Council never abandoned the concomitant principles. Expecting work from relief recipients, or repayment in some form, in order to avoid instilling undesirable character traits, was still the basis for City Council's policies.

Underlying every policy, whether for direct or indirect relief, were the stringencies that Council felt were imposed by tight budgets. In 1933, with the abandonment of public work projects as relief, the city faced meeting one-third of
direct relief costs plus all the costs of medical relief and all the administrative costs of direct relief delivery. In addition to developing and administering relief policy, Council also began to issue frequent and increasingly desperate appeals to senior levels of government to assume a greater share of the costs. The city's experience rapidly showed that local authorities could not cope with a national problem.142

Council's response to this situation was to transfer the burden of relief elsewhere. Initially this was framed as a request for more financial support from upper levels of government. The city commissioner's report in 1934 had stated, quite mildly, the growing acceptance of the belief that the financial responsibility for relief was not solely a municipal problem: "No progress has been made during the past year in persuading the higher government authorities to accept a greater share of this financial burden."143 Two years later, the same commissioner was much less inclined to be conciliatory. Commissioner Leslie was far more direct on the fact the whole problem belonged to the Dominion government. He stated, "The larger urban centres throughout the country have a real grievance over the refusal of the Dominion Government to accept full responsibility for unemployment expenditure while freely admitting the problem is national in scope and nature."144 The City Council, caught between the seemingly impossible demands of the
citizenry it was supposed to serve and the realities of falling income and increasing expenditures, became increasingly frustrated with the inaction of upper levels of government.

While restricted by lack of funds and a preoccupation with balancing the budget, Council did take some creative approaches to relief efforts. While the city participated in programs such as the public works for relief or land resettlement programs, Council looked for other solutions which would cost little while maintaining dignity and independence. Free garden seeds and plots of land were assigned to relievers who applied, and crops of potatoes were planted in vacant, city owned lots. The city put a lot of effort into investigating the development of a market garden scheme (ultimately abandoned as too expensive) which included the plans for a pickling and canning factory for the produce of the market gardens.\textsuperscript{145} City Council also responded to a challenge from the Kiwanis to a baseball match, an event which raised over $200 for community social welfare projects.\textsuperscript{146} Public health services to the relief board were acquired and a free school milk program was initiated. The City Council also directed a resolution to the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association that free hospital accommodation for indigents should be provided, "looking forward to the introduction of state medicine" and
the day when no person need worry about paying for necessary health costs.\textsuperscript{147}

During this period City Council, caught between the exigencies imposed by the levels of government above it and the demands of the citizenry below, was unable to resolve the problems associated with unemployment relief. As Council became increasingly paralysed, public participation became stronger, in an attempt to influence City Council to take action. In fact local citizens participated in municipal politics to an extent never experienced before or since. (See Table 1.7)

\begin{table}
\centering
\caption{Saskatoon Voters List, Percentage Voting 1912 - 1963}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
\hline
Year & \% Voting \\
\hline
1912 - 1928 & 26\% \\
1929 - 1940 & 54\% \\
1941 - 1963 & 28\% \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textit{Drawn from: City of Saskatoon, Municipal Manual, 1963. Table of Voters List and Number Voting, Section XVIII, p.7.}

As the table shows, in the fifteen years prior to 1929 the average percentage of eligible voters on the voter's list, who actually cast votes was 26\%. In the twenty three years following the depression the average was 28\%. In the years 1929 to 1940, the average percentage of voters at each annual civic election was 54\%.\textsuperscript{148}

The table demonstrates that local people took a far greater interest in municipal politics during the depression
than at any time before or since. City Council was well aware its actions were under close public scrutiny.

Attempting to meet the values inherent in the traditional approach to relief became an impossible task. Work for relief was too expensive to implement, and changing beliefs led to rejection of the notion of minimal relief as a charitable process. The Council's attitudes began to change also, rejecting the traditional responsibility for relief provisions. Simply put, the principles which dictated the development and administration of relief policies in the city were out of step with the needs of the period. The challenge to outdated principles acting as modern day policy originated with the recipients themselves. The unemployed knew they were not charity cases, that the cause of their predicament was beyond their individual control. From this they developed a belief in their right to support from their society in troubled times that were beyond their ability to change. They pressured the Saskatoon City Council, in a variety of ways, in order to change those policies.

The activities of the unemployed, as individuals and as organizations, and the support they gained from other individuals and organizations in the community reflected the growth of shared convictions. Action was taken because the authorities were failing to act. The activities of those on relief were not revolutionary. The unemployed were not in search of political power. In most cases they were simply
expressing the demand that elected bodies meet their responsibilities and act in the manner which the voters expected. The activities of the unemployed were a spontaneous expression of popular demands, a form of practical politics.

Saskatoon City Council, reluctant to provide relief at any time, was forced by such activities to improve the material conditions of relief in significant ways, including abolishing the food store, removing unpopular relief officers, and introducing a cash scheme for relief payments. Increasingly, the suggestions and complaints made by the various organizations were investigated and frequently implemented along lines suggested by the unemployed organizations. More importantly, perhaps, while initially attempting to implement nineteenth century British principles in the delivery of relief, Saskatoon City Council reached a point when it had to abandon the belief in local responsibility for relief and the concomitant British principles. Saskatoon City Council become another voice in the growing demand that senior levels of government assume a centralized and national responsibility for relief and, simultaneously, to replace the principles of control of labour, less eligibility, moral rehabilitation, and working for relief with a centralized national scheme of unemployment insurance.


Guest, *The Emergence of Social Security*, p. 36.


in which relief policies reinforced a "family ethic" and traditional roles for women.


10 There are many examples of the same ideological lines being drawn repeatedly, with notable citizens lining up on either side. For one example, see Don Kerr and Stan Hanson. Saskatoon: The First Fifty Years (Edmonton, Alberta: NeWest Press, 1982), for their discussion on ownership of public utilities, pp. 93-95.


12 Ibid., p.216.

13 Kerr and Hanson, Saskatoon, pp. 26, 159-161.

14 City of Saskatoon (hereafter C.O.S.) Archives D500.III, Report of Relief Disbursements (309), Nov. 1929. The total relief bill for this month was $609.89. It must be noted that male unemployment was the cause of less than one-quarter of the need for relief in this month.

15 C.O.S. City Council Minutes, 1928-1932, for the reports of the Relief Officer to City Council.

16 Statistics drawn from the reports of the Relief Officer to City Council, recorded in City Council Minutes, from the week ending Oct. 5th, 1928 to week ending Jan. 11, 1932.


18 "1,800 Families on Relief List," Star-Phoenix, Jan. 7, 1932, p.3. This figure comprised of 6,791 individuals.

19 "City Relief Bill is $1,000 Daily," Star-Phoenix, Jan. 27, 1932. p.3.

20 "May Have to Slash Relief for Families," Star-Phoenix, Jan. 29, 1932, p.3.

21 Star-Phoenix, Sept. 7, 1929, p.17.


Ibid., p. 9.

Star-Phoenix, "Save Wages, Mayor Tells Unemployed," Sept. 21, 1932. p. 3.

Ibid., p. 196.

Interesting research has been undertaken on the history of working class culture and gender relations. Pat Ayers and Jan Lambertz argue that "deceit lay at the core of many successful marriages" as women strained to ensure the survival of their marriages and their households. Further, they argue that the struggle to maintain the household on low incomes was more than a struggle to provide basic necessities, it was central to marital relations. See Pat Ayers and Jan Lambertz, "Marriage Relations, Money and Domestic Violence in Working Class Liver pool, 1919-1939" in Jane Lewis, ed. Labour and Love: Women's Experience of Home and Family, 1850 - 1940 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 195-219.

Thora Wiggins, Verbal Presentation, CRIAW Conference on Women and Isolation. See also: Housewives' Association of Canada, Brief to the Royal Commission on Dominion Provincial Relations. (Toronto: 1938) and The National Council of Women of Canada, Brief on the Status of Women presented to the Royal Commission on Dominion Provincial Rights. Also, for samples of budgeting advice given to women in the media see "How to Marry on Eighteen Dollars a Week (and Like It)," Chatelaine (October, 1937), p. 77. Letters to the Family Counsellor column in Chatelaine frequently address budgeting problems. For example, "The Family Counsellor," Chatelaine, (September, 1936), p. 63.

This was true of all levels of government. See Archer, Saskatchewan, p. 219.


Ibid.

Ibid. The editorial pointed out the 1929 permit figures would establish an all time record for the city.

Drawn from various accounts in the Star-Phoenix over the fall and winter of 1929.
"Police Have More To Do As Population Increases," Star-Phoenix, Oct. 18, 1929, p. 6.

"Bank Clearings Shatter City Record," Star-Phoenix, Oct. 17, 1929, p.3. This story reported the amount of cash passing through Saskatoon banks "exceeded the marks for all time."

Star-Phoenix, Editorial, Oct. 7, 1929, p. 4. The editorial, on the employment index, claimed R. B. Bennet had a "luxuriant imagination."

See the classified advertisements for Nov. 2, 1929, p. 25. There is an advertisement worded as a warning to the unemployed. Note the similar ad from Traill B.C.

C.O.S. Archives D500.III.893, Relief - Relief to the Unemployed (378), 1929-1930. Letter from the Chief Constable to the City Clerk, Dec. 20, 1929.

Ibid., Minutes of the Relief Accommodations and Finance Committee for Dec. 23, 1929.

C.O.S. Archives D500.III.875, Letter from Mayor Hair to Mr. Molloy, Deputy Minister of Railways, Labour and Industry, Jan. 30, 1930. The city may have been additionally adamant about the "useless" nature of the work and its function as a work test because of the Provincial Government's unwillingness to fund anything they considered a cost cities would have had to undertake and pay for in the normal course of events, such as sanding streets.

"Dole" literally refers to a charitable payment of money or food to the poor. It is currently a slang term, widely used in Britain, for unemployment insurance payments.


C.O.S. D500.III.895, Relief - Unemployment Relief (370), letters and replies re Status of men employed on Relief Unemployment Projects.

Ibid. See also Lawton, "Urban Relief," p. 116. and C.O.S. Archives D.500.III.895, Report of the Special Committee on Unemployment, to Mayor and Council, Dec. 18, 1930. The special committee decided work was to be given on a basis of 1 week in four to married men with no dependents or one child, 2 weeks in four to married men with 2 to 4 dependents and 3 weeks in four for those men with more than 4 dependents. This work, on city sewers, also required
those engaged to be fit and sufficiently clad for the strenuous outdoor labour.

45 Star-Phoenix, Dec. 12, 1930, p. 3.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid. The Relief Officer also indicted Poles, for sending their earnings home, and others whose wives did not live in Saskatoon.

48 Saskatchewan Archives Board (hereafter S.A.B.) B 82, Social Welfare Conditions in the City of Saskatoon with Especial Reference to Individuals and Families in Distress, pp. 7-10. Four groups did not offer any estimate of their financial expenditures.

49 Ibid., public fund raising letter, circa Dec. 23, 1929.

50 Ibid. The original documents for the canvas of businesses provides an ad hoc survey of city business. One hundred and ninety-four employers were contacted, with number of employees ranging from 2 to 1200. Only four employers were recorded as opposed to the scheme, one stating "they [the unemployed] should be shovelling snow".

51 These organizations and their activities will be dealt with more fully in Chapter Three. They are only mentioned here to illustrate the interaction of public (City Council) with the private and charitable groups in the delivery of relief.

52 Drawn from survey carried out on behalf of the Canadian Welfare Council: A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon (Ottawa: Council House, 1937).

53 "Children Cared for at Shelter," Star Phoenix, Dec. 13, 1930, p. 7. The shelter had 59 children and 15 babies. The Children's Aid Society, which ran the shelter, were requesting donations to "brighten Christmas for the waifs."

54 Letter to the Editor, Star Phoenix. Dec. 4, 1930, p. 5. The author of the letter went on to say that the government should buy new things for those on relief, and that those on relief had contributed to society in the good years.

55 Welfare Council, A Study of Community Services in Saskatoon, pp. 18-19.

56 Ibid., p.4.
57 Ibid., p. 3. See also S.A.B. B82, Social Welfare Conditions in the City of Saskatoon with Especial Reference to Families and Individuals in Distress (Ottawa: Canadian Welfare Council, 1930).

58 Ibid., p.70. The Family Welfare Association included, as a department, the major recommendation of the 1930 Canadian Welfare Council's report -- a Social Service Exchange. The 1937 report makes it clear that the social service exchange idea had not been well understood or implemented effectively in Saskatoon. Essentially, the Social Service exchange was a register to be contributed to, and consulted by, all agencies working in the social services field in the city.

59 Ibid., p. 19.

60 Ibid.

61 Ibid.

62 Lawton, "Urban Relief," pp.128-129. See also Welfare Council, Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, pp.127 - 128 and Star-Phoenix, Jan. 4, 1932, p.3.


64 "Principle of Tag Days Approved," Star-Pheonix, Nov. 8, 1929, p. 3.


66 "Active" is defined by reports of their activities in the local paper, and by correspondence in the City Clerk's files.

67 Drawn from the correspondence of various organizations with city council over the decade, and of council with the provincial government. The residence requirement was never adequately settled. Proposed revisions to the 1936 "Act to provide for the granting of Aid or Relief under Certain Conditions" was opposed by Saskatoon City Council because it would greatly increase the relief burden of the city. See C.O.S. City Clerk's Records, File 303, 1937, Direct Relief Act and ibid., Files 308, (Relief Dept. Misc.); 309, (Relief - Transients) and others.

68 Star-Phoenix, Jan. 5, 1932, p. 3.

Initially, the Civic Relief Board had anticipated establishing their offices in the Clothing Relief space, as the Clothing Relief Bureau was expected to vacate City Hall's Basement because of stringent fire regulations associated with the insurance of the building. See C.O.S. Archives, Civic Relief Board Minutes, Oct. 21, 1932. Item 53. It is interesting to note, the Fire Insurance Company did not raise premiums on City Hall when the proposal was made to locate the Clothing Bureau in City Hall, in spite of the increased risks, because the project was only a temporary solution for a temporary problem. See C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, File 182, 1930.

C.O.S. Archives, File 305, Relief - Misc. Original Relief Application Form.

C.O.S. Archives, Civic Relief Board Minutes, Nov. 10, 1932.

C.O.S. Archives, Civic Relief Board Minutes, Dec. 21, 1932.

Ibid. See also C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 302, Minutes of the Special Sub Committee on Unemployment Relief matters, Jan, 1933.
According to the Direct Relief Agreement, this was permitted only with the permission of the Provincial Department of Municipal Affairs. The Relief Officer, on at least one occasion was reprimanded for allowing this to happen without obtaining the required permission. In this particular case, the woman, moved from Saskatoon City Hospital, later died and the city had to reimburse costs to the rural municipality, including burial expenses. See C.O.S. Archives, Relief: Misc. File 307, 1937.


Ibid. Minutes of Meeting of City Council, Civic Relief Board and members of Retail Merchants Association, Sept. 27, 1933.

Ibid. Minutes of Special meeting, Mar. 6, 1933. "Owing to the Public Library being to small and the number of people desiring to attend, the meeting adjourned to the Canadian Legion Hall." The Library subsequently sent a bill, which the City refused to pay on the grounds they had not used the auditorium.

Ibid. Agenda for Special Meeting of Mar. 6, 1933. This agenda had 15 items all told, and was distributed in advance to council members.


Ibid. Letter dated June 5, 1933. They also wanted an ex-soldier appointed to serve on the tribunal.

Ibid., Letter from Westside Businessmen's Association, June 26, 1933.


C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 301, Letter from Dr. Anderson, Provincial Premier, Sept. 27, 1933.

C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 302, Minutes of Special Meeting, August 21, 1933. Copy of presentation by the Central Council on Unemployment.
96 C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 302, Minutes of the Special Delegation's Report to Council, Aug. 21, 1933.

97 C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 308, Plebiscite Among the Unemployed. This file contains all the documents and minutes related to organizing the plebiscite, including revised drafts of the ballots.


99 Overall turnout was low, as some organizations of the unemployed had organized a boycott of the plebiscite. The total number of families receiving relief that week was 1,386. Only 371 individuals voted. Of the voters, 316 preferred cash for groceries, 301 preferred cash for meat, 237 preferred cash for bread, and 187 preferred cash for milk, to 177 who preferred the current system. C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 308, Report of the city clerk on the voting by recipients of relief on unemployment matters, Sept. 24, 1933.


101 In fact, the relief officer was forced to resign by the Relief Board, which perhaps needed a scapegoat at the time. The Relief Board justified its action to City Council which had been receiving complaints from organizations such as the Canadian Legion that the Relief Officer had not been given a fair deal. In its letter the Civic Relief Board claimed it had not fired him or asked for his resignation. It had only suggested a two month leave of absence because "he did not have the confidence of the board nor did he cooperate in carrying out its various policies as adopted from time to time by resolution." On his return from this leave, the letter stated, the matter of his continuing in the relief department or another department was open for discussion. See C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 302, letter from Relief Board to City Council, June 24, 1933, and other related correspondence, same file.

102 C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 301, City Bylaw no. 2396, A By Law of the City of Saskatoon to provide for nominating a Poor Relief Board and to provide for out-door relief for the resident poor. Passed 3 July, 1934.

103 C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, File 307. Letter from City Clerk to Fraternal and Protective Association enquiry dated Nov. 14, 1936, re basis of determining cash allowance, Nov. 28, 1936.


106 C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 303. Report of the Special Committee on Relief Prescription and Medical Supplies.

107 See C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 307 for extensive records, including applications, of this scheme.

108 City of Saskatoon, Report of the City Commissioner. 1935 p.41.


110 See also "Much Activity in Loon Lake Village," Star-Phoenix. Sept. 23, 1932, p. 6. The town of Loon Lake claimed to serve 6,500 within 15 miles.

111 D.G. Matheson, "The Saskatchewan Relief Commission" (M.A. Thesis University of Saskatchewan, 1974). In Matheson's analysis, the entire scheme was "...at best a qualified success and, in some respects a dismal failure." See his chapter VI for an excellent discussion of the Land Settlement Scheme at the provincial level.


113 Ibid.

114 The Unemployment Committee itself represents the intertwining of private and public organizations. The Ministerial Association had approached City Council to hold a Conference on the plight of unemployed single men. Council readily agreed and summoned representatives from the Kiwanis Club, the Cosmopolitan Club, the Kinsmen Club, the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, the Salvation Army, the Trades and Labour Council, the Board of Trade, the United Farmers of Canada, and a professor from the University of Saskatchewan. Also expected to attend was the Relief officer and other representatives of Council. See C.O.S. Archives, D500.III.893 (378) for copies of City Council Minutes, Dec. 16, 1929 and letter of invitation, dated Dec. 18, 1929. The recommendations of this committee were accepted by City Council and used as the basis of their relief program.

116 Ibid. See also C.O.S. Archives City Council Minutes, Dec. 23, 1929.

117 Ibid. Minutes of Meeting of City Council's Unemployment Committee with Representatives from the Ministerial Association, the Salvation Army, The Saskatoon Trades and Labour Council, the United Farmers, Cosmopolitan Club, the Kinsman Club, and the Board of Trade. At this meeting the Salvation Army pointed out the Star Phoenix Christmas Fund was undermining the base of financial support they expected from the community.


119 Matheson, "Saskatchewan Relief Commission," p. 211. The shortages of clothing plagued the Clothing Relief Bureau, prompting several re-organizations of the system. Finally, in 1936, city Council undertook an investigation into how other Cities organized their clothing relief system. A questionnaire was sent to London, Hamilton, Toronto, Fort William, Port Arthur in Ontario; Victoria and Vancouver in British Columbia; Edmonton and Calgary in Alberta and Winnipeg, Manitoba. All cities replied with vary detailed explanations including original documents used in the administration of their systems. See C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, File 78, Clothing Relief Depot.

120 Star Phoenix, Nov. 9, 1932, p.1.


122 "Police Clash with Jobless in Mill City" Star Phoenix, Dec. 13, 1930, p. 3 is another example covering a clash in Prince Albert. There were also stories from Swift Current, Moose Jaw and Regina of similar clashes over the period. Reports also covered unemployed demonstrations in Britain and the United states. See Oct. 25, 1932, p. 3 and Oct. 26, 1932 for examples.

123 It must be noted the "reds" were not necessarily communists. Anyone making political demands was likely to be labelled communist.

"Camp Conditions Found Superior to Life on Farms," Star-Phoenix, Jan. 25, 1936, p. 3.

Ibid.

One researcher goes so far as to say "the term 'concentration camp' was not completely a misnomer as it applied to the Saskatoon and Regina camps." See Matheson, "Saskatchewan Relief Commission," pp. 209-210. This term was actually used interchangeably in contemporary correspondence. For example, in correspondence with the insurance company providing coverage including cooking and smoking both the Council and the company used the term concentration camp. See C.O.S. City Clerk's Records, File 183, Exhibition Grounds.


C.O.S. Archives D500.III.895, Resolutions from the Unemployed Associations of Saskatoon, recorded in the Minutes of Dec. 8, 1930.


Ibid.

The issue of the right of people to be heard by council was finally resolved by the establishment of a second weekly meeting of the Standing Committee of Council. Delegations would not be heard at the regular Monday night meeting, unless dire emergency warranted it. Delegations speaking to the Thursday night meetings, had to apply in writing in advance, and would be given no more than ten minutes maximum to speak. See C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 30, 1930, Delegations.

C.O.S. Archives City Council Minutes, June 1, 1931.

C.O.S. Archives City Council Minutes, June 8, 1931.

Lawton, "Urban Relief." This was the rent relief policy established by the Provincial Government. Landlords were pressing City Council to change this, because of the difficulty many of them were facing in living and paying their taxes from their rental income, which was all the income many of them had.
"Leslie's Attitude Towards Jobless Flayed," Star-Phoenix. April 1, 1936, p. 3.

The reliefer was complaining about the fact the Relief officer had cut his family's meat allowance, after the Medical Officer for Health had increased his wife's milk allowance for medical reasons. He does not state whether the reliefer was bigger and younger or older and smaller than himself, though he calls both the man and his wife "parasites." C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 303 Food, Diets, etc. Report of the Relief Officer re: Complaints on Special and Extra Diets, Dec. 11, 1933.

C.O.S. City Council Minutes, Dec. 11, 1930.


C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 302, Relief Board.

City of Saskatoon, Report of the City Commissioner, 1936.


Introduction, Report of the City Commissioner, 1936.


The record does not show who actually won the game.

C.O.S Archives City Council Minutes, May 26, 1931.

City of Saskatoon, "Voter's List and Number Voting," Municipal Manual 1963, Section XVIII, p. 7. The steady rise of numbers of voters on the list was interrupted by the depression and war years, reducing numbers eligible to vote, and further emphasising increased participation. Even in the period 1972 - 1986 average participation is still only 26%. See City of Saskatoon, Municipal Manual, 1987, pp. 137 - 139.
Chapter 2: Women on Relief

Saskatoon City Council failed, like other levels of Canadian government and as the British government had for centuries, to distinguish between service and client. Relief policy, designed by men to control other men, was ill-adapted to serve the needs of mass unemployment and entirely unsuited for the women and children who made up the vast majority of recipients. The statistics for relief in Saskatchewan clearly show that, on average, over 70% of those in receipt of relief over the decade were "unemployables."¹

The women on the receiving end of relief policy and principles were not considered by the administrators of relief. In spite of this they were actively engaged in surviving and changing the terms of relief. Women on relief and those women who did not accept insufficient family wages developed a variety of strategies to make life endurable. Poverty was a fact of life and a major restriction for working class women, but it was not necessarily something that deprived women of their ability to act in the interests of themselves and their families. Maintaining the home and family was the prime concern of women on relief, as it was for women working to provide relief and help. Women's work, as volunteers, wives or mothers, or as paid workers, affected the nature of relief.
Women worked at several levels. First, women tried to manage the household so as to keep the family off relief. Secondly, women worked to improve the conditions and quantity of relief and to instil more dignity into relief services. Thirdly, women worked to change the political and economic system which they held responsible for the entire debacle of the thirties.

As the statistics show, Saskatoon was a city of women during the depression years. The population of the city had decreased very little between the period covered by the Dominion census of 1931 and the prairie census of 1936, (See Table 2.1). This was remarkable in a province which lost population over the same period.

While the 1936 census for the province records a 1.08% increase in population over 1931, this increase is far less than would have been expected from natural increase. Saskatchewan actually suffered a net loss of 158,000, through emigration, over the decade of the thirties.2

The male population in the province decreased by 3%.3 While Saskatoon's overall population remained static, the male population of the city reflected the provincial decrease more dramatically. Table 2.1 displays the population changes of the city of Saskatoon between the census of 1931 and the census of 1936.

The number of women in the city virtually remained the same, while the male population dropped by 7%. This may seem
like an insignificant amount, it must be remembered that any fall in population in a city experiencing the rapid growth which Saskatoon had in previous years actually represents a greater loss than percentages alone suggests. Migration from the city was entirely male and in certain age groups.

Table 2.1
Population, by Sex, Saskatoon, 1931 & 1936
(with percentage of totals & decreases)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1936</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pop.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43,291</td>
<td>(-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21,975</td>
<td>(50.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>21,316</td>
<td>(49.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In spite of the absence of men of marriageable age, most of the women who remained in the city reported their marital status as married. The "conjugal condition" or marital status as reported by women over fifteen years of age in Saskatoon is presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2.
Conjugal Condition of Women in Saskatoon, 1931 & 1936

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>#</th>
<th>% of 15+</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>% of 15+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 15</td>
<td>6,002</td>
<td>5,157</td>
<td>5,157</td>
<td>38.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>5,481</td>
<td>35.79</td>
<td>6,157</td>
<td>54.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>8,828</td>
<td>57.65</td>
<td>8,859</td>
<td>54.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>927</td>
<td>6.35</td>
<td>1,092</td>
<td>6.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Given</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21316</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>16156</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Over 50% of the women over 15 years old, reported themselves as married, but there is no indication whether they
were solely responsible for the care and support of the family. Given the numbers of men who left the city it is fair to assume that many of the women reported as married were temporarily the sole parent in the household and were forced on relief.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>#Fam</th>
<th>Adlt</th>
<th>Chld</th>
<th>$/Mth</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>22</th>
<th>33</th>
<th>44</th>
<th>55</th>
<th>66</th>
<th>77</th>
<th>88</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>1496</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan.</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb.</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>2253</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar.</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>3163</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr.</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>815</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>1188</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>3211</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>4770</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example, the monthly statistical report for relief in December, 1930, had husband absent in bush and husband in jail as relief categories. (See Table 2.3) Numbers on relief in the

1Recipient classed as "sick"
2Recipient classed as "aged"
3Recipient classed as "widowed"
4Recipient classed as "deserted"
5Recipient classed as "family head in jail"
6Recipient classed as "family head in bush"
7Recipient classed as "deported"
8Recipient classed as "unemployed"
categories of sick and unemployed increased during the winter months. The numbers in the aged, widowed, deserted and other categories remain relatively stable year round. These categories were mostly female.

Many of the married women in these categories of relief had watched their husbands leave the city in search of work. One woman's testimony eloquently illustrates these conditions in 1930:

...my husband for the past five weeks has been hundreds of miles from home hunting work, and still is, while I, myself, am having to sell various things to keep my young family going, of whom five are under school age, and I guess there are quite a few in the same position.

The "feminization" of the city is also apparent when age is taken into consideration. (See Table 2.4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>1931 Male (%)</th>
<th>1931 Female (%)</th>
<th>1936 Male (%)</th>
<th>1936 Female (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-14</td>
<td>6066 (14)</td>
<td>6002 (14)</td>
<td>5289 (13)</td>
<td>5157 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-34</td>
<td>7509 (17)</td>
<td>8542 (20)</td>
<td>6711 (16)</td>
<td>8797 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-54</td>
<td>6618 (15)</td>
<td>5244 (12)</td>
<td>5576 (13)</td>
<td>5319 (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+</td>
<td>1777 (04)</td>
<td>1508 (03)</td>
<td>2088 (05)</td>
<td>2040 (05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21795</td>
<td>21316</td>
<td>20421</td>
<td>21313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The 4% fall in the overall population of the city was not only accounted for solely by men, (the male population alone fell by 7%, see table 2.1) but, more specifically, by
men in the 15-54 age group who had left home to join the other thousands of men travelling the country in search of work. While the percentage rate of change may seem small, the numbers involved, in a city the size of Saskatoon, meant there was a significant loss of individuals. Even taking into account the fall in numbers of females under fifteen, there was still only an overall loss of three female citizens, while over seventeen hundred men left the city. The majority of these were in the 35-54 age group.

The absence of men in this particular age range highlights the facts of life for women during the depression years. The cycle of life many women looked forward to was disrupted. Engagements were prolonged, marriages delayed, birth rates fell, and the rate of illegitimate births rose. This latter statistic rose far in excess of the provincial rate of increase. (See Table 2.5).

The rate of illegitimate births in the province, calculated as a number per 1,000 live births, rose from an average of 8.3 in the twenties to 30.5 in 1931. Saskatoon's rate per 1000 for that same year was 56.8. The number and rate of illegitimate births had risen very slowly over the preceding decades. Table 2.5 shows that while actual numbers of births, including illegitimate births, declined in Saskatoon, the rate of illegitimate births increased dramatically in the city, much more so than for the province. The dramatic increase in the rate of illegitimate births
cannot be accounted for by the fall in overall births. That is, the number of illegitimate births also decreased, but not as much as legitimate births.

**Table 2.5.**
Illegitimate Births and Rates per thousand Live Births
Saskatoon and Saskatchewan, 1929-1933*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Saskatoon</th>
<th>Saskatchewan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#/illegit.</td>
<td>rate/1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>births</td>
<td>births</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>56.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>70.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data after 1933 was not given according to specific cities, but categorized according to urban and rural municipalities. In the generic urban centre, the rates per thousand live births were still increasing.

Source: Saskatchewan Department of Public Health Annual Reports, 1929 - 1939.

The rate might be so much higher in Saskatoon compared to the province because country girls came into town to have their babies. This happened because facilities for unwed mothers were located in Saskatoon. The increase in the rate of illegitimate babies was also due to the missing men. In normal times, the men who fathered children with single women were susceptible to pressure to marry before the baby's birth. This was true, especially if they had jobs and, as a consequence were tied to a community. In economic hard times, men were more mobile. They had less commitment to the communities they lived in and were more ready to leave to search for work
elsewhere. All these factors contributed to the fact that putative fathers were not around for marriage ceremonies after pregnancy was an established fact.

The city registered a fall in births, marriages and deaths over the decade of the thirties. It should be noted that the fall in these vital statistics was steeper than the provincial rates of decline for the same categories. In this respect Saskatoon was a microcosm of Canada at large.

The fall in the rate of births, marriages and deaths was another simple yet poignant measure of the impact of the depression locally. Prior to the depression decade, Saskatoon's population had steadily increased. The depression disrupted the steady growth of the city. The response to economic depression meant fewer marriages and fewer births. Table 2.6 shows the average number of births, marriages and deaths per year in the specified periods. The rate of natural increase through births and the number of deaths within the population all show a significant decrease in the period 1930 to 1939. An indicator of communal stability, the number of marriages, also shows a decrease. The number of deaths show the least deviation from the incremental curve, births the highest. (See Table 2.6).
Table 2.6
Births, Marriages, Deaths, City of Saskatoon
Averages per year, 1913 - 1946

Source: City of Saskatoon, Municipal Manual, 1963. Section XVII.

The fall in these vital statistics was due to the overall fall in population, particularly of men. It was also an indication of the severity of the depression. With no economic support men and women were not marrying or having children. An urban centre reflected the trend more dramatically because of its central nature; people were moving to the cities from the rural areas, and from there out of the province.

The strain and worry of separation caused by the departure of men took a toll on marriages which had been established, for men returned to children grown beyond recognition, or to responsibilities they were unable to cope with after the adventures of riding the rails. As one woman
said of her husband who had left home and family to look for work:

After he came back he wasn't the same man. He liked to drink too much. I think he was glad when the war came. And after the war he was ruined. He just went back on the road. I raised the children on my own.³

The breakdown of marriage is one more facet of the destruction wrought by the unemployment of the 1930s, affecting the structure of the family significantly, as shown in Table 2.7.

Table 2.7
Family Structure by Ages and School Status of Children, and by Gender of Family Head
Saskatoon, 1931

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Head</th>
<th>Total # Families</th>
<th>Total # Children</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>7-14</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>In Schl</th>
<th>Over</th>
<th>In Schl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>7329</td>
<td>18047</td>
<td>5139</td>
<td>6629</td>
<td>6571 (99)</td>
<td>6279</td>
<td>2627 (41)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couples</td>
<td>6272</td>
<td>15773</td>
<td>4903</td>
<td>5983</td>
<td>5936 (99)</td>
<td>4887</td>
<td>2237 (41)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male¹</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>44²</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>165 (99)</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>58 (32)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female³</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>1806</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>470 (98)</td>
<td>1134¹</td>
<td>306 (27)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The table shows that just over eighty-five percent of families with children were headed by married couples.⁹ Over eleven percent of families were headed by female single parents, and three percent by male single parents. In families with both parents forty-five percent of children were kept in school

¹Includes the census categories of wife absent, widowed, and divorced.

²No divorced men were responsible for children under 7.

³Includes census categories husband absent, widowed, divorced & single.

⁴No single females reported in this category.
after the age of fifteen years. This percentage dropped significantly when one parent was absent. Only thirty-two per cent of children over 15 with a male single parent and only twenty-seven percent of those with a female single parent were reported as still in school. The need for additional sources of family income was greater in the single parent family. Thus, children in the single parent families were even more vulnerable to an early working life and post secondary education was not an option.

It is not possible to compare this data with the 1936 census material. Data was collected in significantly different categories in the 1936 census. For example, children were recorded only in under 14 and 15 to 24 age categories with no sub-division for an "in school" category. This makes it impossible to assess percentages of "in school" children. In addition, the new category "Male heads" includes what was more correctly recorded as married couples in the 1931 dominion census. What data is available for comparison shows only minor changes in numbers but not in basic family structure. The most notable changes in numbers were the drop in the overall numbers of families and children, and a fall in the number of children recorded as "in school," due perhaps to the exclusion of children in that category after fifteen years of age.

Even before the onset of the unemployment associated with the 1930s, the family income derived from the sale of labour
in the marketplace was often inadequate for working class families. Women and their children had often found themselves seeking paid labour to contribute to the family's support. When men left their homes and the city in search of work, women were left in conditions more harsh and stark than usual. Women had participated in the paid labour force, but only sporadically, as the need for income dictated. At the same time, since the development of a paid market economy, for most women in the working class, the need for the wife and mother to work was an admission of failure. Furthermore, most jobs available in the paid labour market were insecure, low paying, and unrewarding.

During the depression the absence of husbands and the irregularity with which money came into the home drove more women to seek work, in order to avoid the greater stigma of receiving relief. Such work was not recorded in the census statistics, even though the percentage of married women reporting full time employment had risen consistently over the past decades in census reports.

Early censuses grossly under-represented the wage earning work of married women. Research in Britain has shown a more realistic approach is to consider a married woman's life time, and examine how many of these women worked full time at some point in their lives. This reflects the fact that approximately twice as many women worked full time at certain points in their lives, revealing also that the incidence of
married women working for wages was far more prevalent than realised.

The unemployment of women has also been under-reported. Many women redefined themselves as housewife when out of work. Further, many women's work was concentrated in the service sectors which suffered from underemployment in that wages and hours were cut. Men were concentrated in industries in which large scale lay offs and firings were the norm. 15

Much of the work women undertook to supplement the family income, which would not be recorded in the census in any form, comprised an informal underground economy. Women worked by providing necessary services, usually for each other, in exchange for cash or other services. Women's paid work, whether in the formal market economy or in an informal underground economy subsidized employer's low wages to their husbands, yet contributed financial support necessary for the survival of the family.

Societal pressure supported the functioning of the reserve labour market. It encouraged the entrance or exit of women from wage earning work (in the female ghetto occupations) as necessary. 16 Women could be hired in times of necessity, such as war or economic boom and easily fired at other times. Patriotism had functioned in this way during World War One, encouraging women to work while men were fighting at the front, or encouraging them to leave their jobs for the returning veterans. 17
Women served as a reserve labour force for employers, easily hired and fired, and they usually worked in non-unionized positions with little protection and few benefits. Given the priority women placed on their homes and families and the value society placed on a full time wife and mother, women's need to return from the paid labour force to the domestic front as quickly as possible dovetailed with the fluctuating demands of employers for full or part time female employment.18

Saskatoon in 1930 was no exception. With unemployment growing, there was a belief that married women were occupying jobs which rightly belonged to male bread winners. Moreover, women were seen as working for purely selfish reasons, such as "pretty frocks, which your husband would be only too glad to buy for you."19 On March 8, 193020 a letter appeared in the local paper which opened up a hornet's nest of debate for the next two and a half months.

Sir,— I notice what a lot is being said about, also being done for unemployed men in the city and province but I do not see any fuss made about the unemployed woman. How is it that women who usually earn so much less than men and who usually have far more expenses, in the case of widows or single women all alone, than the average single man, seem to be able to save enough to keep themselves out of the bread line? Of course in the past the average domestic worker was paid a suitable amount for her work and therefore was able to save a little bit. Now there seems to be a conspiracy on the part of the average employer to reduce women's wages so low they will not be able to save, so in future we shall have women on the bread line.21
The writer went on to lay part of the blame for the unemployment of women on "foreign peasant women" who were willing to take lowered wages and lowered standards of living.

The following week a letter appeared which absolved foreigners of the blame for the unemployment of women, but which blamed married women, particularly young married women, who were "robbing" the young woman of earnings which would "help out the parents should the father be out of work." It was the notion of married women, whose husbands earned money, which seemed to strike a chord. A letter of April 5, 1930 referred to a case which had been brought before the Trades and Labour Council by a mother whose educated and unmarried daughter could not find work "owing very largely to the usurpation of married women" of the labour market.

The young married woman is not altogether to blame. She would doubtless prefer living in a flat to emptying daily ashes from the domestic stove or furnace in her modern home if she had one and the supernumerous tasks that occupy a house wife in a city home. The present trend of most young married couples is not to create a home and rear a child or two, but to escape obligations as far as possible.

This writer went on to say "the ones who are to blame" were those who encouraged this - the employers. All employers should question married female employees regarding the earnings of their husbands, and if the husband earned $100 a month or more, the woman should not be employed, as "one hundred dollars a month in the hands of a capable married woman can support a comfortable home of middle class standard."
"Lady Citizen" wrote to support this view as she, too, was concerned about local single girls:

Sir,

In the face of such hard times and unemployment as exists in Saskatoon at the present time I think it only fair and just that steps should be taken to remedy the conditions as far as possible. Why do firms in our city employ married women whose husbands have good positions? It's a shame and a disgrace that this condition exists here. Is there no way to compel married women to give over and give the girls a chance to make a living? Single girls have been thrown out of employment and married women kept where firms have found it necessary to cut the staff down. This is a gross injustice.

The letter writer went on to say that a law should be passed to prevent this.

The author also talked of the injustice of contractors giving work to outsiders, so that men could not get the work formerly available. She argued that single girls who were not local should go home and help their mothers. This letter reflects the common attitudes of the time. People believed relief measures should only take care of their "own." Others should return to whence they came from. This was the spirit of the sixteenth century English poor laws. Further, there was a tendency to blame married women for unemployment. If they would give up their jobs there would be work for everyone who wanted it. Married women did not have any right to paid employment.

While subsequent letter writers continued to support this view many wrote to defend the right of married women to work, taking two very different approaches.
on practical necessity. Good positions notwithstanding, the income of married men was inadequate to provide adequately for the family, especially larger sized ones. One respondent was moved to detail a basic budget. The budget presented by the letter writer is a valuable insight into the actual financial demands facing the average working class woman. Care with the family budget and knowing where every penny went were considered the signs of a good household manager. Given the financial insecurity facing most working class households, it was clearly a necessary skill.

Take a family of four at $1,200 per year at the following figures and living in Saskatoon:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent (five roomed unmodern house)..........</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
<td>$360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light, including ironing...................</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal and Wood for winter &amp; summer..........</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groceries and Meat.........................</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread and Milk................................</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, by the barrel.......................</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street car fare to and from work..........</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper (Star-Phoenix)...................</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Insurance, $1,000 policy.............</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Insurance, $2,000.....................</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical education, $1.50 lessons for 2...</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This leaves a figure of $49 a year for doctor and drugs, dentist, clothes, bedding, school, music books, Red Cross and other small donations. This allows nothing for loss of earnings through sickness and subsequent loss of work, for renewal of furniture, no places of amusement or holidays away from home because of the cost of travel.

The writer continued to say that this budget was not a theoretical suggestion, but one she had tried to make work for years. She also pointed out that if "some of the wives did not help to keep a roof over their heads and their
children supplied with vitamins[sic] A, B and C, the city would have their relief department working day and night and the debt court filled to overflowing." The defence of a married women's right to work rested on her family's need for her earnings.

Letters carried in succeeding weeks strayed from the original discussion of unemployed women. The defence of a married women's right to work, the cost of living, and budgets to match it, became the focus of letters. "One Who Has Also Tried" wrote in and argued with the budget outline; musical education for two children, for example, was a luxury. A four roomed house was sufficient. The husband could walk to work. It would be good for his health and the budget. The fire could be allowed to die around noon during the summer and started again just before supper. Ironing could be done in the mornings while the fire was at its height. The response to this restricted budget was further analysis and debate, and a rejection of the lifestyle inherent in the more restricted budget.

The second defense of the right of married women to paid work was more liberal:

But why in a free country should married women be debarred from helping to maintain their homes? "Lady Citizen" is evidently jealous of some neighbour woman who would not prefer to call herself by the aristocratic title "lady." There are lots of homes with good sized families where the earnings of the father are insufficient to fill all the hungry mouths. I say then, all honour to the mother who, usually at great sacrifice, is willing to go out and take positions involving hardship and drudgery, positions many of the complaining girls would not demean themselves to accept.
This author had a very critical view of what he considered elitism. He continued: "Lady Citizen" had better use her time, such as she can spare from bridge and golf, for the advocacy of a better cause, and leave the good, honest hard-working woman to enter the lists". While supporting the view that women were free to pursue paid work if they chose, the writer's sympathies were with the married woman who needed work.

This debate, raging in the local paper, was only a reflection of a similar debate occurring at the national level. For example, a story carried in the local paper reported a protest against the University of Toronto's decision not to employ married women whose husbands were employed. The protest had identified this as a reactionary position.

Much of the debate in defence of women's right to work was well reasoned and articulate. For example, Helen Gregory MacGill, a Judge in the Juvenile Court, and a member of the Minimum Wage Board in British Columbia, wrote an insightful article on the plight of working women. She discussed seasonal employment since most employment for women was in industries with high demand for workers at only certain times of the year. Such seasonal work was also stressful. It involved rush periods with long exhausting hours and slack periods with complete shut downs. This prevented women from saving for periods without work, sickness and retirement.
MacGill also addressed equal pay for equal work, pointing out that women could be hired for the same work as men, but at lower wage scales. Women made, on average, only forty to fifty percent of the wages men made. One of the byproducts of the unemployment created by the depression, she noted, was that women and their children found it easier to obtain work than the men, and consequently took "ill-paid, unskilled work in the hope that their combined wages will feed the family."33

She indicted the failure of unions to protect women workers and pointed out the problems of women who did belong to unions. She described how the "double day" affected women's participation in unions. She also pointed out the reality that women who had to provide for dependants with their earnings, arguing against the myth that women worked only for pin money and did not really need their jobs.

MacGill also made a scathing attack on the government's lack of consideration for the woman who was out of work. As she pointed out, little governmental attention was given to the problems facing unemployed women: "an unemployment conference does its whole duty...when it discusses the difficulties and seeks the relief of workless men."34 MacGill pointed out that there were ideas that women were in industry for only a short period, or for pin money, or had no dependents, or could never be really unemployed because there was always housework. These ideas obscured "the fact that
thousands of women [were] directly involved in the unemployment problem." As Canada had no accurate statistics she used American statistics which showed that one in five wage earners was female and one out of every five women worked.

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCW) had statistical facts from the Canadian situation to support MacGill's arguments. The structure of the organization and its membership it was ideally placed to inquire into the lives and conditions of women in Canada. In 1929 the National Council had carried out a survey of married women in industry. The results showed the majority of married women worked because they had to. (See Table 2.8).

**Table 2.8**

*Employment of Married Women, Toronto, 1929*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Sample = 300 married women working outside the home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70%</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Husband Employed</th>
<th>Dependent Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>**= Married</td>
<td>**= Yes</td>
<td>**= Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= Other</td>
<td>= No</td>
<td>= No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The reasons given for working were support of themselves or others (including their own mothers) or meeting liabilities such as children's education medical bills or payments on the home.\textsuperscript{36} The graph in Table 2.8, drawn from the results of this survey clearly indicate women's need for paid employment did not diminish after marriage. The graph shows the answers to three major questions in the survey. Of the three hundred married working women surveyed, seventy-nine percent had husbands still living with them, twenty one percent had been widowed, deserted or were separated. Only fifty-four percent of the sample had husbands with steady employment. A further twenty-six percent had husbands who suffered from uncertain employment. Fifty-seven percent of the sample had dependent children. Thirty-eight percent had no dependent children.

The survey included other questions. The women were asked how long they intended to continue working. Forty percent of the respondents had definite time limits to their working lives: "until husband re-established in business" or "until children are educated" or "until doctor's bills are paid off". Forty-seven percent believed they would work "indefinitely" or "always". The remainder preferred "work to bridge and social calls" and were "more contented" working or would work "as long as was able".\textsuperscript{37} In addition women cited sick husbands, unemployed husbands, seasonal employment of husband, building of retirement savings or other financial difficulties as motivating factors in their choice to work. It must be noted
that these results were obtained for the 1929 Annual General Meeting of the NCW, held in late May that year. That is, before the onset of the depression. Women worked, even in the "boom" periods, from necessity.

In spite of the eloquence of women such as MacGill, or the work of organizations such as the NCW, the attitude towards married women working, indeed any woman working, did not improve the understanding of women's right, or need, to work. In 1933, an article entitled "Go Home, Young Woman!" by a former member of the Quebec Legislature, advocated the return of all women to the home. He saw "the largest potential for the employment of men" in "the places at desks, counters and machines now occupied by women." Medric Martin argued every woman should hand over her job to her nearest unemployed male relative. This was a patriotic duty, no less than the call to work had been during World War 1. This article, published in Chatelaine, aroused a storm of protest. Agnes MacPhail, Canada's first female M.P. responded the following month with an article, "Go Home, Young Woman, Ha! Ha!." She identified Martin's proposal as "deliberately sacrificing the talents, ambitions, freedoms and happiness of women in order to mend (as he believes) the broken down economic machine." She challenged the right of any person to assume women did not possess the same rights to develop their potential as men, and the belief that one sex should be condemned to one groove, regardless of talents or skills
possessed, because of sex alone. She also pointed out the problem of unemployment was complex, and solutions to unemployment were not to be found along the "fantastic pathways" suggested by Martin:

> When we honestly plan to distribute the real wealth of the world and not juggle with food, shelter and clothing for profits we shall find a means for setting all to work to produce that which they will all consume. That should be the only end and aim of an enlightened economy.\(^{40}\)

Readers of the magazine also rejected Martin's ideas. Women worked from "sheer, stark necessity", and would welcome alternative employment from the factories and shops, work that was "constructive, creative and progressive."\(^{41}\) As one reader pointed out, all it would take is for "the men to examine the women's pay slips" they would receive were men to take over women's jobs. this would "provoke general strikes for living wages".\(^{42}\)

The debate continued at the local level on the Letter Box page, with as many as four letters each week (the letters to the editor appeared only on Saturdays), addressing the issues raised. These letters reveal many of the common attitudes towards working women and their duties. They also reveal many details about the daily work of the housewife. Given the amount of work facing the average working class housewife, (the survey by the NCW in 1929 had shown that 65% of the respondents had responsibility for the housework after paid working hours) it is not surprising women were reluctant to take paid work.
The nature of the paid market place was such that women found that wage work, even when they were willing to take it, was not always available, even in economically prosperous times, and was even harder to find in the thirties.\textsuperscript{43} Even work commonly considered as suitable for women was reduced. For example, teaching was widely considered a suitable job for a woman and the expansion of the school system associated with the rapid population growth of Saskatoon had ensured employment for women in this field. Yet the number of positions fell over the depression decade.

From the beginning of the century until the 1930s there were rapid and sustained increases in the school system. In 1902 the elementary school had 2 teachers and 112 pupils. By 1929 there were 170 teachers and over 7,000 pupils.\textsuperscript{44} However, the number of teachers in the school system declined from a high of 296 in 1932 to 278 in 1939, that is, just over 7\% of the teaching force. Numbers of children enrolled in the school system also fell from a high of 10,639 in 1932 to 9,532 in 1939.\textsuperscript{45}

Teaching was considered a suitable job only for single women. When they married, women were not permitted to teach. Possibly this was because they might become pregnant, and this was not considered suitable for pupils to see.\textsuperscript{46} Mrs. Ledingham, a teacher in a one room school house during the thirties, stated long engagements were "very common among teachers, as well as other professions," because
...once you were a married women you were just asked to leave your profession. And I can remember very vividly getting my ring on Valentine's day, and being down in the school board office, and the superintendent saying 'So you're going to leave us in June', and I said 'I would like to teach' and he said 'that's a no-no', and that was it.  

She also pointed out with the onset of war, they "forgot about their regulation about married women" and married women teachers returned to teaching.

The other female occupations were also suffering contractions. In 1930, the Trades and Professions Committee of the NCW reported staff reductions, salary cuts and unemployment on the increase for women in industry. Further, the committee reported a decline in openings across Canada: the highest decline, 57.8% reported from Calgary, the lowest decline, 32% reported from Victoria. Yet the need for money, which motivated many women to seek paid labour, was increasing with the depression.

Extensive research in Great Britain has shown that women in the working class adopted a variety of creative strategies to combat starvation and poverty. Poor wages, unemployment, seasonal employment, desertion, widowhood, were conditions which ensured women have always had to undertake more than simply the duties of wife and mother. The common notion of a "private" and a "public" sphere of work has not done full justice to an examination of women's work, because so many of these strategies to acquire income have fallen into an ambiguous realm which was sometimes neither. The formal and
public economic world of women's paid work has been well examined. The private and personal unpaid work within the family is under investigation. But the informal and private economy, a world separate from both of these, in which many women participate in an exchange of labour and services, has not been considered. In addition, the myth of woman's dependency masked the very real value her labour power had to her family. This was often revealed by the tension and stress evoked by conflicting demands made by her family of birth versus her family by marriage. The argument developed in this thesis leaves aside completely the value of the unwaged reproductive and caring labour of women within the family. That it exists, and is of immense value and service to a capitalist economy is accepted as a given for the purposes of this work.

In order to reconcile competing demands, and to contribute to the family's survival, women had developed an underground economy. The types of labour and services which constituted the informal economic system were services to which women themselves had easy and skilled access, such as providing board and lodging, child minding, laundry and cleaning services, in-home hair styling, sewing or dressmaking, cooking (pies and other goods). Such services would be used by other women because of the ease of accessibility, the relative cheapness of the goods and the convenience offered. For example, food cooked by other women,
such as pies, cakes, baked hams, in an era before the widespread use of convenience foods, would have been very useful. Which direction a woman's participation went depended upon the resources available to her, such as the extra room for a lodger, the tools for laundry services, skills and equipment for dressmaking. Part time work was preferable to full time, and in-home to outside work as, in general, women looked forward to the time when they could afford not to work and thus could conform to middle class ideals and expectations of the full time wife and mother. Liberation for working class women was not the freedom to work, but freedom from work; women worked because of economic necessity, not from choice. Once the family income was sufficient, reducing the amount of hours in work was the priority. A wife and mother at home full time was an indication of the economic stability and prosperity of the family and the ambition of most working class women. Given the stresses and strains associated with the "double day" and the lack of support from either society or from the family in meeting the demands of two jobs, this is hardly surprising.

There is no reason to believe this was different in Saskatoon. Working class women wanted the freedom to devote all their time and energy to the care of the household, a demanding and full time job on its own. Yet the inability of men to provide sufficient income for even a basic standard of
living ensured that women were compelled to find ways to supplement the family income. 58

Working class women subscribed to the middle class vision of wife and mother as both central to the family and as the primary role and function of woman. A woman's role in a working class family was one of equality with the male within a partnership, and there was enough work to make the role a full time and demanding task. The problem for working class women was that reality interfered with making the vision a reality. Money was insufficient most of the time to meet the needs of even a minimum standard of living. Housing conditions were abominable. Husbands were out of work, or in low paid and insecure work, or were poor marriage partners. This was reality for most working class women, a reality that was not reflected in the media, or glorified as an ideal. Women lived with this incongruence in isolation, trying to match their lives with the standards they had been raised to believe were the norm.

Thus, a number of women had always struggled with providing for the family, in the absence of the traditional "breadwinner." By 1937, for example, approximately 150 families were supported by Mother's Allowances which were entirely inadequate to support the family. The allowances provided nothing for mother or home, only $8.00 for one child per month and $4.00 per month for each additional child. These women were also compelled to either "labour long and arduous
hours outside the home to the neglect of her children" or seek relief.  

The demands of poverty precipitated the need to find extra income, preferably through casual and temporary part time work. But not every woman could have found sufficient, if any, extra sources of income through the paid labour market in Saskatoon.

Women found other ways to supplement the family income. There are suggestions of the lengths to which women went to provide for their families. The classified advertisements offer insight into the types of work women undertook in Saskatoon. Lodgings were offered. Marcel's, a special kind of wave applied to the hair with curling irons, were offered in women's homes. Reliable cleaning services, spring cleaning, domestic help, child minding, bed and breakfast, prepared foods (baked hams, pies, and other ready made foods) were other services which women offered to generate income.

Other stories in the Star-Phoenix covered the other hardships women had to face: suicide, abandoned babies, murders, suggest the depth of despair to which some women were driven by the conditions of their lives. For example, a one month old baby boy was offered for adoption through the classified advertisements. A story in the newspaper reported the finding of a newborn baby, abandoned in a back alley behind Temperance Street.
Small animal husbandry was often another source of income and food for the family undertaken by women, but it was not always easy. One unfortunate woman had her flock of chickens stolen not once, but twice. After the police found and returned all of them after the first theft, they were stolen a second time. She was not so lucky the second time since when the police returned them after the second theft, half the flock was missing.\textsuperscript{62} Women often found their washing stolen from the clothes line.\textsuperscript{63} Bawdy houses were in the news, mostly for the scandalous nature of the "goings-on." City Council received complaints about "these houses of ill-fame" and about "bootlegging joints," which were often run by women, along with complaints of abuse in the relief system. These complaints were often anonymous and, as a result, Council refused to act.\textsuperscript{64} All of these stories detail the additional difficulties and stresses women faced as they struggled to contribute to the family income.

There are also suggestions that women were prepared to organize themselves for their own mutual benefit. For example, one woman recalled working in the Saskatoon Eaton's store during the depression:

There were six of us working in the dress department, and we all worked a six day week. Then they said they would have to let one of us go. We didn't want that to happen, so the six of us got together, and we worked it so we all worked, but we only worked five days a week. We couldn't see one of us lose her job entirely,\textsuperscript{65} better a bit for us all, than none for one of us.
There were also individual women who were feared for their assertiveness in acting on local conditions. For example, another woman recalled that some teachers were feared: They would "come to your home and just take clothes to give out" in their schoolrooms to needy families. These teachers believed they saw more of what was happening in the community through what they could see in their pupils.\(^66\)

Protests against City Council's policies were not solely the prerogative of the men on relief. When a man received relief, his entire family became "relievers." Women joined in the litany of petitions to Council, usually addressing issues which related to the home: for example, clothing for children, or the renewal of household objects such as pots and pans, or lino (oil cloth). The Women's Section of the Saskatoon Unemployed Association, for example, led delegations to oppose the establishment of the relief store, predicting it would mean the discharge of store clerks and the closing of some independent stores. They also argued that it infringed upon the rights of the relief recipient to shop where they could secure the best bargains, that substitutions (seen by Council as an abuse of the system), should be allowed in the interests of the health of the family and that the range of articles the store proposed was not wide enough.\(^67\)

Women also took direct action when the necessity arose. An example of this kind of protest occurred in November 1932. The Civic Relief Board, which administered relief, intended
to introduce a relief agreement that every person and family applying for, or on, relief was compelled to sign. (See Appendix 6 for the full text of the agreement). The agreement, among other things, gave the city the right to enter a person's home at any time, and required the repayment of any sums "loaned" (that is; the value of any relief) whenever the city requested, the amount owed to be determined by the city.

These two clauses in particular angered people on relief. The clause regarding entering at will was described as violating the sanctity of the home, and the clause on repayment was considered an insult to the honesty of those on relief, who argued that they had every intention of repaying. They were not "bums" they said, but they did need to be able to determine fair repayment schedules with the city. Further, two-thirds of the relief came from other levels of government which were not demanding repayment. Council was accused of trying to recoup money it had not spent.

The concept of relief as a loan rather that a right an individual could expect, was officially formulated in the agreement. The agreement itself was incorporated into the Relief Application form, an lengthy four page document. (See Appendix 3 for a reduced copy of this form). It was a concept that was violently opposed.

The Relief Officer, Mr. Frank Rowland, was reported in the press as expecting no trouble with the requirement to sign
the agreement. Yet in November, 1932, fifty families refused to sign the agreement and were cut off relief immediately. Subsequently, thirty women and their children "took up residence in City Council chambers" where "it was warm and where the city would be compelled to feed them." This was a declaration of relief as a right, and a rejection of the notion of relief as a loan.

This was Saskatoon's first sit down strike. The furore their occupation caused was remarkable in that, according to media coverage, local people were generally supportive of the women. Local restaurants sent in food, and other organizations collected supplies for the women. Police surrounded city hall in order to prevent others from joining the protest, and to prevent the supplies, such as mattresses and bedding, from being sent in to the protesters. The local Trades and Labour Council (TLC) and representatives from other local groups were also on the scene. A confrontation threatened when the police refused to let blankets and food in to the women as the evening wore on. As the stand off around City Hall continued, negotiations between the TLC and Council began. The City Council did not want to agree to the women's demand that the relief agreement be withdrawn.

The women stayed in the chambers for almost 48 hours. They did not get the relief agreement withdrawn, as had been their objective, but Council did agree to attach a
supplementary letter lessening the harsh conditions of the agreement, embodied as a resolution:

The City Council go on record that no person liable for relief will be asked to repay any relief given or relief for which that person is liable until a period of four months has elapsed since he or she went off relief and further that the maximum amount of repayment required will not exceed ten percent of the salary or wages earned in any one month...It is further provided that in case any portion of monies paid out for relief is paid to the city by the Dominion or Provincial Governments and for which the City is under no obligation to repay, the proper proportion shall be deducted from the total relief for which that person is liable.75

The women explained that they did not object to repaying relief, but they had to have some say in how and when that happened. Re-working the system to accommodate the change accepted by City Council took months of wrangling between Council and the Civic Relief Board. Finally, a milder version of the agreement, called an "undertaking" was imposed on the Civic Relief Board by Council and a by-law rescinding any agreements previously entered into was passed in November, 1933, exactly one year later.76 Essentially, though, the women won their objective, for the relief agreement fell into disuse. It had been discredited.77

Furthermore, general opinion about the purpose and use of the agreement was severely critical. An editorial in the Star-Phoenix stated that the requirement to sign or be cut off was close to blackmail, and while disapproving of the method the women had chosen for their protest, supported their aims and analyzed the agreement in a negative fashion.78
As civic elections were due to be held in the weeks following the occupation of city hall, charges that political motivations were at the root of the city hall action were levelled by the incumbent politicians. The women's charges, however, as reported by the newspaper, were concrete and direct, and addressed the many shortcomings of the city's relief programme. While their action was a political act, it had specific and short term goals; disrupting or affecting the elections was not one of the objectives.

The major objective was to criticise and bring to public notice the nature of the relief agreement, and the harsh reality of relief conditions. The women felt they were receiving second class goods, such as butter that smelt strongly of fish. They also believed that somebody was making a profit out of their misery. As seen above, this was the case: the city turned a profit on the operation of the relief store. Moreover, they argued that they could barely keep their families warm and fed on what the relief system allowed.

Studies in other cities showed the women's views were justified. Nutritional requirements provided for by relief budgets were below the minimum required for the long term maintenance of health. A study of relief services in Saskatoon argued "the diet schedules given to relief recipients in Saskatoon could be substantially improved" and recommended consultation with the "Inter-Provincial Nutrition Advisory Committee", a group comprised of the directors from
the household science departments at the Universities of Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta. The provisions allowed by the relief department in Saskatoon by 1937 were as described in Table 2.9. Some of the provisions were considered loans or advances. For example, the cost of the light and water supplied by the city departments were carried as debts by the city and repaid by the labour of household heads in lieu of cash. (See Table 2.9)

Table 2.9
Saskatoon Relief Provisions, 1937

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOUCHERS:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fuel:</td>
<td>On inspection, requirements estimated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summer: 1/2 cord wood or kindling every 3 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Winter: 1 cord wood every 3 mths for cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light:</td>
<td>$1.50/mth where there are school age children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1.00/mth where children are not of school age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water:</td>
<td>$1.00/mth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil:</td>
<td>1 gal. Coal oil (increased in times of sickness or for very large families).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk:</td>
<td>4 pints per week per adult or person over 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASH PAYMENTS:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food:</td>
<td>1 adult $6.93/mth; 1 adult &amp; 1 dependent $10.72/mth;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 adult &amp; 2 dependents from $10.94-$11.70; 1 adult &amp; 3 dependents $13.22-$15.70. Scale for dependents determined by age.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drawn from: A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, pp.9-10.

All provisions recorded in the table were judged "reasonably adequate" and in line with what other Canadian cities of comparable size were providing. The women on relief in Saskatoon found them neither reasonable nor adequate.

Given the failure of the official relief system to provide adequately, women found many other ways of
supplementing or stretching the relief in order to make ends meet, some of which -if discovered - could have disqualified the family from any relief support. Before relief was delivered in cash, many women made arrangements with their local shopkeepers. Under these agreements, the shopkeeper would not fill all the quota of goods as specified on the front of the voucher. The housewife could then purchase small necessaries not permitted, such as matches, sewing thread, candles, to a value agreed upon by both. The shopkeeper would make a small profit from the difference between the value of all goods he had sold, and the greater value accorded to the voucher by the city. The housewife had access to goods she had no cash to purchase.85

Arrangements such as these led to the frequent charges of "abusing the system" before Council. As seen in chapter one, changes to the system were attempts to control "abuses" such as these, rather than to improve relief conditions. It took three years of protests, delegations, petitions and provincial intervention before the City Council was persuaded to use a cash system and actually trust the women on relief with money. With cash, women were able to purchase in bulk, and effect other budgeting strategies to stretch the money to the limit.

Recipients continued to press Council to increase the amount of relief granted. This was something City Council consistently refused to do, even on the occasion of the King's
Jubilee celebrations, when relievers asked for temporary increases to allow relievers to share in seasonal or special celebrations.\textsuperscript{86} For example, one year the Central Council on Unemployment had approached City Council with a proposal for a voucher of $5 for every family on relief, so they could celebrate Christmas. Council responded with a special committee designated to meet with the Civic Relief Board. This joint committee came up with the idea of "nice light fruit cake." A local baker offered a sample of a cake he was willing to provide at 15 cents a pound, including several hundred pounds free as his contribution to the relief recipient's Christmas. The joint committee refused his offer. The committee asked him produce a better quality fruit cake at the same price.\textsuperscript{87} In subsequent years the Council granted a 25 cent per person allowance at Christmas.

Women resorted to other strategies. Many of these strategies were considered abusive of the relief system. Such illegal strategies worked because the relief system was so grossly overburdened. The survey of community services undertaken in 1936 for the Family Welfare Association spelled out the actual conditions within the relief department. The cost of even the minimal relief provided by the city was prohibitive, which ensured cost cutting measures. In 1929 municipal relief in Saskatoon cost City Council $16,660. In 1936 the costs, shared by local and other levels of government had risen to $646,505. The city's share of this was $136,735.
In 1937 this had risen to an overall cost of $691,697, of which the city paid $146,293. None of these figures include debenture charges.\textsuperscript{88}

One of the cost cutting measures was keeping relief department staff quotas low. The relief department was administered by the city relief officer, with a male staff of fifteen. Only three or four of these staff were engaged in outside visiting work, the rest worked in accounting, and other administrative duties. In February 1937, 1,381 families and 294 individuals (235 men and 59 women) were on the relief rolls; that is, a total of over 400 families per investigating worker. According to the report, 125 families per investigator would permit only supervision; no real support or rehabilitation work could be undertaken. In an attempt to hold costs down, Saskatoon's ratios were far greater than this. While the administrative costs of the relief budget were only 3% of the reported costs for 1937, the report argued this was a "deceptive economy."\textsuperscript{89} Under these conditions, relief was not well developed or supervised and was ineffective as a rehabilitation mechanism.

The relief system was "unfriendly." Water tickets, for $1.00 per month, were issued in the winter, but this relief service was "almost entirely discontinued"\textsuperscript{90} in the summer. During the summer, women were expected to use the free water taps, regardless of the distance involved. A neighbour wrote to Council describing the plight of one women who was living
on relief in appalling conditions,91 The woman's husband had been in hospital "for over two weeks with little hope of him coming out soon." She herself was in poor health. She had five children, the oldest seven years, the youngest two months. She had to arrange to bring her relief groceries home herself. All the water necessary for cooking and washing she had to carry over a block - in January. Her situation was very difficult. The writer pointed out that relief officials were investigating people on relief, and "it was high time this case" was looked after.92

An investigation by the relief officer paid more attention to the fact that the woman in the case had never picked up her own groceries. However, he described the living conditions of her family as "practically indescribable [sic] filth and squalor. The roof leaks from the melting snow, and the shack has apparently been built from scrap lumber". He went on to suggest an investigation by the health department.93 The Public Health Department supported all the original allegations, and added the fact that the baby of the family was in poor health.94

The relief officer was hardly sympathetic to the plight of women on relief. The Fraternal and Protective Association had written to Council about the fact that single women with dependents were required to visit the City's Relief office daily to sign on for work. Council in turn had requested a complete report on this from the relief officer. His three
page, single spaced response argued that while this was the practice it was justified because it only affected a small number of women and was done for specific reasons. The remainder of his letter was a diatribe. He claimed the female secretary of the organization was an avowed communist who belonged in an internment camp. The group itself was "largely comprised of Communists, Nazis and Fascists" who were engaged in "vieing [sic] for supremacy" within the organization. Furthermore, he was of the opinion that "it is not in the best interest of the City of Saskatoon to divulge any information regarding relief matters, or in fact, any other matters, to the Fraternal and Protective Organization or any other organization of such calibre". The organization at this point was affiliated with the Saskatoon Trades and Labour Council, and was properly incorporated with the provincial government. This group had also filed a copy of its constitution with City Council, and was proud of its legal and respectable status.

The Relief Officer embodied many of the notions of sixteenth century British relief principles. He believed too many of the relief recipients had only one aim, to retire on relief. He believed he lowered the relief rolls by issuing work cards. The higher the number of hours, the greater the tendency for the person to go off relief: "an increased work card is effective in removing the relief recipient from the relief rolls". More hours were assigned to those who did not have good work records or were not local Canadian citizens.
The Relief Officer was generally unpopular with City Council. His reports were often written with a sarcastic tone. He often pointed out that the policies he interpreted and applied were those developed by Council. There was one instance of outright animosity between the relief officer and a city councillor. Furthermore, he was frequently reported to be rude to relief recipients because they did not pay taxes and generally shirked their responsibilities as citizens. Yet, he had neglected to pay a portion of his own income tax in 1932, and the tax collector, had written to the City Clerk threatening to garnishee his wages in order to collect this sum.

While some progress was made in bringing changes, other aspects of the relief system had been challenged without success. The system did not allow for any major purchases. As the years of the depression passed, articles such as furniture, pots and pans, all reached the point of needing replacement. Yet relief was only designed as an interim measure, a stop gap. Replacement of necessary items for the family's daily life was not considered part of relief.

The clothing relief system also left much to be desired. The Clothing Relief Bureau, initially run by a coalition of service clubs, was dependent on charity to stock its supplies with second hand and cast off goods, and had proven unequal to the task of meeting the demand for clothes. Under pressure the city supplemented the service club operation with a $200
a month grant. This was still inadequate. The Fraternal and Protective Association of Unemployed Citizens and Taxpayers reported a conversation overheard at the Clothing Relief Bureau:

| Question: Any Mitts? | Answer: No. |
| Question: Any suits?  | Answer: No. |
| Question: Any pants?  | Answer: No. |
| Question: Any house dresses? | Answer: No. |
| Question: Any winter caps? | Answer: No. |

The group continued to point out that the material on hand would "indicate poor judgement on the part of donors" as the majority of articles were "fit only for furnace fuel".

Later, the Fraternal and Protective Association reported it had been made aware of the fact that the Clothing Relief Bureau was run without any monetary support from the Municipal, Provincial or Federal Governments, in which case it admitted "the Clothing Relief Bureau cannot do much more than they [sic] have been doing, but at the same time we submit that their limited activities are not by any means coping with the situation".

Council had to agree and took over the operation of the Bureau, renaming it the Clothing Relief Depot. This depot ran to over $2000 a month in expenditures, and on occasion reported this would be insufficient. Charity remained part of the system. Also, the Depot supplemented the charitable supplies with bulk purchases of inexpensive cloth. Women on relief were supervised in making clothes out of the bulk cloth.
This system was unacceptable to the recipients for many reasons and they argued for a cash system. The problems they experienced with the Clothing Relief Depot were many. For example, the clothing made from the bulk cloth made women and children readily identifiable as relief recipients by the clothes they wore. The purchased goods had the same problem "for the style and cut never fit anyone who wore them". The quality of these ready made clothes was poor, and selection and quantity was limited. The clothes required for the new season were often late, children starting school in the fall in summer clothing, or starting the summer in winter clothing. There was "no provision for towels, dish-towels, pillow-cases, nightdresses, coat, hats, corsets, cotton-batting and cheesecloth for sanitary use, underskirts, boy's shirts, sweaters for women and girls". Only one pair of sheets was given, regardless of family size, no baby clothes were issued, and the shoes given were "impossible to wear and were ruining people's feet".

The response of the Clothing Relief Depot to the complaints was generally sympathetic, and attempts were made to rectify the most glaring problems as there was "no desire to deprive relief recipients of needed supplies, but some hard facts regarding finance" had to be faced. According to the Clothing Relief Depot, it was impossible to meet the needs of the unemployed, and those whose wages were insufficient. The Clothing Relief Depot found itself in a
position where it could not "take any step which would not bring hardship to either taxpayer or relief recipient".\textsuperscript{107}

The opposition to the clothing relief system was supported by various retail merchants in the city who argued they could supply the clothing, and at a lower price, than the city's clothing relief systems could. They also pointed out they needed the relief business in order to be able to pay their business taxes.\textsuperscript{108}

The clothing relief policy developed at the provincial level to govern the activities of clothing relief encouraged parsimony. "No family is entirely destitute of clothing", was the opening statement of the policy, "available garments may often be reconditioned, interchanged or altered to meet the needs of the family group".\textsuperscript{109} A further clause stated "the quantity and quality of clothing should be the minimum necessary to meet the needs of the individual and his family", and that "it is inadvisable to issue" all the necessary clothing at once, it should be "supplied from time to time".\textsuperscript{110}

The overall effect of striving to make ends meet in the face of attitudes such as this and governed by policies and individuals without recognition of the hardship imposed by relief conditions, cannot be underestimated. Surviving such impossible circumstances while arguing for improvements to the system, and attempting to raise families in line with middle class moral values day after day, year after year, had
enormous impact on the willingness of women to question and revise their expectations of themselves and their society. A prime example of the change that overtook many women was Gladys Strum, who began a 29 year career in politics "fuelled by the fear that she and her family would lose all they had worked for because of the depression and illness".111 In coping with the demands, devising strategies to overcome the problems, many women were changed radically and profoundly. That this was possible is a credit to the intelligence, determination and courage of the women involved.\textsuperscript{112}

The depression had uprooted the normal life pattern anticipated by many women and replaced it with delayed engagements and marriages, delayed child bearing or increased risks of illegitimate births. The pattern of married life was affected, also. Married women had always worked to contribute to the family income in some way. The number of women who had to undertake this increased, and the difficulties of making ends meet, even with their efforts, soared.

In general, the faces of the population in Saskatoon changed over the decade, becoming female, poor, with dependent children and (often) with an absent and unemployed husband. This woman's face had always been present in the city's crowds. The thirties only made her presence more visible.

With the increase in her numerical presence, came an increased sense of unity and a shared consensus of justice
among women. Activities to improve material and political conditions soared at all levels during this period. From individual acts to collective protest, women became involved in affecting change in their lives. Working class women, and the feminists who identified their problems, worked actively, and with some success, over the decade to combat the problems caused by poverty, sexism and economic depression.

This was not true for all working class women, nor for all women in the upper and middle classes. There were other women in Saskatoon, unaffected themselves by the depression who were unaware of, or ignored, the reality of the depression. Many of these women were also employers, hiring other women to help with the spring cleaning, the laundry, cooking, child care and sewing on a full time or part time and casual basis. Many of these women went through the depression decade as if nothing was changing, concerned only with golf games, bridge parties and the problems of domestic help. The women's pages of the local paper reflect this dichotomy. Immediately following a report on the work of the Local Council of Women is a headline, "Degree of Formality of Gown May be Judged by Importance of its Decollete, Says Stylist."113

While all organizations contributed in some measure to the delivery of relief in the city of Saskatoon, it was mostly women's organizations which took the lead in subsidizing the formal relief measures of Council. A belief
in the ability of woman to understand and cater to the needs of other women, and in the general fitness of women for this kind of social welfare work facilitated the participation of women in these areas. For the women working in these organizations, religious beliefs, political beliefs, and sisterly solidarity had motivated them to act for those they believed needed their help.

Women on relief took their help, partly because there were few other choices but also because the ideals and views of women in both classes coincided. Working class women worked and struggled to provide for their families, a goal middle class women could readily support. Middle class women believed in the sanctity of the family. In the name of the family, and of children, middle class women were able to give, and working class women accept, help. The myth of the family, and an ethic based on its imperatives, brought women together on relief. The relief measures provided for by Council were inadequate and fostered responses by the women on relief which were often innovative and sometimes illegal in order to cope with the circumstances of relief. The same family ethic encouraged the response of volunteer and charitable measures of women's organizations to alleviate the conditions of relief.

In addition to receiving relief and adapting it to their own needs, women on relief were active in improving the conditions of the formal relief system. Profoundly influenced
by their shared experiences of the relief system, women on relief came to reject the commonly held assumptions about people on relief. They were part of the experience that led to the ground swell of opinion which paved the way for sweeping changes to the relief system.
See the table "Percentage and Number of Persons (Employable and Unemployable) On Relief in Cities" in Lawton, "Urban Relief in Saskatchewan," p. 46. Drawn from the Saskatchewan Government submission to the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, it is a vivid illustration of the imbalance between "employables" and "unemployables" on relief.


Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1936, Vol. 1. Table 1, p. 359.

This table was drawn from: C.O.S. Archives, D500.III.895 Relief - Unemployment Relief, (370), 1929-1931.

Does not include costs for care of sick indigents at Salvation Army Hostel, or other medical and miscellaneous costs.

A Mother of Six, "Married Women Workers", Star-Phoenix, May 24, 1930.

In an interview Mrs. Alma Ledingham expressed the opinion that some couples may have married sooner if the woman could have kept working after marriage, or if they did not have the financial responsibility for their parents.


It is not possible to ascertain how many reporting this situation for their families actually had the male parent absent, temporarily or otherwise, in search of work.

See: Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1936, Vol.II. Table 68, pp. 811-812.


Where paid work was easily available, and the support systems necessary to enable women to participate on a more regular basis were in place, women preferred part time work, and took it.


Reserve labour force is a term requiring reconsideration. Because of the segregation of women into certain sectors of the labour force, women and men were not employed in work that was interchangeable and were not interchangeable factors. See: Margaret Power, "Women and Economic Crises: The Great Depression and the Present Crisis," in *Women, Class and History*, pp.492-513.


Julie White, "It's Good, It's Bad: The Contradictions." in *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History*, Veronica Strong-Boag and Anita Clair Fellman, eds. (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd. 1986), pp. 226-245. White examines the arguments for and against the expansion of part time work for women. See also "Part Time Work: The Dark Side," a pamphlet published by Connections, Saskatchewan which argues protection and benefits, including unionization, should be expanded to the mostly female part time labour force.

**Live and Let Live, "Married Women Workers,"** *Star-Phoenix*, April 19, 1930. Letter Box Page.

Interestingly, this is the date designated as International Women's Day in 1910.

**Mrs. L. Jones. "Unemployed Women",** *Star-Phoenix*, March 8, 1930. One of the points Mrs. Jones raised in her letter was the new habit of paying board but not wages to domestic workers. She also warned that if employers continued to grind women's wages in this way, the city would have women to look after as well as men the following winter. Unfortunately, she
attributed part of the blame for this state of affairs to foreigners and their low standard of living and wages.


24 Ibid. The writer continued to say, "I do not say it will provide for a creche of children, but the average employer does not pay his helpers in proportion to their size of family, therefore the helper must be prepared to 'cut his garment according to his cloth' and indulge only in as many luxuries as his purse will allow."


26 See the Star Phoenix, letters to the editor pages for Apr. 12, 26, May 3, 17, for further examples.


28 In fact, the titles assigned to the letters changed from "Unemployed Women" for the first letter published to "Married Women Workers" and "The Cost of Living" for letters in subsequent issues of the paper.

29 "One Who has Also Tried," Star-Phoenix, May 17, 1930.


31 Ibid.

32 Women's Page, Star-Phoenix, Feb. 8, 1932.


34 Helen Gregory MacGill, "The Jobless Woman," Chatelaine, Sept. 30, 1930, p. 5. This article, as it stands, could be re-published today, practically unchanged, and be considered a contemporary commentary.


37 Ibid., pp. 109-110

38 Medric Martin, "Go Home, Young Woman!" Chatelaine. Sept. 1933, p. 10.


40 Ibid., p. 53.


42 W. A. Parker, "Better Pay and Better Hours" in "Can You Shackl..." Chatelaine. Nov. 1933, p. 44.

43 In 1935 Saskatoon had only 72 manufacturing industries, with a total of 1,189 employees. See The Canadian Welfare Council, A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, (Ottawa: Council House, 1938.) p. 2. Other sources of employment would be in service related industries, in positions such as ticket agents, sales clerks, bank clerks, servants, etc. The Census of Canada, Vol. III in 1921 lists occupations open to women. Job opportunities were restricted not only by the depression, but by the "job ghettos" women were hired into. Even in categories such as transport or trade, when specific positions are given, women are shown to be hired in the service related positions.

44 City of Saskatoon, Municipal Manual, 1963. Table of Teacher Pupil Ratios.

45 Ibid.

46 Interview with Mrs. Alma Ledingham, Sept. 17, 1986.

47 Ibid.


51 It is still possible to see similar advertisements in the Star-Phoenix today, everything from child minding to perogies, a Ukrainian food speciality.

52 Elizabeth Roberts, *Woman's Place*, p. 141. The author says that women patronized services out of a charitable impulse, or from sisterly solidarity, even if they would not normally purchase such things as commercially produced convenience foods.

53 Drawn from *Labour & Love*, See also: Lenore Davidoff, "The Separation of Home and Work?"

54 Roberts, *A Woman's Place*, pp. 136 - 139.

55 Roberts argues that woman held an idea of the ideal family income required to adequately feed, clothe and house the family including savings and entertainment. Once this ideal was reached it was more important to have less work than more money. See *Woman's Place*, p. 142.


57 The "double day" is a feminist term referring to the fact working outside the home for a woman usually means an accompanying second full day of work to complete all the tasks of domestic labour to maintain the household.

58 For a fuller picture of working class and working women's daily lives in the thirties further investigation is needed of the reactions of women to the stress of competing demands, the greater value placed on home making over paid work, the sense of failure if forced to chose work, and the experiences of juggling work and home.

59 These allowances had been reduced since 1930, when they were the lowest of any province in Canada. Canadian Welfare Council. *A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon*. pp. 13-15. Schedule on p. 15 compares Mother's Allowances for 6 provinces. No other province ignored the needs of the mother, or the costs of the home in determining mother's allowances.

60 It would be interesting to investigate the efficacy of these services in generating income. Informal investigations suggest that the amount of money generated was
not worth the time and effort involved, but there were no other options.

61 Personal Column, Star-Phoenix. Jan. 15, 1932. p.22. Private adoption may have been the only route for unwed mothers with no family support or income.

62 Star-Phoenix, April 28, 1930.


64 Star-Phoenix, Feb. 5, 1932.

65 Mrs. Flo Cherrier, Personal Interview, Saskatoon, Sask. October 22, 1986.

66 Personal Interview, Mrs. Alma Ledingham.

67 C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 358, 1932, Relief Store, Delegation of Women's Branch, Saskatoon Association of Unemployed.


69 Editorial, "The Agreement," Star-Phoenix. Nov. 19, 1932, p.4. The general tone of the editorial, while disapproving of the women's action, is quite supportive of their anti-agreement position.

70 These comments were made during the sit in, and after the sit in was over. See: Star-Phoenix, Nov. 18 and 20, 1932, for the stories covering the agreement and the reaction to it.

71 This was not true. The relief investigators hired by the Civic Relief Board had warned the Board that trouble was brewing and concerted action was planned. See Chapter One for a fuller exploration of this.

72 Ibid.

73 I must express my gratitude to Professor Don Kerr, who first brought this incident to my attention when research on this thesis was just beginning. See: Kerr and Hanson, Saskatoon, pp.300-301 and Star Phoenix, November 18 and 20, 1932.

74 Star-Phoenix, Nov. 20, 1932.
75 C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 301, 1932. Relief Board, Misc. Copy of the resolution passed by City Council, Nov. 19, 1932.

76 See Correspondence and other documents, C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 301, 1933. Relief Board - Misc.

77 Star-Phoenix, Nov. 18, 1932. p.3. There are absolutely no records of any repayments of relief, being asked for or given.

78 Editorial, Star-Phoenix, Nov. 1932. p. 5.

79 This view is not supported by an examination of currently available evidence.

80 Star-Phoenix, Nov. 20, 1932.

81 C.O.S. Archives, Civic Relief Board Minutes.


83 This group had already assisted relief officials in other Prairie Provinces. See A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, p. 12.

84 A Study in Community Welfare Services, p. 9.

85 Star-Phoenix, See also: Alma Lawton, p.119.

86 C.O.S. Archives, File 302, Relief Christmas Allowance, 1933. 933.

87 C.O.S. Civic Relief Board Minutes, 1933. Also, C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 308, Relief - Food.

88 Canadian Welfare Council. A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, Appendix iii.

89 A Study in Community Services in Saskatoon, p. 8.


Ibid.


Ibid., Report of the Public Health Department, Feb. 5, 1934.

City Clerk's Office, File 307, Relief, misc. Letter to City Commissioner, dated Oct. 21, 1940.

C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 307 Relief, Misc. This file contains a copy of the Constitution of the Fraternal and Protective Association of Unemployed Citizens and Taxpayers.

C.O.S. City Clerk's office, File 307.

C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 308, Documents relating to conflict between Alderman Niederost and Relief Officer Parker, July, 1937.


Ibid.

Ibid.

C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 301, Clothing Relief.


Ibid.

C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 78, 1935, Clothing Relief, Clothing Relief Depot letter to Fraternal and protective Association, May 1, 1935.

Ibid.

C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, Relief Clothing files, various, 1929-1939.

Ibid.


As Virginia Woolf pointed out "'the poor', 'the working classes' or by whatever name you choose to call them are not down trodden, envious and exhausted; they are humorous and vigourous and thoroughly independent." This was her comment after attending a congress of working women. See: Virginia Woolf, "Memories of a Working Women's Guild," Yale Review, XX (Spring, 1930), 121-38.

Chapter 3: Women Delivering Relief

The British principles which informed official relief in Canada also influenced informal relief efforts. Though charitable and philanthropic measures to aid the poor served to subsidize public relief, the providers were often governed by the same principles as relief officials. Aiming to contribute to relief, women played a prominent role in the delivery of relief as workers in the volunteer and charitable organizations which subsidized official relief.

These activities filled some of the gaps left by official relief policy. Charitable and philanthropic agencies would be approached by those in need, before public relief was requested, in an attempt to "stay off" relief. Thus, inadequate official relief was supplemented by the informal relief provided by charitable activities.

In Britain, the efforts of women in relief work were extremely valuable both to those they helped and to the public agencies responsible for relief. Studies have shown that private philanthropy significantly contributed to poor relief.1 Although businesses and individual employers, for example, contributed financially to private relief efforts, the majority of private relief efforts were undertaken by women, either individually, or through organizations to which they belonged. Middle class women could provide

136
financial support from their own resources. They did so, to the same extent as did men. These women also undertook unpaid labour in large numbers. They visited the poor and sick with moral and material comforts. They organized and taught in schools, established and supervised cottage hospitals, soup kitchens, libraries and asylums for the deaf or insane.

In Britain, the women who became involved in such activities were drawn from both the upper and middle classes of society. Many upper class women, educated and eager to contribute in some way, felt constricted by the socially confining role assigned to women of their class. The round of social visits, leaving calling cards, and household supervision left little scope for their talents. Charitable work was an acceptable and justifiable outlet for their abilities.

Women from middle class backgrounds who became involved in philanthropic work did so for similar reasons. Their background lay in the evangelical tradition. Hard work was the cornerstone of this religious ideology. As partners with their husbands, they had been part of the productive work which had contributed to the upward mobility of their families. Part of the legacy of upward mobility was a decline in their productive labour. The home and work place became separated and middle class women found themselves kept in idle luxury as a reflection of their husband's
success. Many women found this frustrating and became involved in charitable work as an outlet for their energies.⁵

The industrial revolution also liberated middle class women from wage earning work. Women became dependent consumers, relegated to the task of creating the home, a haven of peace and refuge for male breadwinners.⁶ Technological changes had provided middle class women with more "conveniences" and allowed more time for community activities.

The rise of evangelicalism and the development of philanthropy provided women of the leisured classes with socially acceptable outlets for their energies and their "free" time. Middle class women imitated upper class women who interested themselves in a wide range of charitable activities. In the organizations that were established, women learned the basic skills of organizing: how to raise funds, how to acquire information and produce publications, and how to inform and mobilize others.⁷

These women were the example for Canadian women. Canadian women also had concrete examples living in their midst, including both newly arrived immigrants and women visiting the country. Lady Aberdeen, the Founder of the National Council of Women of Canada, was a prime example of an English upper class woman who wanted to be more than a
figurehead of her husband's position as Governor General. She offered her skills and commitment to Canadian women.

It is important to understand the context in which women's charitable work in Britain and Canada was established. Women were believed to be innately more compassionate, caring and nurturing than men. This rhetoric had been used to assign women to the hearth and home.

Religion had reinforced this view. From the mid nineteenth century, religion had assigned the sphere of compassion and caring to women. "To be a good woman was to be a good Christian", that is, passive, caring, and nurturing. "To be a good man was to be a good citizen: active competitive, self confident". Such views encouraged women in their unpaid work outside the home.

These women saw the external world as being corrupt and missing what they had been taught to value. This attitude had been instilled by a Christian upbringing. The values women espoused also encouraged a sense of sisterly solidarity, a sense that other women were unlucky victims of circumstances beyond their control. Redressing the injustices caused by a lack of "feminine" values at large became a major factor in many women's activities. Women worked tirelessly for reform in areas such as public health, urban reform and mother and child welfare.

Middle class women wanted to teach proper, that is, middle class, standards and virtues which would ensure
everyone knew their place in society. Social aid, expected to stave off social unrest, was often undertaken because of a fear of class warfare, though many activities were often motivated by political, spiritual and religious commitment.\textsuperscript{10} An unexpected result was that many women were profoundly changed and radicalized by the experiences beyond the home, and became committed to radical changes in the sexual and social order.\textsuperscript{11}

The women in these organizations had concerns of their own and their own motivations for becoming involved in social reform or welfare efforts. Working outside the home, religious conviction, class duty, sisterhood, progressive or reformist impulses, dislike of working with men,\textsuperscript{12} were all reasons why women became involved in women's groups and became actively engaged in promoting change on a variety of levels.

All these factors combined to spawn the birth of superwoman; moral crusader, political activist, as well as perfect wife and mother. Hence the abundance of advice in the media on how to excel at the vital roles of womanhood.

In spite of the increased demands on time and energy to maintain a household at a professional level, middle class women were still expected to contribute to the "less fortunate". Volunteer work was an important, though unpaid, outlet for women's desire to contribute and participate in a realm beyond the family.
There were indications in the popular media that work outside the home for women was unpopular. One concept which illustrated this was the concept of "professionalization" which emerged in Canada in the 1920's and 1930's. The idea underlying this concept was that all jobs - including being a homemaker or mother - were to be done professionally, even scientifically. This concept was designed to make the work of wife and mother more attractive and invite women to leave the workplace after marriage. Paradoxically, it also served to create more free time for women in the middle classes.

Professionalization was also reflected in the programs for many women's organizations which focused on the improvement of women's performance in their roles as wife and mother. Health and welfare professionals insisted on stressing the necessity for full time care of and attention to children.

Articles published in Chatelaine, a Canadian magazine published for "Canadian Women" reflect the concept of professionalization. Articles were presented in categories with headings such as: "Child Study and Welfare" or "Home Planning." Articles within these categories had titles such as "The Scientific Background of the Egg," to "Baby's Routine and Management." Special attention was given to the brand new wife in a special series entitled "Bride's Progress," (the domestic equivalent of Pilgrim's Progress).
which was presented as a straightforward course in practical housekeeping, and meal preparation.  

Professionalization may have been intended to increase the attractiveness of the role and status of wife and mother as women were beginning to enter the paid work force in growing numbers. Increasing the status of the home and the home maker may have been intended to encourage women to leave the work place and marry.

Nevertheless, professionalization also increased freedom from domestic chores and increased the opportunity for women to go beyond the confines of the home. Opportunities beyond the home in the paid labour force were severely restricted for married women from the upper and middle classes. Women had to create their own opportunities.

Women began to argue effectively that in order to carry out their main task in life and protect their homes and families adequately, they had to undertake "domestic" and "mothering" tasks beyond their own homes. Thus women, set out to clean up corrupt politics, destroy the evil alcohol industry, rescue fallen women and provide clean water and healthy living conditions for everyone. Women's organizations, involved in providing for others, were an external continuation of the home. Women justified working outside the home on the premise that they were protecting it by doing so. The centrality of home and family life was intended to be reinforced by the activities of these women.
Saskatoon had many active groups in which women organized to improve material conditions for others in need. As religious impulses played a part in some women's motivations, and as the church was a central support of the local communities, many women contributed their time and effort to their local church.

There were many other organizations available for women in Saskatoon. In 1936 there were forty women's organizations affiliated to the Local Council of Women. For a female population of 21,313 this is an approximate ratio of one organization for every five hundred women, a ratio that is considerably lowered when females under fifteen are ignored, and when it is realized that local organizations which did not have a national affiliation were not members of the Local Council of Women.20

Many women welcomed an opportunity to exercise their power beyond the women's auxiliaries of their local churches. This was a result of a rejection of the restricted role they played there and from a desire for more concrete and meaningful work. One woman recalled the pleasure many women found in this. Since welfare services and charitable organizations did not exist, wherever women felt there was a need, women went out to create the services to meet it:

This was the time women had become very active, getting the vote for the first time, active in lodges, benevolent associations. There was no social welfare, if children were orphaned, there was a need for an orphan's home. The C.N.I.B. was non-existent. A lot of the charitable associations
we know today didn't exist. There was the Orange order and the Eastern Star, and the Royal Purple, which were strictly for women and gave women a chance to exert their power beyond the women's own church organizations, where they were the ones who made the fowl suppers and did the cooking and carried on what was the women's work at home. 21

Thus, in Saskatoon and the surrounding area, women had a variety of women-only organizations from which to choose to make their contribution to the betterment of human welfare. In addition to the women's auxiliaries of the various churches, such as the Catholic Women's League, (C.W.L.) there were well established women's organizations like the Local Council of Women, the Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.), the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire (I.O.D.E.), Canadian Girl Guides and Canadian Girls in Training, the Ladies British Empire Settlement League, City Hospital Women's Auxiliary and Women's Institutes. Many of the services these organizations provided were de facto relief services.

These organizations were made up of middle class women, partly due to the fact that many of the skills educated and motivated women had to offer were useful in the delivery of relief services. Middle class women, in their roles within these organizations investigated claims for help. They could access food supplies, medical services, emergency funds and other material needs when necessary. They provided information on nutrition, sanitation, and basic health care. They offered counselling and support to the families and
individuals they met through this work.\textsuperscript{22} Many of the tasks women undertook through these groups were undertaken with a religious fervour, even if the organization was not affiliated to a church.

One organization definitely not attached to any particular religion was the National Council of Women, (N.C.W.), which had a local affiliate in Saskatoon. This was a national organization made up of representatives from a wide variety of Canadian women's groups. The structure of the group was an example of the impulse to coordinate and centralize services. It is also an example of the different motivations stimulating women and the tensions which arose from them.

The N.C.W. had tried to diminish religious, class and racial differences from its inception. For example, recommending silent prayer at the start of meetings, it was hoped, would facilitate membership from among women of different beliefs.\textsuperscript{23} In 1896 it had also invited a representative of Canadian native women to join the executive.\textsuperscript{24}

In spite of these efforts it could still be criticised as an organization comprised mainly of white, Protestant, English, upper and middle class women\textsuperscript{25}, reflecting the interests of that segment of society.\textsuperscript{26} What is not so immediately apparent is that the organization encompassed a
variety of women, and reflected an amazing variety of political views and ideologies.

The N.C.W., founded in 1893, had a structure of Standing Committees. The titles of the committees are a fair indication of the depth and breadth of the Council's activities, from Arts and Letters to Citizenship; Economics; Housing and Town Planning; League of Nations; and Moral Standards. An especially effective committee was the Committee on Laws for the Protection of Women and Young Children, which kept a running record of all legislation concerning women and children, recommending directions for lobbying efforts by the organizations affiliated with the N.C.W and resolutions for action by the government. The work of this committee had been published by the Dominion Government in 1904.²⁷ All committees had the mandate to investigate and make recommendations to the general body on any topic falling within their interest. In turn, the N.C.W. could make resolutions for action by the government, and recommendations for action to Local Councils.²⁸

The founder of the N.C.W. in Canada, Lady Aberdeen, personifies the contradiction inherent in the N.C.W. She had been representing the Society for Promoting the Return of Women to All Local Governing Bodies, the Women's Franchise League and the Women's Liberal Federation of Scotland when she had been elected president of the International Council of Women Meeting in 1893. Arriving in Canada later that year
as wife of the Governor General, she was instrumental in laying the foundations for the N.C.W. in Canada. In spite of her own strong political opinions, she had insisted that the N.C.W. downplay political, religious and feminist beliefs, so that women could work together for the good of all.

The Year Books of the organization reflect the dichotomy of the organization. The opinions, suggestions and ideas put forward range from extremely conservative to quite radical. For example, In 1929, the Economics Committee had reported on the effects of employment of married women. Specifically, the committee had considered whether the employment of married women harmed their families or other, single women. While many believed that the employment of married women did adversely affect young single women, specifically that it contributed to young women going astray, the committee reported that it was

...unable to prove the correctness of such statements, and considering that many other influences add their quota to bring about such evil result...[we] only ask you to continue to sift the evidence and to base your conclusions not upon opinions and custom but upon a woman's right to judge for herself just how she shall best use her time.

The Moral Standards Committee had also expressed a similar progressive stance on women's rights. The convenor opened her report "It is not my intention to follow the crowd in deploiring the breaking down of the family and the looseness of morals among the girls of today. The home is in
a state of transition, as is the position of women and girls in the business and domestic life."\textsuperscript{31} The report continued to detail such problems as lack of street lights and suitable residences for single women in the cities, and the burden of punishment felt by a wife and children when their husband and father was imprisoned: "the guilty one is imprisoned and cared for - the greater punishment [is] on the innocent left behind in hardship."\textsuperscript{32} A feminist view of woman and her place in the world, a view of woman as warrior was also apparent in the N.C.W. records: "She must not go back into the home and shut the door. The idea that "there are 1,000 problems she [woman] must solve" lay at the core of the National Council of Women. The implication of the organization's work was that women were the only ones fit to solve them.

This radical feminism was diluted somewhat by other ideologies. Respect for the professional class, for example, swayed the Public Health Committee of the N.C.W. in 1930 not to bring a recommendation on a National Health Insurance Scheme to the general body because investigation had revealed that doctors feared they would have too many patients on their "list." The result would be a loss of the "personal touch of the family physician".\textsuperscript{33}

The role of the N.C.W. was also frequently challenged. Charlotte Whitton, the convenor of the Child Welfare Committee, stated in a report that the N.C.W. and its local
councils were "essentially a conference body" and as such should not be actively involved in child welfare work. This was better left, she argued, to professionals. She did concede, however, that there might be occasions when the N.C.W. would be better equipped than anyone else to undertake a "definite and specific responsibility" but that "sound enquiries" and consultations with "experts" were necessary before doing anything.  

This theme was used as a justification for all N.C.W. work. Yet, in too many situations the N.C.W. had been the logical and only choice to undertake specific and definite tasks. Pragmatic actions had been a cornerstone of Council activities. For example, the N.C.W. had fought hard and consistently for a clean water supply from the early days of its foundation, bringing pressure to bear on all levels of government. The fact that cities made a practice of emptying municipal wastes into the sources of drinking water, "one of the most stupid things ever done on a wide scale," had enraged the N.C.W. The contamination of drinking water by waste matter was directly responsible for the regular, annual outbreaks of typhoid.

How the council dealt with this issue demonstrates how most of their activities were organized. The activities included gathering information, providing education, encouraging public awareness, arranging public meetings, and mobilizing political lobbying. In answer to the Toronto City
Council's grudging acceptance of the facts but refusal to act because ratepayers would never foot the bill, the N.C.W organized a postcard campaign. The facts of the link between typhoid and contaminated drinking water were presented on a postcard to all eligible women voters (women could qualify to vote in municipal elections through the property qualification). The election returns authorized the necessary expenditures for a sewer system.36

The effectiveness of such tactics was limited by the powerlessness of women in society generally.37 There were many issues in which the N.C.W. took the initiative and in which the group recognized and identified problems and solutions, yet fought for years to achieve changes without positive results. Ridicule, derision, and ignorance on the part of politicians to what seemed sane, simple and necessary measures certainly contributed to the notions many women held that the vote and getting women into public office would solve many problems.38

Unfortunately, many of the efforts of the women's organizations, such as the N.C.W., were not directed towards real reform of the system. In general, efforts to improve, for example, health care for women and children tended to aim at the individual woman. For example, if individual mothers could be educated about diet and nutrition, infant mortality could be reduced. There were no real attempts to recognize poverty, disease and housing conditions as the
real culprits of infant mortality, but rather the burden fell on individual women to educate themselves; it was their own ignorance that was the problem, their fault that children died.39

With the onset of the depression and the increasing demand made upon the formal relief system, the informal relief within these organizations such as the N.C.W. took on greater significance. The women's organizations took on various projects and tasks related to the formal relief delivery system.

The activities exemplified by the National Council of Women at the national level were repeated at the local level. In Saskatoon there were other organizations, besides women's groups, active in welfare associated activities, many with women active in leadership roles. These activities, plus some organizations specifically directed towards welfare work, supplemented the formal welfare service of the city's relief department. The Children's Aid Society, the Provincial Bureau of Child Protection, the local hospitals, the Community Health Department, the Red Cross, and the Family Service Bureau, for example, were all welfare organizations involved in the delivery of relief services, but there were many additional welfare efforts, private and voluntary, undertaken by women-only organizations. The same reasons and motivations which had spurred the National Council were operating at the local
level. The Local Council of Women followed the lead of its national parent group on most issues. In some areas, the local group displayed an independent spirit in responding to local issues, believing it understood local conditions better than the national group.

The National Council of Women had local affiliates all across Canada. The Saskatoon Local Council of Women (L.C.W.) was well respected by the twenties. When the parameters of the need for relief expanded beyond the capacity or willingness of the city council to cope, it was natural for the Local Council of Women to offer its services, and have them utilized by the City Council. The Local Council of Women took the lead in forming the Family Welfare Association, a coordinating body of all the voluntary welfare agencies in the city, with "generous financial support from the men's service clubs."40 They also led in reviewing and improving relief services in the city.

The Saskatoon Local Council of Women was ideally placed to take a leadership role in the city. It had been formed in 1916 in the parlour of the Y.W.C.A at a meeting called by the Equal Franchise League. The meeting, with representatives attending from twenty five women's organizations, heard from a representative of the Local Council of Women in Regina, who explained the Constitution, by-laws and objectives of the national Council. The women
present founded their own local branch, with Mrs. W. C. Murray, elected as President.41

A $1.00 affiliation fee was set for member organizations, and it was decided to seek representation from all the women's organizations active in the city, including Catholic and Jewish women's organizations. The new president, at the first regular meeting of the organization, expressed the hope that the Council would become the largest faction in the city. Eighteen organizations had already paid the required fee to become affiliates.42

The Local Council wasted no time in starting work on issues of interest to women in the city. Within the first six months of operation the members had begun investigating the need for a woman police officer, the urgent need for a training institution or home for delinquent girls, women's pensions, a separate court for women, and the need for female judges. The work included lobbying the government for these changes.

The standing committee structure worked very well in Saskatoon. Women representatives served on the committees most in line with the work their own organizations were involved in. One of the committees in 1929, investigating the reason for little girls acting as street vendors, and finding nothing could be done about it, wrote to Miss Charlotte Whitton about the situation.43
Charlotte Whitton, Director of the Canadian Welfare Council, (C.W.C.), and a member of the National Council of Women, had long advocated professional social services. Her organization had made a practice of the social survey: a scientific examination of the social services available in a particular city. She wasted no time in suggesting the solution of a social service organization, preceded by a welfare survey, to the L.C.W. as a method of solving the problems confronting the group.44

The results of the survey were presented in the form of a report accompanied by a series of recommendations.45 The role of volunteer organizations was supported, and commended as a valuable source of assistance, if undertaken in a professional manner, to government relief programmes.

The major result of the 1930 survey was the establishment of the Social Service Bureau. This professional organization co-operated with both volunteer charitable groups and the City Relief Department. It included a Social Service Exchange and was run by a trained social service worker, a Miss Lillian Thompson.46

Miss Dorothy King, the field worker recommended by Charlotte Whitton to carry out the survey, told a large and interested public meeting that a central bureau could investigate and authenticate genuinely needy cases and reduce costs of relief by reducing overlaps and introducing a "new, systematic and wiser philanthropy".47 The principles
of classification, morality and economy were functioning well in Saskatoon in 1930.

In spite of the fact that her work load made impossible the kind of intensive social service case work she believed necessary, Miss Thompson was completely wedded to the ideals of relief work that "trained" recipients to help themselves. Speaking to an open meeting of the L.C.W. and its affiliates, she pointed out that families helped in the old way - that is solely with material aid - were still on the relief rolls. The new method, "which consisted chiefly of giving advice so that families could solve their own problems," meant they became independent of financial aid. It was also a less expensive form of relief.

Other structures of the national organization did not seem to function so well at the local level. The principle of silent prayer, for example, designed to encourage the participation from non-Christian backgrounds was persistently violated. Early meetings recorded "The Lord's Prayer recited in Unison". Even in the thirties, the minutes periodically strayed from recording "The meeting opened with silent prayer" to "The Lord's Prayer repeated in concert".

The L.C.W. did not always see eye to eye with the National level on other issues. In November 1931 the L.C.W. responded to the request of the National president, Miss Winnifred Kydd, for contributions to the Comforts fund for
the Unemployed Relief Camps, with a $10 cash donation and plans for a shower to raise items for the local camp in Dundurn. A year later the members decided not to repeat these efforts, and to send a letter to the National President explaining they were putting their efforts instead into raising comforts for local, unemployed females.

The L.C.W. utilized the committee structure to achieve a great deal of work during the thirties. There were the regular duties of running an organization: elections, appointing convenors and committees, notifications of meetings, fund raising, internal education, which the L.C.W. carried in addition to an increasing work load. There was a regular commitment to entertain the Annual Homemakers Conventions held at the University every June. The L.C.W. also became a clearing house for information. There were requests to arrange speaker's tours, public meetings and entertainment, or for information and help, which were either handled directly by the L.C.W. or directed to more appropriate organizations.

In their attitudes to direct relief work, the women of the L.C.W. in Saskatoon adhered to the official line of the N.C.W. This policy stated, as a Local Council President phrased it, that the L.C.W. "made suggestions and stimulated the suggestions into activities" through affiliated associations and societies. In this way, other clubs and
organizations were doing creative work, which had initially received its impetus from the L.C.W.54

But the Local Council did undertake a great deal of active work, simply because there was no one else to do it. In some cases, the L.C.W. was the obvious and ideal group to approach. It responded to requests from affiliated societies for joint action, or support for actions or resolutions. For example, it co-operated with the Y.W.C.A.'s plans for registering unemployed women, and for providing classes and other services. The members also co-operated closely with the Business and Professional Women's Club. At one time they protested, with this group, the government's treatment of unemployed single women over 21.55 At another time the members lent their support publicly to a protest against the laying off of women bank clerks in order to make way for male employees.56 The group also carried out a survey of delinquent girls at the request of the Social Service Bureau.57

Some projects were undertaken at the request of unaffiliated organizations. The Unemployed Association of Saskatoon drew attention to the shortage of household linens among those on relief: the L.C.W. responded with fund raising efforts to purchase pillowcases and towels.58 The group also responded to the Association of Haultain Women's Families on Relief. Like the Association the L.C.W. opposed the Relief Store, and agreed to co-operate with the women by
working on food lists for the store to purchase, and recipes and menus for the recipients.

At other times the L.C.W. held fund raising activities, such as showers, to acquire the necessary items for the Relief Depot.\(^59\) A music teacher approached the L.C.W. seeking support of expenses associated with his plans to run free musical classes for the children of families on relief. The group raised supplies for the Coal Creek Colony, a land settlement scheme in the north of the province.\(^60\) The Home Economics committee worked with the Relief Department in designing recipes and menus, which were printed on news sheets and enclosed with the relief store bundles.\(^61\)

The L.C.W. also undertook a variety of projects under its own auspices. Many of these projects originated from the standing committees, and were sustained throughout the decade. The L.C.W. in addition to organizing the Clothing Relief Bureau also organized a sewing room to make clothing, and to remodel or repair donated clothing. The executive was responsible for providing lunch to the unemployed women who worked there. Every December the L.C.W. organized a campaign to provide "white boxes". These were gifts for the needy and unemployed single women of the city. This plan had initially developed as part of a rejection of the suggestion of the Superintendent of the Unemployed Men's Camp, Lt. Col. Gilroy, that the L.C.W. supply comforts once again to the men's relief camp. The L.C.W. members had recognized that
single unemployed women were being neglected and took upon themselves the responsibility to ensure these women were not forgotten at Christmas time.62

The Local Council of Women was also at the forefront in organizing kindergarten classes for children aged three to six years of age in underprivileged families,63 through its Recreation and Child Welfare Committee. This program, initiated in one school as an experiment, had proven "so worthwhile" it had been expanded to two schools in 1935, and three schools the following year.64 The classes were designed to increase competency in English, improve standards of behaviour, develop normal play habits, and improve health, all standards determined by the middle class values of the women involved. The classes were held three mornings a week in local school rooms, and a mid-morning lunch of milk and biscuits was provided. This work was cited by the National Council as an example for other Local Councils to follow.

The results of Saskatoon's "experiment" was a net average gain of 3 lbs per child enrolled in the program, and height gain ranging from half an inch to four and a half inches. At the outset of the program over half the children were grossly underweight, at the end only 12 were markedly underweight.65

The Local Council of Women became a relatively powerful and effective organization. The Council was approached on
many occasions, and in some cases annually, to appoint representatives to serve on committees. For example, the High School board asked for a representative on its Vocational Training Board. The group had been active on the City's Playground committee, and members were already familiar with City Council's committee structure for delegating authority. The Saskatoon L.C.W. report stated that the objective in the supervised recreation program was the establishment of health services and health programs in order to extend care to the pre-school child. The end result was "to produce a model young citizen by a well balanced program of academic instruction with time for fine arts and health care." Pragmatic help, even in a system of supervised play, had moral objectives.

The Local Council had also undertaken other activities. Like other Local Councils, the members had undertaken courses of studies and reading recommended by the N.C.W. The group had also responded to requests for information, for example, reporting that many cases of hardship resulted from the Divorce Act's requirement that the domicile of a wife seeking divorce be defined as her husband's domicile.

Another important aspect of the L.C.W.'s work was its attempt to improve the relief system. The L.C.W. was also repeatedly approached by other organizations for support in achieving change through lobbying and activism. As a consequence the L.C.W. found itself lobbying and agitating
during two different periods for the appointment of women: in 1933 for a woman relief officer, and in 1936 for a woman relief inspector to go into the women's homes, rather than male inspectors. The L.C.W. expressed the belief that only another woman could truly understand and appreciate the difficulties faced by women on relief. Since a woman may have been reluctant to share or discuss her problems with a male inspector, the L.C.W. was afraid many important issues were not being identified or addressed by the relief department.

The L.C.W. also co-operated with the Y.W.C.A in efforts to improve employment options for women by providing training opportunities. It was involved over the decade in a variety of efforts to improve the status of women in a wide range of areas: divorce, health care, and education. It responded to resolutions from groups such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the United Farm Women, and the Homemaker Clubs. While education and stimulation of change remained on the agenda the group was forced into a more active role than had been intended, both in the delivery of informal relief services and in attempts to improve official relief.

The Young Women's Christian Association in Saskatoon (Y.W.C.A) was another example of a women's organization with specific educational and moral objectives which found itself delivering relief services. Originating in Britain as
a prayer union (a group gathered together to pray for the salvation of others), it had quickly become involved in providing safe accommodations to the increasing numbers of young women arriving in London in response to Florence Nightingale's request for nurses to serve in the Crimean campaign. After this war, the organization continued the provision of hostel accommodation at reasonable rates, accompanied by moral guidance, to young girls arriving in the city in search of work.

Saskatoon's Y.W.C.A. was formed from similar instincts. Miss Millicent Simcox, a Church of England Deaconess had been sent to Saskatoon in 1907 "to look after, on behalf of the Church of England, the stream of English girls coming out to find work." She undertook this by meeting every train that arrived in Saskatoon, including the 4:30 a.m. arrival. She used her own income to provide free lodgings, a rudimentary employment bureau, and a public sitting room. When Miss Simcox returned to England for the summer in 1909, the service failed. However, a "better spirit evoked" [sic] and on her return the local I.O.D.E. representatives "volunteered all financial resources" if she "would do the work." Thus, in 1910, Miss Simcox returned and met with representatives of the Golden West Chapter of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire (I.O.D.E.) and the Women's Auxiliary of Christ Church. They agreed to form a branch of the Y.W.C.A. in Saskatoon to continue this blend
of work-related support, sisterly concern and moral guidance. Miss Simcox would continue to meet the trains, and provide assistance and direction to new arrivals. This service, known as Travellers Aid, would continue for the next sixty-four years. An assistant would run an employment service: Y.W.C.A. members would help out with both services, and both services came under the auspices of the Y.W.C.A. The "Y" would be responsible for all the financial and administrative matters.73

In May, 1910, the Y had sixty members, thirty-one of whom were on the board of directors. A year later, it had two hundred and fifteen, a twenty-one member board, and an 8 men trustee committee advising the group on financial matters. In these early years the Y organization focused on raising funds for the building to house its services. In spite of a variety of temporary lodgings, these service expanded.

After the building opened, in addition to the traveller's aid, the Y offered English classes to "New Canadians" (a euphemism for immigrants), developed a library (Miss Simcox's sister sent out 100 books from England to start it) and initiated bible study classes.74

It was apparent the new "Y," and its building, had a special role in the lives of the women of the city. A pamphlet published in the period 1914-1918 reveals what the Y offered to local women:
1. A place to meet a friend, leave a parcel or use the phone.
2. A place to write a letter or linger in pleasant surroundings.
3. A place to get a well cooked meal.
4. A place to get directions to any part of the city.
5. A place where the business girl may rest at noon.
6. A place to get a bath or secure the use of a sewing machine.
7. A place to secure employment or help.
8. A place to join bible or mission study classes.
9. A place to find a Helping Hand when you need it most.

The absence of telephones, pleasant surroundings, and counselling services in some women's lives can be inferred from this litany of attractions. The primary goal of the Y.W.C.A. was "to unite those young women who, regarding Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour according to the scriptures, are vitally united to Him through the love of God shed aboard in their hearts by the Holy Spirit and desire to associate their efforts for the extension of His kingdom among all young women by such means as are in accordance with the word of God."

But religious work was only one point on the list and was ranked eighth.

The Y.W.C.A. was well established and well respected as part of the Saskatoon community by the time the depression developed. The services listed above, the use other organizations made of their facilities and the classes offered in a wide range of activities had made the Y an integral and indispensable part of the community. Annual tag days, linen showers, open houses and other fund raising
activities had also made the Y familiar to those who otherwise would not have come into contact with its services.

In addition, the Y's activities were always extremely well covered by the local paper. Editorials preceded every tag day, enumerating the achievements of the organization and encouraging citizens to be generous in recognizing the value of the wonderful work the Y did. Annual meetings were covered in depth, as were any public meetings or speakers the Y sponsored. Such stories often emphasised the cost effectiveness of the services the group provided.

With the depression, the Y.W.C.A. found itself inexorably slipping into the provision of relief services. The Travellers Aid service found young women arriving in search of work, or destitute, in a city where there was no work to be had. These women were kept in the Residence, with the City contributing 40 cents (later 50 cents) a day towards their keep. The employment bureau, a service the Y had abandoned in 1923 as too expensive and a duplication of a government service, was re-established to try to help girls and young women find work, so they could become independent and self supporting. In 1933, the Travellers Aid Secretary reported that though fewer people were travelling (she still met 2,353 trains), she was forced to deal with far more severe problems than previously. Her statistics for the year recorded twenty-six investigations,
twenty-one searches, and thirty-five cases of money or ticket difficulties. In addition she was involved with twenty-four mental cases, twenty-seven police cases, twenty-four runaways, twenty deserted wives, fifty-five charity cases, fifty-nine physically ill or hospital cases, one hundred and twenty-four families and seventy-nine young women with employment. 79

She also directly protected young women. She had escorted eighty-seven young women to the Y, seventy-seven to friends, and eleven to Canadian or U.S. immigration. She also helped forty-three children under the age of 16 who were travelling alone. The safety of young women, saving them from an unsavoury fate, was a prime objective of the Travellers Aid Secretary’s work, as young girls who arrived in the city "seemed to disappear" and parents were left seeking missing daughters. 80

By 1934, the Travellers Aid Secretary acknowledged the emphasis of her work had shifted to "employment and social service work". Her report pointed out "nearly every girl the Secretary comes in contact with has some problem with which she needs help. Girls flock to the Y.W.C.A. in a never ending stream." 81

The Y.W.C.A had been aware of the problems that unemployment were creating for women. As a Star-Phoenix editorial pointed out, "the plight of the unemployed women, especially girls living away from home - their dilemma is
even worse than that of the jobless man. They cannot rough it, beg meals, sleep in freight yards or adopt expedients open to a man on his beam ends."  

The editorial also pointed out that it might be a shock to some citizens to realize that the "numerous relief measures... put into effect have included no assistance for unemployed women."  

The Star-Phoenix was glad to report in the same editorial that something had been done. In 1930, the Y had completed a survey on unemployment among young women. As a result of this, the Y had decided to co-operate with the city, establishing an employment service in conjunction with the city relief department. It was this service that was providing the accommodations and employment services to the "girls" arriving daily through the Travellers Aid service, as well as to local girls and women in need of help:  

Any girl who has come [in] to the Y.W.C.A. is sent to the City Relief Office. Those [in] any way capable and able to work have been placed by them. Any girls without homes and in search of work have been kept at the Y.W.C.A. until work has been found for them.  

The employment service was designed to reduce the costs to relief services by finding women work as soon as possible. The employment service had placed 110 females in full-time employment, and found day work for a number of married women in their first six months of operation.  

The same editorial which noted the lack of services for unemployed women, and which also congratulated the Y.W.C.A. also noted that the failure of private and public relief
efforts. However laudable the efforts of the Y.W.C.A. in recognizing and meeting the needs of the unemployed women of the city, the editorial expressed the opinion that "there should be some permanent arrangement for dealing with the problem they [the Y.W.C.A.] had volunteered to tackle as a social service." As no such permanent arrangements emerged, the Y.W.C.A continued to be the major source of relief services for single unemployed females in the city, often referring to themselves as the "only" place for women.

The overall purpose of the Y.W.C.A was to "strengthen God's Cornerstones - our daughters". In providing relief services, such as the accommodation and employment services, the Y.W.C.A. believed its primary concern was the moral, religious and spiritual welfare of the young women under its care. In doing so, however, the Y was also responding to the concrete and material needs of the unemployed women of the city.

For example, in 1933, the Local Y.W.C.A. Board took, for the Y.W.C.A., a daring and innovative step. This step, their visiting National Secretary told the members, would be watched with interest by other Y.W.C.A.s across the country. The residence, always a source of profit had begun to lose money. The board decided to change the residence policy to "provide comfortable home for girls and young women who have economies forced on them by salary cuts" by converting the rooms into bed sitting rooms. This, along with converting
the kitchen into a communal kitchen, at once gave the girls more privacy and independence, and reduced costs associated with running the kitchen and dining room. The new service "provided a real service to girls with low salaries" at rates ranging from $6.75 to $12.75 a month.89

Another aspect of the Y’s moral and spiritual work was found in the classes the Y provided for unemployed girls and women.90 In the current difficult times, the Y had determined the needs of unemployed girls and young women as "friendship, social contacts, self expression, wholesome attractive outlet for abundant energy, skills in handicraft, interest in the city, and community, social etiquette, a place to go where no fee attached, a need of lightness, gaiety and laughter".91 The classes also served another purpose for Y - they brought girls within the Y’s sphere of influence. In fact, the Y put much emphasis on participation in its ongoing clubs, specifically so that young women could be influenced by the Y’s moral and Christian views.

The Y wanted to respond to the challenge of the Canadian Welfare Council that "relief is not enough," by acknowledging and meeting unemployed young women’s need for more than physical survival.92 The Y undertook this work, "seeking more and more methods of offsetting those mental, physical, moral, emotional and religious strains from which so many unemployed and underpaid young girls were suffering".93
In doing so the Y could help substantially to reduce relief costs, and provide a morally and spiritually uplifting social background for the unemployed girls. This would help "counteract the discouraging and oft times communistic tendencies" that developed with long term unemployment and relief. The Y would do everything in its power to help girls keep off relief and stay cheerful. Thus, in addition to providing personal services, such as lodgings, three meals a day and rooms, the Y offered intellectual and spiritual companionship. The Y.W.C.A.'s classes or clubs provided girls and young women with tours, physical training, books, sing-songs, and instruction in business methods, handicrafts, interior decorating, personal hygiene, sewing, and knitting. The Y also arranged indoor and outdoor parties, talks and speakers.

In co-operation with the president of the University of Saskatchewan, Dr. W.C. Murray, the local Technical Collegiate, and nineteen other women's organizations, the Y.W.C.A had organized free classes for "all genuinely unemployed girls." University night classes were opened in such subjects as German, psychology, "economic structure" and English. Particularly artistic girls could apply for admission to art classes. The courses at the Technical college included bookkeeping, interior decorating, and show card writing. The Y classes included knitting, cooking, tap dancing and finger waving, (a style of hair dressing). Girls
would have to offer proof of their inability to pay, and of their educational level (grade 12 minimum) for the university classes. In addition, the Y instituted "Home craft" classes. Designed to train women as effective domestic labourers, this class was open to both unemployed women hoping to find work in this area, and women who wanted to improve their own skills. Certificates were granted at the end of the training sessions.

By 1935 the Y.W.C.A was beginning to argue, like the Star Phoenix five years earlier, for concerted government intervention to replace its own volunteer efforts. In 1935, the Y placed 207 women in work, served 1,200 free meals, and provided free lodgings to 500 needy girls and women. The heated and lighted club rooms were used by 100 women daily. The home craft classes were run in co-operation with 27 organizations. In addition the Travellers Aid Secretary had administered 1750 cases of relief for the city.

In late 1935, Mrs. A.M. Eddy, the convenor of the Travellers Aid Committee of the Y.W.C.A., and also a member of the Saskatoon Trades and Labour Council, was arguing for Government intervention. She wanted the government to establish the homecraft classes on a larger and more efficient scale than the Y could organize. Her argument was based on statistical evidence. The classes the Y organized trained twenty-five women at a time. The Y had received applications for work from 929 girls and offers of positions
from 828 women. Yet, the service could only place 456 unemployed girls because of the lack of skills and experience of most of the unemployed applicants. The only growth industry Saskatoon had to offer unemployed women was domestic labour, but lack of training seemed to be the obstacle between these young women and the available positions.

There were problems associated with domestic labour other than lack of training, which the Y hoped proper training would eradicate. There were "elements of dissatisfaction" on both sides of the relationship of employer and employee: long hours and unwarranted stigma for the domestic servant, complaints of carelessness and inefficiency from the employers. A set of standards - a code for employers and employees regulating pay, working conditions and time off - was part of the Y’s plan.99

The Y hoped to raise the standard and status of the domestic worker. The members were motivated by the belief that "the home is the chief asset of the nation and the function of the homemaker one of dignity and importance. Hence it followed that a similar position be accorded her paid assistant."100 The women of the Y.W.C.A. believed they could raise the status of paid domestic labour in the same way Florence Nightingale raised the status of the nurse.

"Aunt Martha’s Letter," an occasional column of commentary on women’s issues carried by the local paper,
revealed some of the elements of dissatisfaction obscurely referred to by Mrs. Eddy. According to Aunt Martha, many local housewives disliked some of the provisions incorporated into the Househelper's Code. Local housewives, she said, could not seem to understand why servants wanted to work only 8 hours a day, wanted more than two half days off a week, and wanted to use the front door.\textsuperscript{101}  

The Y did eventually see its training scheme established in the fall of 1937 as part of the Dominion Youth Training Plan.\textsuperscript{102} By then, the Travellers Aid had become the "Migration and Social Service Department" which included Travellers Aid, an Employment Bureau and other social service programs.\textsuperscript{103} The figures for 1936 show the Employment Bureau received 929 applicants looking for work, and 828 requests from employers, but only 49\% of applicants were placed. Other cases handled within the Social Service Department were for emergency food and shelter to young women in economic difficulties and accommodation and support for those on relief who were ill and unable to work. These services were subsidized by the city, but at less than they cost.\textsuperscript{104} The residence, losing money in the early days of the decade was now frequently overcrowded, as a result of the new policy. The Y.W.C.A was also seeking local support for the Code for household assistants, finalized by the National Y.W.C.A and adopted by the National Council of Women in June of 1936.\textsuperscript{105}
Women in the Y.W.C.A. struggled with inadequate means, relying on public charitable response for the most of its funding, to provide services for the unemployed women in the city. They did undertake other activities to try to improve the conditions of women, working or not, such as asking the Saskatoon Trades and Labour Council to co-operate on demands for minimum wages and regulated working hours for working women. They argued for protection for cafe workers who worked until after the street car service closed at night. They provided a valuable service with the low cost, safe accommodations, and classes which were widely utilized. They had great insight into the lives and working conditions of women locally, and frequently offered their opinions on proposed government policies at all levels of government, as well as frequently lobbying and petitioning for changes. Highly visible and identifiable, with an everyday physical presence and a trusted reputation, the Y was a place that women turned to for help.

Unfortunately, the solutions offered the women connected with the Y.W.C.A. were limited by lack of money and by lack of vision. The services offered responded only to immediate concrete needs. This meant providing low cost accommodations, rather than working for improved wages for working women. In this way, domestic service as a solution to women’s unemployment made sense. It could, immediately, provide a young unemployed woman with a roof
over her head, food in her stomach, a small wage and a modicum of independence. Some young women, proud enough to refuse relief, were found working for room and board and $2 a month.  

In pressuring the government to involve itself in Youth Training schemes, and in promoting domestic service as the solution to young women's unemployment, the Y.W.C.A. was trapped by its vision of women and their role in society. Women's supreme duty was as wife and mother. Domestic service was excellent training for this duty, and could provide independence and self respect, keeping young women from moral lapse.

It could well be that the members of the Y were also trapped in their solutions by other limitations. Saskatoon was not a city with a diverse economic base, which could offer a variety of employment options in the best of times. A lack of other options for women was complicated by their own incapacity to create other avenues. The Y was also limited by its family ethic. Women with husbands or fathers were expected to be taken care of by their male relatives. Women who were widowed or deserted were deserving cases for official relief. The Y preferred to work for the young, single, friendless, homeless girl. It is a measure of the depression, perhaps, that the Y began to respond to the needs of all women, not just their preferred clientele. But, for all the women they attempted to serve, the Y's responses
were limited by lack of vision and power, and in particular by a narrow view of women's roles.

These views of women were endorsed by the Dominion and Provincial Youth Training Course in which 226 young men and 160 young women were enroled. The boys' classes were varied, ranging from forestry and prospecting to radio engineering. The girls' classes were centred around aspects of personal service: dressmaking, hairdressing, commercial, cooking and table service, personal grooming, homecraft and sewing.\(^{110}\)

While the Y.W.C.A. did have some unique and innovative solutions to the provision of relief services, it had no similar vision for solutions to women's unemployment. Its work made them ideally placed to respond to women's relief needs, but they did not take advantage of their position to advocate, or work for fundamental changes to the system.

Another example of a women's organization distracted from its original intentions by relief work was the Local Chapters of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire. The organization was formed during World War I as a patriotic institution to support the war effort. Most of its activities were related to encouraging and developing patriotism. These activities included the awarding of medals and books to schoolchildren, donating photographs of the King and Queen and supporting veterans. In 1929 its primary objective was "to stimulate and give expression to the sentiment of patriotism, which binds women and children of
the Empire around the throne and to the person of their Gracious and Beloved Sovereign. Secondary objectives included welfare work among widows and dependents of service men who had fallen in defence of the Empire.

The onset of the depression had precipitated an expansion of this welfare work. One chapter had a summer cottage at Pike Lake which provided a summer camp holiday for women in need and their children. Two chapters were involved with the Well Baby Clinics and Dental Clinics for Needy Children at a local hospital. Other chapters supported various schools with educational fees and books, and other educational activities. All chapters contributed to the provision of clothing or other necessities to destitute families. All this work was self supported. Fund raising activities included competitive bridge parties, silver teas, and sales of home cooked goods. Chapters also applied for permission to hold Tag Days. In 1935 they raised $212.49 and in 1937 they raised $251.47 for their child welfare work. The fund raising work supported not only the expanded welfare work, but regular "Empire" activities, such as installing brass plaques and contributing to the upkeep of Memorial Avenue in the local cemetery.

Chapters also undertook educational work. Mothercraft classes, run in conjunction with the Victorian Order of Nurses, featured in the October 1931 issue of Echoes, the National newspaper of the I.O.D.E. as an example to other
chapters across the country of the "unique and important work needed in these difficult times." These classes were seen as "important for the benefit of prospective mothers" which was of "more than usual interest at the present time on account of the very high rate of maternal and infant mortality." The chapter responsible for this project carried all the expense of running the classes and in addition welcomed all the mothers to each class, provided refreshments and provided a daycare for children of the mothers attending. The classes covered pre-natal care, nutrition, care of the teeth, proper clothing for Mom and baby with demonstrations of bathing and feeding, and general care of Mother and child. The nurses taught the classes using posters, lectures and hands-on demonstrations. The classes had proved so popular and useful, that the I.O.D.E. expanded the classes to cover such topics as budgeting and marketing.

Other women's organizations worked within their own communities to provide relief services. For many of these women's organizations relief work had always been an aspect of their existence. They simply continued to do what they had always been prepared to do. The only new thing the depression brought this kind of women's organization was the size and the scope of the problems they faced. For example, the Catholic Women's League provided clothing and other material assistance to Catholic families in need, as well as
undertaking a Christmas Cheer Campaign.\textsuperscript{117} Rosary Hall, a small hostel and recreational centre run by the Sisters of Sion (a religious order of women), provided free room and board to transient girls who came in from the country looking for work.\textsuperscript{118} In 1934, this group declined the offer of City Council to hold a Tag Day to raise funds, saying "in view of the fact that the depression continues, we have decided to withhold our Tag Day this year with the hope that next year will bring better times."\textsuperscript{119}

The Saskatoon Section of the National Council of Jewish Women, Social Services Committee, "assisted the poor, sick and needy of our faith of this city."\textsuperscript{120} These women organized a tag day, a dance, had a booth at the exhibition and held bridge parties which, along with donations from Jewish sources, raised over $600 in 1938.\textsuperscript{121} With their funds they disbursed direct relief to needy Jewish families, contributed to the support of the Jewish orphanage, and assisted transients.\textsuperscript{122}

Another women's organization which became involved in relief work was the Women's Christian Temperance Union. (W.C.T.U.), which ran a hospital for unwed mothers and supported this work with a grant from city council. The Hospital provided a haven for unmarried girls who were pregnant "when all other doors are closed to them."\textsuperscript{123} The hospital provided the necessary medical attention and helped find foster parents for the babies. In addition, the
W.C.T.U. members believed they were helping the "girls" find a Christian lifestyle:

We are glad to say we have reason to believe that many of our girls become truly converted and go forth with the determination to live a better life, though they realize life may be hard to them. Sometimes, instead of receiving help to live the higher life, those with whom they meet seem to delight in hindering them every step of the way. Thus they often become discouraged.124

The statistics for the hospital showed the prevalence of pregnant girls under sixteen, incest cases, miscarriages, and still births. Most of the babies were given up for adoption. For example, in 1930 of the seventy girls registered, (seventy-eight births) four married the fathers of their babies, thirty-seven kept their babies. The remainder put their infants up for adoption.

Adoption may not have been what the mothers may have wanted. As the report stated: "Mother love is very strong in these girls, and they are loath to part with their children, but circumstances are such that it in many cases it is quite impossible to keep them".125 The W.C.T.U. saw that most of the inmates of the hospital were teenage girls, "truly more sinned against than sinning".126

The W.C.T.U. also co-operated with the provincial Bureau of Child protection in trying to track down putative fathers, in order to make them realize their responsibility. They also befriended friendless girls in court and helped with police cases.
As the depression continued the W.C.T.U. tried to economize as much as possible, realizing "the extraordinary conditions confronting citizens in all walks of life" but because of those very same conditions the group reported "our work steadily increasing and our revenues decreasing as well". The increase in demand for the services of the hospital was beyond the capacity of the W.C.T.U., even with financial support from City Council. In 1934, the Salvation Army took over the running of the hospital, which it still does to this day.

It was this myriad of services which had prompted the first social service survey of the city in 1930 to recommend the establishment of the Social Service Exchange. Professionalism: efficiency, reduction of duplication of services, abuse by recipients, and cost-cutting were the expressed objectives of the Social Service Exchange. Regardless of these objectives, women's organizations, a staggering number of them, continued to undertake an amazing amount of work for the relief of women and children in the city.

While all organizations contributed in some measure to the delivery of relief in the city of Saskatoon, it was mostly women's organizations which took the lead in subsidizing the formal relief measures of city council. A belief in the ability of woman to understand and cater to the needs of other women, a belief in the general fitness of
of social welfare work, and a recognition that women's needs were ignored and neglected, facilitated the participation of women in these areas. The work they undertook was pragmatic and concrete; they did what had to be done. For the women working in these organizations, religious beliefs, political beliefs, and sisterly solidarity had motivated them to act for those they believed needed their help. The value of their work can be surmised from the staggering amount of work they undertook and achieved at a time when funds were severely limited.


3 Ibid, pp. 431-432.

4 Ibid. The author points out that in some cases involvement was merely fashionable. If a society leader became involved, many other women would do so from social reasons. An Australian scholar argues that generally upper class women lent only their titles as "benefactors" of the various charitable organizations. Only in the colonies, in her opinion, did upper class women become more significantly involved in philanthropy. See Elizabeth Windschuttle, "Feeding the Poor and Sapping Their Strength: The Public Role of Ruling Class Women in Eastern Australia, 1788-1850," in Women, Class and History: Feminist Perspectives on Australia, 1788-1978, Elizabeth Windschuttle, ed. (Australia: Fontana Books, 1980). p 62.

5 Prochaska, "Women in English Philanthropy," p. 435. Prochaska points out that involvement in charitable work was actually a strategy used to create opportunities otherwise denied to the increasing independent middle class woman.


9 These impulses have been called "maternal feminism." There is scholarly debate about maternal feminists. Were they early feminists? Was their work designed to protect class interests or based on idealism? For an example of the critique of women's involvement in charitable activities see Carol Bacchi, "Race Regeneration and Social Purity: Attitudes of the Canadian English Speaking Suffragists," Histoire Sociale/Social History, XI (1978),460-474. She has also published a book, Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of English Canadian Suffragists, in which she expands this critique.
10 Without an understanding of the complex factors which motivated many women, it is not possible to accurately appreciate the feminism underlying many women's volunteer work. See the introduction in Malmgreen, Religion in the Lives of English Women, for a discussion of this.

11 I would argue women can not be considered a homogeneous group. Even within the same organizations women expressed widely varying opinions and views on the same issues. (See the National Council of Women's Year Book as an example of this). Dismissing women's activities because they did not express an explicit radical feminist analysis does not do justice to the variety and vitality of women's opinions and views.

12 Men had a tendency to sap the vitality of the women's movement. See the opinion of Emily Stowe, reported in Canadian Women, p.178.

13 Excellent research, with which I agree, has been carried out into the development of the phenomena of professionalization. For example, see Veronica Strong Boag, "Intruders in the Nursery: Childcare Professionals Reshape the Years One to Five, 1920-1940 in Childhood and Family in Canadian History, Joy Parr, ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982).

14 Ibid. It may be that the development of professionalization was related to the loss of traditional support systems, like servants or extended family networks, which had provided full time support and resources to wives and mothers. Individual women were becoming more isolated in their responsibility for the welfare of the family, and the advice of "experts" may have been welcomed and relied upon in the absence of other supports.

15 For an interesting look at how the format of the magazine changes in the first year of operation, see Chatelaine, I, nos. 1, 6, 9, 10.

16 "The Scientific Background of the Egg," Chatelaine, II (May, 1929), 22-23.


18 The Bride's Progress", Chatelaine, I (June, 1928), 16. The "Bride's Progress" commenced in the June, 1928 issue of The Chatelaine and continued until the December, 1928 issue. The origins of the series is suggestive about the inability of the nuclear family to prepare the young woman for her new role in the modern world, perhaps due to the increasing
mobility of the Canadian population. The author, a dietitian, had conceived the idea for the series after she had taken a young friend into her home for a month to learn home management. The editorial of the issue carrying the opening article in the series prophesied "the practical ways and means of a teacher of home economics in her own home will be of great interest to a larger coterie of our readers than brides alone." The authors of these articles were touted as qualified experts in their fields -- qualified nurses, teachers, dietitians -- and presumably more knowledgeable than the average woman on how to perform the duties of wife and mother more efficiently. For example, Miss Stella E. Pines, R.N. was described as having "...made a life study of Mothers and babies all over the Empire, Miss Pines has conducted research in their behalf, establishing Mothercraft centres in New Zealand and carrying on obstetrical and public health study in Great Britain and Canada." See "On the Importance of Women Being Women." (editorial) Chatelaine, I (August, 1928), 16.

19 This has since come to be identified as maternal feminism, or domestic feminism. Arguments such as these surfaced in all the areas where women wanted to participate. For example, in the temperance movement and the early suffrage movement, many of the arguments women raised had a distinctly domestic flavour. For examples see: Karen Blair, The Clubwoman as Feminist (New York: Holmes and Meir Publishers, 1980); Ramsey Cook and Wendy Mitchinson, The Proper Sphere: Women's Place in Canadian Society (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976); Beth Light and Joy Parr. Canadian Women on the Move, 1867-1920 (Toronto: New Hogtown Press and O.I.S.E. Press, 1983); Joy Parr, ed. Childhood and Family in Canadian History (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982).


Interview with Alma Ledingham, Sept. 17, 1986.

Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, pp. 19-25, details the activities of the women involved in a variety of organizations.


I.C.W., Year Book for 1938, p. 64.
Prentice, et al., *Canadian Women*. See pages 180-183 for a discussion of the class make up of the organization. Also, see the "History of the National Council of Women," in the N.C.W., *Year Book for 1937*, p. 64, for a summary of the organization's activities from 1893-1937. The variety of activities, from making a quilt for Victoria's 60th jubilee celebrations to the appointment of Department of labour "women correspondents on every phase of paid work affecting women and children", shows the eclectic nature of the group.


This description of the N.C.W. structure was drawn from the Constitution and by-laws of the organization. These were reproduced annually in the *Year Book*.


Ibid., p. 99.

Ibid.

N.C.W., *Year Book for 1930*, p.107. See also Margaret W. Andrews, "The Course of Medical Opinion in British Columbia, 1919-1939" (*Histoire Sociale/Social History*, XVI (1983), 131-43. Andrews shows that this was probably not entirely accurate, at least in British Columbia. Doctors, according to her research, were beginning to reject the socially approved role of free medical services to indigents and a preference for state assumption of responsibility for the medical costs of these patients. She demonstrates how doctors were attracted by the notion of receiving payment for these patients, as they were a growing percentage of their patients in a time of increased competition between doctors.

N.C.W., *Year Book for 1930*, pp. 63-64.


Ibid.

It was this experience which led many of the women involved in good works, a socially approved activity, into other activities which were not always appreciated or accepted, such as the temperance movement or the suffrage
movement. Women did not like what they saw of the way men operated the world and they wanted to change it. While many of these women would not be counted as feminists, nor would they have used the term of themselves, their activities were a practical feminism; they addressed issues that had an immediate and detrimental effect on the world of women that most women experienced.


39 See Veronica Strong Boag, "Intruders in the Nursery," pp. 143-178. The author analyzes the drive towards "professionalising" the role of mother which was well under way by the 1920's. See also, Suzann Buckley, "Efforts to Reduce Infant Maternal Mortality in Canada Between the Two World Wars," Atlantis, II (Spring 1977), 76-84.

40 A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, p.4. The Canadian Welfare Council, the author of this study, was engaged during the thirties in a dispute over the control of family and child welfare services. Essentially, the Welfare Council attempted to wrest responsibility for the provision of health education in these areas from the Division for Child Welfare, a department of the Dominion Government's Ministry for Health. While the Dominion Government was willing to do this, opponents of the scheme saw it as an attempt by the Dominion Government to avoid activity in the health field. The government argued it was solely a cost cutting measure. See: R.L. Schnell. "The Public Interest and the Social Market: An Experiment in Privatizing Federal Child Welfare, 1933-1937." (Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies, University of Calgary, 1987), for a fuller discussion of this aspect of the C.W.C. activities.


42 Ibid., Minutes for Jan. 7, 1917.

43 S.A.B. B 82, Minutes of Executive Meeting, Nov. 25, 1929.

44 A Report of a letter from Miss Whitton. She said she had discussed the difficulties of starting a social service organization, but promised that work in starting one in Saskatoon would begin as soon as possible. Recorded in the
minutes of March 28, 1930. The L.C.W. decided to write back to her asking her not to undertake the work before September. Minutes, Executive Meeting, May 27, 1930.

45 This format continued until well into the forties. Local organizations used the authority of the C.W.C. to argue, usually successfully as in Saskatoon, for the implementations of the recommendations.

46 Dorothy E. King, Fieldworker, Social Welfare Conditions in the City of Saskatoon, with Special Reference to Families and Individuals in Distress. A Study by the Canadian Council on Child and Family Welfare at the Request of the Legislation Committee of the Saskatoon Local Council of Women, 1930. Miss Thompson, hired as a social service worker, one of the major recommendations of Miss King's report, later became convenor of the Saskatoon L.C.W.'s Moral Standards Committee, established in 1935. See minutes for the L.C.W. Executive Meeting for Oct. 24, 1935. The objectives of the committee were: Unemployed women and their welfare, the Appointment of a Female Police Officer, Prisons for women, Rehabilitation of Prostitutes, the Welfare of Illegitimate Children.

47 S.A.B. B 82, Minutes for a Special Local Council of Women Meeting, Oct. 14, 1930.

48 S.A.B. B 82, Minutes for regular L.C.W. Meeting, Feb. 23, 1934. Miss Thompson pointed out she had a case load of 300 families a year.


50 The minutes for meetings in 1916 record this consistently.

51 I could determine no pattern to the decisions regarding how to open the meetings. See, for example, Minutes for Mar. 30, 1934.

52 S.A.B. B 82, Local Council of Women Minute Books, 1933. Minutes for Executive Meeting held Nov. 21, 1933.


The extensive resolution covered the treatment accorded single unemployed men and single unemployed women under 21.


S.A.B. B 82, Local Council of Women Minute Books, 1931. Minutes of Nov. 24, 1931, meeting.


S.A.B. B 82, Local Council of Women Minute Books, See for example, Minutes for Dec. 15, 1933 and Nov. 19 and 30, 1934.

A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon. p.62.


N.C.W., Year Book for 1929, pp.75-76.

Ibid., p. 105.

N.C.W., Year Book for 1929, pp. 84-85.


Ibid.


72 Ibid. Miss Simcox insisted in this letter that she never worked for the Y.W.C.A. "society", but only for the church.


74 A History of the Y.W.C.A. in Saskatoon, pp. 3-6.


76 Innis, Unfold the Years, p. 71. This basic objective was established at the London Conference in 1898, and incorporated into the Canadian Constitution. In addition to expressing the objectives of the organization, this was also intended to break down interdenominational barriers, encouraging the participation of all Christian women.

77 The role of the local paper in the community was important. Every event in the community was covered in detail, women's events in particular. The paper had two women editors on staff ensuring this, as can be seen from the regularity of the official vote of thanks for their work at every A.G.M. of the L.C.W. In fact, newspapers were a valuable supplementary resource to organizational records as they often carried copies of reports only mentioned in organizational records, and verbatim reports of meetings. See: Kerr and Hanson, Saskatoon, p. xii, for a discussion on the value of the local newspaper as a historical resource.

78 I am grateful to Cathy Wylie for the discussions which clarified this and other points relating to the activities of the Y.W.C.A. in Saskatoon. In her thesis on the Saskatoon Y, she argues the local Y.W.C.A. did not want to be involved in this work and did so only because the government bureau so shamefully neglected the needs of unemployed women. They advised other Y.W.C.A.'s across the country not to undertake this work, though they did not manage to extricate themselves from it until the unemployment situation improved with the outbreak of war.


81 S.A.B. A 553.2 Report of the Traveller's Aid Secretary, 1933. See also the report in the Star Phoenix, May 17, 1933.
The same concerns were found the Y's club work. The Y.W.C.A. had recorded underprivileged and privileged girls attending the clubs organized by the Girl's Work Department in 1934: of the total 524 enrolled for 1933, 316 came from underprivileged families. S.A.B. A 553.28, Annual Report, 1934.

Another example of the eligibility criteria in operation, girls had to be prepared to offer proof of their inability to pay.

Aunt Martha pointed out women were responsible for creating these class distinctions. She claimed a house hold helper had mentioned that the same women who refused to let servants use the front door, allowed dressmakers and nurses to use the front entrance.

A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, p. 12. See also "Dominion Youth Training Course Described". Star-Phoenix, Feb. 2, 1937.

S.A.B. A 553.28, Y.W.C.A Annual Report to the Local Council of Women, 1937.

A Study in Community Services in Saskatoon, pp. 58-60.

S.A.B. A 553.28, Y.W.C.A Annual Report to the Local Council of Women, 1937.


S.A.B. A 553.28, The Y.W.C.A. in Saskatoon, p.10. The authors considered the Y a pioneer in social welfare because of actions such as these.


Miss Lillian Thompson, addressing the British Empire Service League, said this was women taking advantage of the times to exploit the girls. Star-Phoenix. Mar. 29, 1934.


A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, p. 65. See also "Local Chapter Reports" in Echoes for the decade.

See C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 363, Tag Days.

115. Ibid.

116. Ibid. The photograph accompanying the article shows a row of chairs in a semi-circle, in front of a blackboard with "Why Pre-Natal Care is Necessary: 1) Origin of Life, 2) Nutrition, 3) Carrying off Waste" written on it. On the wall is a display of baby clothing and a poster. A crib, doll and other baby items are on a table.

117. A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, p.20.

118. A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, p.60.

119. C.O.S. City Clerk's Office, file 363, Letter from Sister Marie Ethel de Lion, March 6, 1934.


122. Ibid. See also A Study of Community Services in Saskatoon, pp. 20-21.


125. Ibid.

126. Ibid.

Chapter 4: Conclusions

The objectives and approaches of Canadian relief policy were modeled on the principles of poor relief developed in Great Britain. These principles had been abandoned in Britain before World War 1 with the introduction of the fledgling welfare state. They continued as the basis for relief in Canada. These principles were in place on formal and informal levels in Saskatoon during the Great Depression of 1929-1939.

The principles of relief developed in Britain obscured the reality of working class lives and avoided an acceptance of the responsibility for the elimination of the conditions which caused people to seek relief. Relief was supposed to help people, but the principles had nothing to do with helping people. The principles were used to justify denying or minimizing aid to the poor.

Most important was the economic costs of relief. Support of the poor could not penalize ratepayers. Conditions of relief, as a consequence, were always designed to minimize costs. Minimal conditions were not only cheaper to provide, they also repelled people who might be attracted by "laziness" to prefer public support to an honest day's work. Moreover, this principle encouraged lessening eligibility, the notion that relief could never pay more than the most lowly work available in a locality. The principle of lessening eligibility killed three birds with one stone: it kept costs
low, it made relief unattractive and it ensured relief provisions would not interfere with the operations of the local labour market.

Morality and economy interacted efficiently not only in the principle of lessening eligibility, but in other principles associated with relief, such as the work house, the laws of settlement, and qualification criteria.

The problem was, that regardless of how well morals and money interacted, the system did not work. Although the provisions of relief were always inadequate and inefficient, the system nevertheless continued to be too expensive. Costs escalated no matter what strategy was applied to reject applicants. Again, the problem was not one of bureaucracy, but of social and economic conditions.

Generally, the poor also remained impermeable to moral education, and demonstrated outright rejection of the controls inherent in the system. Working class people persisted in developing their own separate culture, identity, and loyalties. Community consensus and solidarity developed strong notions of what was right and fair. Poor relief was feared and rejected because it was physically and morally repugnant, but that did not stop the need for relief, nor the growing consensus that relief was an unfair system.

Furthermore, this system, designed to control working class men - notoriously dangerous when unemployed and hungry - was mainly utilized by women and children, the sick, aged
or disabled, and the criminal or insane. The inappropriateness of the system designed for one population, but used almost entirely by a completely different population never seemed to be noticed. Women and their dependents were an invisible population. Consequently their needs and concerns were not considered by the administrators of relief.

Relief in Britain was supplemented and supported by private charity. Private relief reflected many of the same desires as public relief: a concern with moral and spiritual welfare, fears about undermining positive character traits, worries about inadequate funds and the need to keep costs low, and a drive to defuse social conflict. Both the private and public forms of relief spawned alternate visions of poverty, its causes and its treatment. The move towards a more humane treatment of poverty, and commitment to social reform, arose from experiences with poor relief.

The people who needed relief were not simply passive victims. They were actively engaged in manipulating the system for short term gain wherever possible and in struggling for justice and fair treatment in the long term. In many cases charity, such as subsidized bread paid for by subscriptions, was rejected in favour of demands for fair prices. The poor created a sense of what was moral and correct behaviour in society through their shared humiliation and organizational experiences. They fought, often violently, for that vision. The violence was enacted on the streets of Saskatoon, and in
one instance caused a death. A relief system which met people's needs with dignity while recognizing that the problems were concrete social problems and not the result of an individual's moral lapse, became part of that vision.

In Canada, the British inheritance was influenced by local conditions. The colony was seen as an escape from poverty, a chance for individuals to make good through their own efforts. Hard work and determination were supposed to bring the means of self support. Relief provisions were unnecessary, because the entire colonization system was one entire gigantic make-work relief project.

This attitude reinforced the moral judgements of poverty already imbedded in relief, and reinforced minimalist approaches that in some cases saw relief policy totally ignored in statutes. Different provinces developed totally different approaches to the provision of relief, but all were based on the same principles.

The need for relief still existed. This ensured that philanthropy became a major prop to subsidize inadequate official relief, just as in England. The relationship between publicly funded relief services, with access to tax dollars and decision making powers, and voluntary private relief was tense. Volunteer agencies in general were critical of government involvement in poor relief, wanting such involvement to be minimal.
Volunteer agencies were reluctant to give up their role in delivering relief. They believed their knowledge and skills, based on face to face involvement with the poor was superior to faceless government bureaucracy. The ultimate failure of volunteer agencies to cope with the relief needs of the depression was seen as due to lack of financial resources, not lack of knowledge or skills. The failure turned private relief from a source of support to the public level into another dependent and a further source of pressure.

In spite of the failure of community based relief in Saskatoon, no political decision to make relief a solely public responsibility was desired by either private agencies or the City Council. Private voluntary agencies wanted to maintain their independent and voluntary role with the financial support of the government. City Council did not want to assume the financial responsibility. Each level of relief, public and private, had different objectives for its role in relief, but the result was the same: inadequate and underfunded relief for those in need.

Eventually, the sheer size of the problem defeated both volunteer groups and City Council. Unemployment was recognized as a national problem beyond the scope of either private groups or local government. The failure of the Dominion government to act decisively and in the national interest condemned City Council and local community organizations to an indefensible position, and relievers to
inadequate support. Though there was no impediment to creative solutions at the local level, neither council nor private groups were able to find any. The principles of British relief were too deeply engrained.

The failure of the British relief principles and the failure of a relief system based on them, was not addressed by Saskatoon City Council. In response to the pressures of the decade the Council developed a split personality. City Council reacted conservatively towards the demands of the relievers, reluctant to instigate change or increase services. Yet, towards the Dominion government, City Council appeared increasingly radical, demanding the involvement of the central government in assuming responsibility for and establishing a centralized national service for unemployment relief.

The incongruence of relief designed for men by men was not recognized, though it can be seen in the simple statistics for the 1930s. The statistics about people on relief in the cities of Saskatchewan divide the population into employables (mostly men) and unemployables (mostly women and children). The figures show that the unemployables vastly outnumbered the employables. On average, the categories making up the unemployable section of relief recipients averaged 70% of the total.

In the delivery of relief services, women were major participants, both as recipients and providers. The activities of women on relief have never been adequately explored and
explained. Much more information is needed to explore this aspect of women's lives in the 1930s, but the evidence suggests that women developed a separate culture, a community solidarity through their experiences on relief. Neighbourhoods, kinship networks, and shared experiences, brought women to a common view of the world that was radically different from the view the lawmakers had developed. These women developed collective and individual strategies, based on their moral judgement of the treatment they were receiving. They had been raised to believe in a particular role for themselves, but had their world, and their place in it, turned upside down by the depression. As a result they protested what they saw as injustice, they rejected unfair and inadequate treatment, and articulated their reasons for this.

Before the depression the discordance between the ideals of life women were raised to believe in, and the experience of everyday life, may have been great, but women experienced it in isolation, as individual failure. In this isolation, a woman would have accepted the gap between the ideal and reality as her problem, when her husband, her children, her home, did not measure up to the standards she had been led to believe were the norm. As an individual, she would be the target of exhortations to be the perfect wife, mother, housekeeper, household manager, cook and hostess, regardless of her income or inclinations. But at the very least, women
could continue to subscribe to the barrage of propaganda that dictated their role and place in society.

The depression destroyed the individual isolation that poverty imposed on so many women. There were simply far too many women whose lives had been directly touched by the enormity of the economic fallout of the depression. Woman's role, her socially constructed identity, was destroyed. With little or no income, often with no husband present in the home, woman's role was radically revised by circumstances. All the things supposedly sacrosanct and inviolate were no longer so. Women lost husbands, children, and health to a futile search for work. They watched their homes deteriorate. They saw themselves taking jobs at impossibly low wages and accepting the situation. They struggled to maintain homes and families in difficult and trying times. They struggled to maintain independence and satisfy pride. The unending, unrewarding labour of domestic maintenance was worsened by low paying outside labour, lack of money and lack of food; lack of health and lack of hope.

Such gross violations challenged women's notions of themselves and the world in which they lived. The eradication of the traditional role, with established duties and expectations, meant a new and fearful freedom. It was this liberation which permitted women to undertake activities which would have been unthinkable earlier. Accepting relief, demanding more from it, manipulating the system, fighting to
improve the conditions of relief, were not activities inside the traditional boundaries of feminine behaviour.

Many of these activities were justified by self-defence, an attempt to preserve the old sphere, to return women to their familiar status, to protect the family. Women were in the forefront of the fight for social change from the sense of violation they shared.

The community consensus women developed and shared from this sense of violation was formulated from a strong vision of women's role in society. This vision had been created and nurtured over decades. Women were at once the victims and protectors of this vision of womanhood. Changes to the social system were going to protect that vision, not alter it.

It was here, based in common experience, that the interest of working class and upper class women coincided. Valuing and protecting the role of wife and mother, and the family were high on the agenda of many women's organizations. Their own value was tied up in those same traditional roles. Protecting and providing for women in need was simultaneously an extension of the role, and a means of protecting it. While both classes of women had very different life experiences, and certainly had distinctly different notions of social justice, both groups shared the same views of women's true place as central to the home and family.

The women who were committed to aiding the "less fortunate" were driven by complex motives and ideals. Class
interests and female solidarity are only two factors on a continuum of motivations and objectives. Religious beliefs, political commitment, class loyalties, personal ambition, naivete, radical feminism and lack of knowledge, were only some of the myriad of factors in the operation of women's organizations and their philanthropic activities.¹

While much of the effort of many women's organizations can be dismissed as based in class interest, or influenced by ideals such as professionalization, it may be more accurate to talk of "pragmatic feminism." The feminists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century may not have been as radical and as effective as late twentieth century feminists would have liked. The earlier feminists were, after all, both produced and confined by, the times in which they lived. In many cases, their efforts achieved short term improvements, contributed to long term reforms, or even moved the organizations and the women in them towards more progressive positions. Furthermore, many of the actions taken and encouraged by individuals within these organizations were progressive. Recognition of their work and achievements, rather than criticism of their ideology, is most important.

The impact of the depression was greater than has been appreciated. The understanding of relief - who provides it and who receives it - was changed forever by the grass roots experiences of the thirties. The agencies which provided charitable support - philanthropy, charity - early recognized
their inability to meet what they now recognized to be a public and governmental responsibility. They began to argue that the governments, at what-ever level, could learn from them about the most professional and efficient ways of coping with relief cases. For themselves, they carved out a programme of public education, to gain support for adequate budgets which would allow them to hire qualified personnel.\textsuperscript{2}

Voluntary family services, family welfare, and community welfare would always be a part of any community agency's work.\textsuperscript{3} Until the governments had reached satisfactory standards in this regard, the private agencies would work in collaboration with the public departments, an arrangement which it was suggested included sharing resources. Furthermore, the depression years saw far more involvement in the local political process than was recorded before or since.

Saskatoon City Council, over the depression decade, was trapped in trying to meet and reconcile the conflicting demands and expectations of its electors. Restrained by the assumptions which had framed governmental relief policy over previous decades, Council found itself on the receiving end of inadequate funding, weak support and non-existent initiatives from senior levels of government. As it struggled to fill the vacuum left by the inadequacy of Dominion and Provincial governments, Council found itself subjected to hostile and bitter criticism from both those it strove to
represent, the ratepayers, and those it strove to provide for, the relief recipients.

Caught between such volatile and competing groups, trapped by a shrinking tax base and escalating costs, and abandoned by province and dominion, Council did well to survive and keep the city from bankruptcy and revolution — both of which must have appeared frighteningly close at times. Some of the achievements of the city's relief policy and administration are currently objects of pride and utility in the city; the "palatial" C.N.R. hotel, now privately owned, is a city landmark, The Broadway Bridge, sewers, roads, and the river bank improvements are all concrete legacies of the city's relief policy and administration in the early years of the depression. It is not entirely the fault of the city that work which benefitted the people of Saskatoon, then and since, could not continue.

The major legacy of the relief policy and administration of the city during the depression was less dramatic and visible, however. The growth and acceptance of a new approach to coping with unemployment, and the fight to achieve it, was a direct outgrowth of the city's experience with the social pressures caused by the need for unemployment relief.

The population in the city was not content to be simply passive recipients of government policies. The reactions to the policies varied. From outright violent protest, to the
formation of a new political party, local people, including women, were moved to action by the impact of the depression.

Even those who were not directly affected, who were fortunate to keep their jobs or even profit from the depression, in many cases were moved to action and change by the realities of the depression. The orchestration of pressure by local people on city council, in which women were major players, laid the groundwork for changes at the parliamentary level. The introduction of unemployment insurance in 1940 indicates the final abandonment of nineteenth century British practices of relief. Without the concrete realities of the depression and the deep and widespread changes in attitude about relief which accompanied it, the deeply held notions of relief as repugnant charity would have prevented the introduction of unemployment insurance. The example of Saskatoon demonstrates the importance of the activity of local people, and more specifically women, in undergoing and achieving the grass roots change which helped lay the foundation for the introduction of unemployment insurance.

Overall, understanding the process whereby political and moral ideologies are articulated as public policy, and how the policy in turn is translated into action, is crucial to the placing of women in history. The gaps between articulation and formulation, between formulation and application are complex. It is in these interstices that people manoeuvre and have their effect on the political and community process.
There were many women genuinely motivated by religious, political or spiritual values who did see beyond traditional boundaries of idealised womanhood, who worked towards fundamental social change. These women advocated alternate views of society; a world where women could share equality and participation in the society beyond the home. These women can not be ignored by or omitted from history. And certainly, the courage, determination and sheer perversity of all women who survived those decades, when survival alone was a political act, can not be understated. The women of the depression years struggled and survived the depression and the relief policy which governed so much of their lives. They have left an historic legacy that must be clearly recognized by society. Their prayers, pamphlets and protests remain as an important part of our Canadian heritage.
A scholarship which integrates social and economic structures with a multi-faceted approach to the "personal" factors of women's lives is only beginning to emerge. To this point the social history of women has had to focus identifying and discovering individual factors. For an example of the new scholarship see Veronica Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled: the Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939.* (Markham, Ontario: Penguin Books, 1988.)

"Relative Responsibilities - Public and Private Services in the Family Field" Text of an agreement of principles, accepted May 28, 1934, by the Canadian Council on Child and Family Welfare (later the Canadian Welfare Council) after review by public and private services throughout Canada. Appendix to *A Study of Community Services in Saskatoon.* pp. 74-75.

A Study of Community Welfare Services in Saskatoon, p. 19.
ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR RELIEF
(FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS)
SASKATOON, 1929
(Including City Grants and private donations
to other relief Services)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Relief Dept.</td>
<td>$16,600.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain Indigenous in prov. homes. etc.</td>
<td>$2,854.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemply. Relief (Citizen Subsidies)</td>
<td>$2,700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Mother's Allowance</td>
<td>$60,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Old Age Pension</td>
<td>$25,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Old Age Pension</td>
<td>$25,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Agencies (estimated)</td>
<td>$20,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES</td>
<td>$153,214.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Relief Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Grants, 1929</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Aid Society</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victorian Order of Nurses</td>
<td>$1,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y.W.C.A. Traveller's Aid</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.C.T.U. Home</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day Nursery</td>
<td>$1,993.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$16,993.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Donations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Aid Society</td>
<td>$518.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.C.T.U. Home</td>
<td>$980.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victorian Order of Nurses</td>
<td>$102.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$1,633.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(i) Estimate of Local Branch of Provincial Bureau of Child Protection.
(ii) Rough Calculation on basis of population; $51,000 charged to Dominion and provincial governments in equal share.

Table Drawn from S.A.B. B82 Social Welfare Conditions in the City of Saskatoon with Especial Reference to Individuals and Families in Distress. pp. 7-10 and p.24.
APPENDIX 2  
Direct Relief, Saskatoon, 1929  
Source, Costs and Services Provided

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th># SERVED</th>
<th>COSTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Relief Department</td>
<td>229 Families</td>
<td>$16,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Relief officer, 1 female assistant.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applicant:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial standing investigated. Able bodied male head required to work for city.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relief Given:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entirely in kind, food and fuel only. Rent only given on pain of eviction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother's Allowance</td>
<td>200 Families</td>
<td>$60,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Bureau of Child Protection, staff sufficient only to undertake minimum investigations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applicant:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All mothers eligible for government pension: &quot;to help her perform her duty to the Dominion and Province in raising her children to be healthy and good citizens&quot;.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relief Given:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash payment (average $25/mth). Only a supplement to the family income.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Phoenix Relief Fund(^1) 1500 Families</td>
<td>$7,000.00(^2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 full time, visits every potential to investigate needs. The newspaper covers all administrative costs, including the staff salary.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applicant:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical needs of children, not &quot;worthiness of parents&quot; determines eligibility.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relief Given:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depends on need: &quot;if family is without food that is provided, children without clothes are clothed, fuel is furnished where the coal box is empty&quot;.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

\(^1\)Initially a Christmas Cheer fund later became a five month winter project.

\(^2\)Cash and value of clothing collected.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Families/Government</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Red Cross</td>
<td>75-100</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff: 3 volunteer investigators.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant: Any needy cases, ex-soldiers or civilian.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief Given: Not specified.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen Fund</td>
<td>No statistics given</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff: Not specified.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants: Ex-servicemen and their families, apply directly or are recommended by other lay agencies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief Given: Short term grants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Legion</td>
<td>No Statistics Given</td>
<td>$2,974.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Empire Service League</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff: Not specified.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant: Needy soldiers with documentary evidence of service.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief Given: Temporary help only, funded from poppy day receipts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army</td>
<td>No Statistics Given</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff: Men's Social and Relief Department, or Corp Officer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant: Any needy man or needy family.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief Given: Food and fuel to value of $3.00 for emergency cases, then referred to City Relief dept. Bed and meals for transients. Soup Kitchen. Second hand clothing, free or cheap, to needy families. Meal tickets for 812 men.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

3 Approximate, the estimate ranged from $1,000 to $1,500.

4 Approximate figures

5 For the period January to July.
Wo-He-Lo Club

22 Families $500.00

Staff: The club has a limited membership of 30 business and professional women who investigate, fund raise and support.

Applicant: Any needy family brought to their attention.

Relief Given: Carries the families through difficult situations.

Caritas Club

No Statistics Given Not given

Staff: Volunteer services of club membership.

Applicant: Only to residents of Saskatoon.

Relief Given: As a supplement to City Relief only: food, coal or cash for medical supplies.

I.O.D.E.

No Statistics Given Not given

Staff: Organization devoted primarily to patriotic work; child welfare seen within this context.

Applicant: Needy families.

Relief Given: Primarily financial, to other agencies, e.g $5/mth to each of four school nurses for their support of needy children.

Catholic Women's League 10-15 Families $1,000.00

Staff: Volunteer members of the organization.

Applicant: Needy Catholic families.

Relief Given: Not specified.

Protestant Church Relief No Statistics Given Not Given

Provided by individual parishes, amounts and value of relief provided in different parishes varies from $2,000 a year to negligible amounts.

Jewish Ladies Aid No Statistics Given $2,000.00

"As it is against the policy of the Jewish group to allow any member to become public charges, the Jewish Ladies Aid" responsible for all Jewish relief cases.

---

6Wo-He-Lo is an acronym for Work-Help Love. It had been in operation for 7 years.

7Exclusive of clothing.

8Approximate figure

9This was the minimum figure
APPENDIX 3
Copy of Original Relief Application Form
Saskatoon, 1932

CITY OF SASKATOON

CIVIC RELIEF BOARD
APPLICATION FOR RELIEF

Name in full: ..................................................

Residence: ..................................................

I am: ........................................................

If married during past twelve months give date: ..........................................................  

Previous occupation of wife: ..........................................................  

I was born at: ..............................................

Nationality: ..............................................

I have resided in Canada: ..........................................................  

In Saskatchewan: ..........................................................  

I came to Saskatchewan from: ..........................................................  

If of Foreign Birth are you a naturalized citizen: ..........................................................  

I have the following persons dependent on me for their livelihood and their age, health and relationship are as stated and they each reside with me: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I am in health and capable of doing the following work: ..........................................................  

My habits as to the use of Liquor and Narcotics are: .......................................................... Have previously been: ..........................................................

State briefly schooling, name school, college, etc.: ..........................................................

EMPLOYMENT RECORD.

I have been employed or engaged during the past five years as follows: (account fully for occupied time)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and address of Employer</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Monthly Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

RECORD OF MILITARY OR NAVAL SERVICE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Battalion</th>
<th>Regiment No</th>
<th>Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I am a member of the following Associations: Church, Clubs, Unions and no other: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Reference to</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

HISTORY OF RESIDENCE.

My residence during the past two years has been as follows: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Board</th>
<th>Amount Paid Weekly</th>
<th>Amount Paid Monthly</th>
<th>Yearly Take</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Date | Address | Owner | Board Weekly | Amount Paid Monthly | Yearly Take |
## RECORD OF RELIEF GIVEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reinvestigations:

This space for use at relief Board only.

Considered this .............................................. day of .............................................. 193

APPLICATION

- Approved for ..............................................
- Refused for ..............................................

Approved by ..............................................
AGREEMENT

I, We, ................................................................. of Saskatoon hereby covenant, promise and agree to and with the City of Saskatoon that should the said City of Saskatoon by itself or by its Civic Relief Board give to myself or my dependents relief either in kind or in money:

(1.) THAT I will diligently seek and will take any position that presents itself or is offered to me either in the City of Saskatoon, in the bush or on a farm or any place outside of the City of Saskatoon.

(2.) THAT any member of the Civic Relief Board or any of its duly authorized employees may at any time enter and inspect any and all premises occupied by me or my dependents.

(3.) THAT I will on demand pay to the City of Saskatoon the value of relief supplied to me or my dependents after the date of this agreement, AND I agree that a certificate by the Civic Relief Board of the City of Saskatoon or by the Treasurer of said City of Saskatoon shall be conclusive evidence as to the making of such advance and the amount thereof.

(4.) THAT should the said City of Saskatoon or its Civic Relief Board either now or at some future date require a mortgage or deposit of title or a bill of sale of any of my assets as security for relief advanced after the date of this agreement I will on demand give such mortgage or deposit such title or give such bill of sale.

(5.) I FURTHER AGREE THAT all monies earned by me or which may come into my possession, except for statutory exemptions, shall be the property of the City of Saskatoon and I hereby transfer, assign and set over unto the City of Saskatoon all such monies to the value of relief advanced after the date of this agreement by the said City of Saskatoon or its Civic Relief Board to me or to my dependents.

(6.) AND I further agree that I will from time to time, or as required by the Civic Relief Board report all monies earned or received by me or my dependents.

(7.) IT is also agreed that whenever the singular pronoun is used throughout this agreement the same shall be construed as meaning the plural where the context so requires.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto affixed my hand and seal this ............... day of .......... A.D. 193......

Signed, sealed and delivered

INVESTIGATOR'S CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that I interviewed the aforesaid .............................................. and that the statement, questions and answers above set forth are as stated to me by ......................................................

......................................................

Investigator

NOTE.—Where interpreter used have interpreter sign the following:

INTERPRETER'S CERTIFICATE

I, ................................................................. of ............................................... SASKATOON, do hereby certify that I translated to .............................................. language all the statements questions and answers in the above form and before the said form was executed by him I read same over to him in the .............................................. language and he appeared to perfectly understand the same.

......................................................

Witness Interpreta

Investigator’s Remarks: 

Relief Officer’s Recommendation:
STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description (Give details)</th>
<th>Amount owing and to whom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bedroom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other assets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Livestock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land — Lots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houses — Other Bldgs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonds, Stocks, Debentures,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgages or Notes,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance Policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Possessions of value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash on hand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash in Bank</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money owing me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal or Wood on hand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I hereby authorize any bank, financial institution or person having access to my credit or banking assets or me to give to the
Saskatoon Civic Relief Board full information concerning same.

I have never received any relief before from any City, Government or other Organization, except as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am unable to provide for my dependents with the necessities of life.

No other person has contributed or is contributing toward the expense of my home except as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATEMENT OF INCOME OF SELF AND FAMILY.

Neither myself nor any member of my family has any income except:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>To whom</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beart</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groceries and Meat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I, the said..., do solemnly declare that I have read over the statements, questions and answers in the above form, that I fully understand same and that the statements and answers to questions set out above are true in substance and in fact, that I have fully considered thereon all my assets of every nature and all my sources of income.

AND I make this declaration conscientiously believing it to be true and knowing that it is of the same force and effect as if made under oath and by virtue of "The Canada Evidence Act."

DECLARED before me at the City of
Saskatoon, in the Province of Saskatchewan, on this day of
A.D. 193
APPENDIX 4
Poster used to Advertise Relief Vote, 1934

NOTICE

Voting on Relief Matters

The Council has decided to obtain the opinion of the unemployed on relief upon the following matters set out in the copy of the ballot shown below:

MARK X OPPOSITE YOUR CHOICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOTE FOR ONE</th>
<th>The present system of supplying groceries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An open voucher on the present relief grocery store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An open voucher on any Saskatoon retail store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash for groceries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOTE FOR ONE</th>
<th>The present system of supplying meat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An open voucher on any Saskatoon butcher shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash for meat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOTE FOR ONE</th>
<th>The present system of supplying milk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash for milk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOTE FOR ONE</th>
<th>An order for a standard loaf of bread</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash for bread</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All heads of households as well as wives receiving relief may vote upon producing to the Deputy Returning Officer the identification card.

Both husband and wife MUST VOTE ON THE DAY OF THEIR RELIEF ISSUE at the ARMOURIES. Corner of Spadina Crescent and Third Avenue.

DATES AND HOURS OF VOTING ARE:
Monday to Friday (Sept. 17-21) — — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday, September 22 — — — 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

BY ORDER OF CITY COUNCIL
APPENDIX 5
Results of Ballot on Relief matters, 1934

MARK X OPPOSITE YOUR CHOICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote for one</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The present system of supplying groceries.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An open voucher on the present relief grocery store.</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An open voucher on any Saskatoon retail store.</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash for groceries.</td>
<td>Rejected 316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>371</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote for one</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The present system of supplying meat.</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An open voucher on any Saskatoon butcher shop.</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash for meat.</td>
<td>Rejected 301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>371</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote for one</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The present system of supplying milk.</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash for milk.</td>
<td>Rejected 187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>371</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote for one</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An order for a standard loaf of bread.</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash for bread.</td>
<td>Rejected 237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>371</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VOTER: Fold this paper so that D.R.O.'s initials on back can be seen.
APPENDIX 6
Relief Agreement for the City of Saskatoon.

I we, ........of Saskatoon hereby covenant, promise and agree to and with the City of Saskatoon that should the said City of Saskatoon by itself or by its Civic Relief Board give to myself or my dependents relief either in kind or in money:

(1) That I will diligently seek and will take any position that presents itself or is offered to me either in the City of Saskatoon, in the bush or on a farm outside of Saskatoon.

(2) That any member of the Civic Relief Board or any of its duly authorized employees may at any time enter and inspect any and all premises occupied by me or my dependents.

(3) That I will on demand pay to the City of Saskatoon the value of relief supplied to me or my dependents after the date of this agreement, and I agree that a certificate by the Civic Relief Board of the City of Saskatoon or by the treasurer of the said City of Saskatoon shall be conclusive evidence as to the making of such advance and the amount thereof.

(4) That should the said City of Saskatoon or its Civic Relief Board either now or at some future date require a mortgage or deposit of title or a bill of sale of any of my assets as security for relief advanced after the date of this agreement I will on demand give such bill or sale.

(5) I further agree that all monies advanced to me or which come into my possession, except for statutory exemptions, shall be the property of the City of Saskatoon and I hereby transfer, assign and set over unto the City of Saskatoon all such monies to the value of relief advanced after the date of this agreement by the said City of Saskatoon or its Civic Relief Board to me or to my dependents.

(6) And I further agree that I will from time to time, or as required by the Civic Relief Board report all monies earned by me or my dependents.

(7) It is also agreed that wherever the singular pronoun is used throughout this agreement the same shall be construed as meaning the plural where the context so requires.

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