

# Pioneers of Feminism and Unionism: Léa Roback and Madeleine Parent

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These transcriptions were extracted from footage shot during the filming of *A Vision in the Darkness* (1991) and *Madeleine Parent, tisserande de solidarités* (2002), directed by Sophie Bissonnette.

## THE TRIAL FOR SEDITIOUS CONSPIRACY (1947-1955)

### The Trial: Witnesses and Arguments (1947)

Madeleine Parent: After the strike, the trials took place, not the least of which was the trial for seditious conspiracy. A conspiracy requires a certain number of people, so we were charged—Kent Rowley and me, as well as another organizer who was with us but whom Duplessis wasn't really targeting, but who had to be there for appearances' sake, Édouard Gauthier—and another worker. But during the trial, they . . . the attorney general dropped the charges against the two workers. But because the police had probably promised the one who spoke out that he'd be released, they couldn't very well release Édouard Gauthier at the same time, because they were both unionized workers, at the same level. So there were the three of us. And Duplessis, who had had Kent arrested and locked up for the last three weeks of the Valleyfield strike, realized that the strike had nevertheless been won. So he decided that this time around, Kent and I would be tried together. That was without taking our lawyers into account. Kent's trial for the Valleyfield strike had been held in French at the Montréal court. He'd also been tried in Saint-Jérôme for assaulting someone, and been sentenced to a month in prison, and that too was in French. But the lawyers decided that, as an Anglophone, he had the right to be tried in his mother tongue. So we made an objection and asked that Kent be tried separately from me. But that wasn't part of Duplessis' plan.

So we ended up having to go to court over it, because Noël Dorion insisted that Kent and I be tried together. Obviously, if he wanted to put us both in jail at the same time, he had to . . . he couldn't gamble on separate trials giving us the same dates. So Justice Fauteux, who later served on the Supreme Court of Canada, came to hear the attorney general's request that Kent be obligated to stand trial in French. After all, he had done it before without objecting. His mother came to testify, and it was very clear that she wasn't a Francophone. So even before she testified, Noël Dorion said, "No, no . . ." [laughs], and presented his whole argument that he'd testified in French before, that he'd been tried in French and so on and so forth. And Fauteux, on the bench, ruled without adjournment that Kent was entitled to a trial in his mother tongue. And under his breath, he said to Dorion, as though he was speaking directly to Duplessis, "If you think that under the Queen, I'm going to deny someone a trial in their mother tongue, you're very much mistaken." So it was decided.

So then the other organizer and I had our trial. Twelve jurors were called out of a pretty big panel. They were all vetted—it was twelve men, obviously, as women weren't allowed on juries in those days. And it was . . .

[Buzzer sounds]

Sophie Bissonnette: Hold on. Start over, Madeleine, about Judge Fauteux.

MP: Okay. So Judge Fauteux said to Noël Dorion, knowing his message would reach Duplessis, "If you think that under the King of England, I will allow . . . I will insist that someone, an Anglophone, be tried in a language other than his mother tongue, you're very much mistaken." So it was over, it was settled, and Kent was tried on his own for seditious conspiracy. And a few days later, of course, the other trial began, for the other worker and me, and the jury was sworn in. They were all men, because at that time, women couldn't sit on a jury. Judge Cousineau was presiding. He had definitely been selected by Duplessis. He had been president of the Conservative Party at the turn of the century, and he knew what his job was. The evidence, the Crown's witnesses, were mostly police officers, including Paul Benoît, who was known by many, many union members in Quebec for his cruelty and his refusal to recognize agreements or respect workers' rights. He carried a monkey's fist and didn't hesitate to use it. Kent had been on the receiving end of it a couple of times. And Benoît, in particular, started testifying about the speeches I had made at public meetings, in great detail. So my lawyer, Roger Ouimet, who was doing the cross-examination, asked him, "How were you able to write all that down?" Because he was in the room, near the door. "Oh," he said, "I had a notepad in my jacket and I took notes." Which is ridiculous! You can't do that! So he had the full speeches, to which he had added all these subversive words, one after the other. Which was interesting because, when I testified in my own defence, I had to recite my speeches once again, to defend myself. The audience was interested in them, as were the jurors. But the judge said, "Listen, you can't make speeches here!" So I said, "I'm sorry, Your Honour, but Paul Benoît recited my speeches, completely distorting them. I have to defend myself." So he didn't say anything else, and I finished my speeches.

Some other police officers also testified. For example, Captain Labbé, if I remember correctly, as well as some others. And they followed the orders they had been given. They didn't say anything good. A judge was called to testify, which must have been humiliating for him, but he was just following orders. A few years earlier, that same judge had told me, when I asked him why he had done certain things that were clearly unjust, that if he didn't follow orders, he could be sent to practice way up north. And as an urbanite of a certain age, he didn't feel he could do that. And that's who they brought in to testify. The head of the conciliation and mediation department, Miron, also testified. Against me, obviously. I knew him well. But he did exactly what he had been told to do, and that was all. The deputy minister of labour, Gérard Tremblay, heard Miron testify because he too had been ordered to testify. He had come down from Quebec City. And during the lunch break, after Miron had finished, Gérard Tremblay came over to speak to Noël Dorion, but on our side. And he said, "Noël, I won't be testifying. I'm going back to Quebec City." So Dorion, who was a bit embarrassed to have been informed of this in my presence and that of our lawyers, said to him, "But you can't do that," and on and on and on, but not too aggressively, because we were right there. So Tremblay said, "Don't worry. I'll tell the boss and I'll take all the responsibility, not you." So he left. But I didn't have a chance to thank him until the Lesage government was elected in 1960, because I didn't dare go see him while Duplessis was still in power, since word would have gotten back to him, and that wouldn't have been good for [Tremblay].

Someone from the Labour Relations Commission also testified. But since he was also tasked with bringing certain documents, he ended up helping us because there were documents in the files of the Labour Relations Commission, for example a letter from Gilbert Ayers to the

commission, which we had never seen and which was revealed thanks to his testimony. And in the end, since he didn't accuse us of any negligence, he didn't help the government. Three union people also testified for the Crown. They were Alfred Charpentier of the Catholic unions, who had been defeated in the run for the presidency by Gérard Picard in the election of 1946; a man named Dubord, who was a machinist in the railroad workshops; and Shannon of the International Longshoremen's Union, representing those who had helped break the longshoremen's strike. As we know, the longshoremen were organized as an independent union, mainly upon the initiative of Gaspesians who had come to work in Montréal. And when they had gone on strike, they had been advised to join the International Union, to gain more support. So this guy, who was called "King Kong Ryan" and who was the president of the International Longshoremen's Union, had also come, and the company had sent a committee of scabs to meet him. He had fired all the strikers' elected representatives and appointed his own committee, which was chosen by the company. And they had broken the strike. That is, it had been settled in the company's favour.

So Shannon was part of that group. The three union representatives testified, and each of them said the same thing, word for word. "The people I know all say she's a communist." Not one word more. They just kept repeating it, as though it were a litany. When our lawyer asked them if they had proof, they just repeated their litany once again. They had nothing else to say. Those were the orders they had been given. Also, they had sent for a woman striker who . . . who was a good striker, but she wasn't on the committee, and they didn't know that. And when she arrived . . . She had been asked to arrive an hour before the session so that Dorion could question her. So he did, and then he told her, "You can go home. We don't need you." But since she was already there, we called her as a witness. And she—in her kind, simple, reserved manner—provided excellent testimony in our favour. Let's not forget that the strike hadn't been won. So those people were taking a risk. Édouard Gauthier also testified. And Édouard, who only had a fourth grade elementary education, but who was self-taught otherwise, answered each of Dorion's question by saying, "I'm just a lowly labourer, but . . .," and then giving his answer. That made Dorion angry, because it didn't have the effect he hoped it would have on the jury. So he said, "Mr. Gauthier, please don't repeat 'I'm just a lowly labourer' each time." And then he went off on some story about his wife, and how he was a labourer . . . he wasn't a labourer. So Édouard said, "I'll try, Mr. Dorion, but it's because you use such big words. That's the effect they have on me" [laughs]. So after that, Dorion didn't question Édouard for much longer. And his testimony was very, very good for us.

Another of our witnesses was Annie Carrière, the union treasurer who had spoken out against the government representative who had wanted the members to change unions when we already had everything we needed to be recognized. And this very simple, very sweet-looking woman, who seemed like she'd never sinned in her life . . . Dorion tried to attack her and make her say things she didn't intend to say, or that she had never said. So for each of his questions, she replied, "No, that's not what I said. I said XXX, XXX." Once, twice, three times. Finally he stopped, because she stayed on track, she never let him rile her. There was also a young girl, Anita Trudel. She was fifteen years old and she had been on the picket lines. Her father was on the committee. He was a plumber at the factory. She said that one morning at about 5:00 a.m., she had arrived on the picket lines, and I think it was the time the police had been making trouble. So Dorion said, in a sanctimonious tone, "A young fifteen-year-old girl on the picket lines at 5:00 a.m. You think that's okay?" And she said, "I was with my father, sir." Each time he asked a question, she replied in the same way. By the time she stepped out of the witness box,

he had been laughed at so many times that he shook her hand and congratulated her, just to save face.

In the final days of the trial, as the lawyers' final arguments drew nearer, I was put in a cell. But I went up to the courtroom during the sessions, and I realized that something was going on with the members of the jury. They didn't look the same. Something was bothering them, or maybe they felt guilty, I don't know. But all this was taking place to make the trial appear very serious, like it was an important case for the Crown. So with the trials and all, I was imprisoned during the trial for at least two weeks, toward the end of the trial. For one week before the jury's verdict, and for one week between the conviction of the jury and the judge's sentence. So two weeks, at the end of it, around the middle of February of '48. When I was in prison in St-Jérôme, once in a while the governor would invite me to go sit in the corridor, near the cells, just for a change of scenery. And one evening when I was with him in the corridor, under his watch, obviously, the judge who had presided over the trial walked by with his assistant, and they left through the basement prison door. When they were gone, I asked the governor, "What was he doing here?" He said, "He's here to check if you're in your cell or not." Some nights he went to the movies, because he lived at the courthouse, in the governor's apartments, during the big trial. Another time, the governor invited me to sit in the corridor again. And at that time, a couple of our strikers were also in jail, having been accused of seditious conspiracy, like me. One of them was going back upstairs to his cell. When he saw me, he found an excuse, and he came over and asked the governor if he could talk to me, so I could try to get him some long underwear from his family. The governor said yes. So he came up to me and said, "The other guy with me, they made him talk. It's not going to be good." He meant the other striker, who was with him. So I loudly promised him that I'd make sure his wife knew to bring him some long underwear. You always had to play the game. But other than that, I didn't see any other prisoners. That was the way it was. One time, when the governor had again invited me into the hallway, he called the grocer to place an order. And at one point, he asked for bars of soap, bars of toilet soap. And obviously, everyone in town knew I was in prison. And it was clear that the grocer asked him, "Why toilet soap? Is it for the inmates?" So he replied something like, "The inmates are people too, just like us. I don't want hard soap." After that, he brought me back to my cell. But really, his approach was better. I left my cell to go to court, and then I went back afterwards. I didn't go back with the lawyers.

Then the time came to address the judge or the jury. And I have to say that Cousineau was very well-prepared. After all, it was for seditious conspiracy, a plot to overthrow the government. A mere strike! "But no, it's not merely a *grève* [strike]. What did workers in France call a *grève*? Believe it or not, it was when it was hot inside the factory, and they would go outside to cool off on the shore." But he clearly had not read the history of workers in France. But for the members of the jury, who didn't necessarily have much experience in this area, it could be confusing. So it became a big theatrical production. He spoke for two hours. At one point he got up, waving his arms around, delivering his big speech. At another point, he congratulated Noël Dorion, the special prosecutor for the court, for his magnificent performance. And then he compared him to Cicero of the Roman State. So now he was Cicero. Cicero, who had exposed the senator Catilina, who was plotting to overthrow Caesar. And I was Catilina. And that was just too much. Although I tried to keep a straight face, I couldn't help but smile a little, but I tried to be discreet. But it made him mad! He was now angrier at me than ever. And my father was even more angry at the judge—it was his first time at the proceedings, although my mother had been there several times—and he wanted to get up and tell the judges that it was unfair, it was undignified.

And my mother was holding my father back because, "You're going to be cited for contempt of court, and then there'll be two of you in jail, instead of one" [laughs]. So that's what happened. Some people were no doubt impressed.

And I was stuck behind bars for another week while we waited for the sentencing. When the judge addressed the jury, he said, "Some of you may be concerned because she's a woman, etc., etc." But he had done everything he could to destroy me. And then he quoted the three unionists who had said, "Everyone I know says she's a communist," etc. And he added, "Don't worry. It's up to me to decide." And he made certain remarks to assure them that it wouldn't be prison.

### **The Trial: Sentencing and Appeal (1947-1955)**

Madeleine Parent: But in the end, another week later, since we had been found guilty, he said we would get two years at the Kingston Penitentiary. Apparently, Duplessis didn't want me in a women's prison in Quebec. That was the sentence. Later, we found out that four of the jurors had been spoken to, probably while I was locked up. One of them was a grocer—this was in the Laurentians—and he was told that if I were found guilty, everything would be all right for him. But if I were found not guilty, he would lose his beer licence. That's a big thing for a grocer. One of the others was the station master at one of the Train du Nord's small train stations. And he had a son that the local notary had placed in a Catholic private school. He was told, "If she's found not guilty, you'll have to take care of his education on your own, but if she's found guilty, you don't need to worry." Another was the owner of two taxis in a small town up north, and during the lengthy trial, one of his employees had been in a serious accident. I think a woman had been seriously injured. So a police officer went to see him—because the members of the jury were allowed to go home on certain weekends. And he was told, "If she's found guilty, we'll sort out the trial for you, you don't need to worry. But if she's found not guilty, you're in for a heck of a time." And the fourth was the foreman of the jury. He had owned a hotel, but he had lost his beer licence, I believe it was because he was a liberal. They said to him, "If she's found guilty, you'll get your beer licence back, and you can decide if you want to open another hotel."

So those four—we didn't know if there were any others—but they were obviously enough. To the point that when the lawyers went to see Noël Dorion after the sentencing, to try to set bail for me, the foreman of the jury was already in Dorion's office saying, "So sir, that thing we talked about . . ." But he didn't continue because our lawyers showed up with Kent to negotiate bail. So that's how that played out.

Judith Murray: So Kent was there anyway? Wasn't he forbidden to be there?

MP: No, he had . . . Judge Fauteux had ruled that he would have his own trial. But then our lawyers insisted that I be tried first and that we wait for the results. And it was difficult to refuse. So they waited for the results of my trial before going ahead with it. And I had the right to appeal, of course. So we appealed, and the trial had been so long that the court stenographer, an elderly man in poor health, had died before he could write up the entire trial. So there was no record of the trial. We appealed to the Court of Appeal and Noël Dorion said, once again, "But we can piece together his notes." But Bernard Mergler, who himself had been a stenographer, and was familiar with it, said, "No. No one can piece together a stenographer's notes, no matter how much of a professional they are." So the court cancelled the verdict and ordered a new trial. They had no intention of acquitting me! But a new trial was ordered. So, in the fall of '48, we went before the court in Saint-Jérôme to be tried, to finally put an end to this whole thing. And

Duplessis' representative—I don't remember if Noël Dorion was there or not—said, "It is not in the public interest to proceed right away." So the judge—like any good Duplessis judge would—postponed the trial until the following year. And every year until '55, we went before the court. The charges hung over our heads, but we couldn't get a trial, because each time, the attorney general sent a message saying it wasn't in [the public's] interest to proceed.

But in '55, it was Judge Caron who was presiding. He was the judge who had presided over the vice inquiry in Montréal. He was no friend of Duplessis'. He was an independent. So we went before him, and the prosecutor for the Saint-Jérôme region, Mr. Thinel, requested once again that the case be postponed because it wasn't in the public interest to proceed. "Why not?" "Well, Mr. Dorion is stuck somewhere, at a conference, I think." "And what about last year?" asked the judge. "Uh," and he came up with an excuse about where Dorion had been, not the previous year, but the year before that. "And where was he the year before that?" So Thinel got a bit red in the face. He didn't know what to say. So Judge Caron asked our lawyer, Bernard Mergler, "What do you have to say about this?" So he replied, "Each year, we come back, we want to be heard, we want to settle the case. But it's always the same story. They've been holding it over our heads." So the judge said, "All right, in two weeks, on such-and-such a date, at such-and-such a time, the trial will begin. And I'm warning both parties that there will be absolutely no postponement. It will start at such-and-such a time."

So two weeks later, we had decided, along with Bernard Mergler, that Kent would no longer take advantage of his option to be tried in English. So we appeared, along with Kent, and the judge ordered . . . Oh yes! There was the jury. Twelve jurors had already been appointed, just like that. But we didn't object because we knew what was going to happen. He asked the Crown—Mr. Thinel—to submit its evidence. But the boss had said it wasn't in the public interest to proceed. He said, "Let me see that piece of paper." And then, "Oh, it's not even signed." So he just dropped the piece of paper, and it drifted around the room before falling onto the floor. Then he said, "All right, present your evidence." But Thinel had nothing to say. So then it was Mergler's turn, our lawyer, and the judge himself advised him, "You have three options. You can ask for—I don't exactly remember what the technicalities were—but it's not a sure thing, because it could have repercussions on your clients. You can also ask for such-and-such other thing, but there's not guarantee of that, either. But this is a trial. It has already begun. You have the right to ask for an acquittal because they have no evidence." And he added some other technical details that I can't remember. So that's what Bernard did, and the judge turned to the jury and said, "The Crown has no evidence against them. All you have to do is find them not guilty." So they said "not guilty" in unison, and then the clerk named them one by one, and they said, one by one, that we were "not guilty." And that's how it ended. After eight years.

JM: I'd like to ask you a question. All that time, you had all that hanging over your heads, but you were also in a relationship together. You had your own private life, and you were in your late twenties, early thirties. Did it affect your plans to have a family?

MP: Well, we were both firm unionists, and that was our life. But Kent had told me, "If you want to have a baby, it's your choice, I'll do whatever you like." And it was true that as the years went by, if I wanted to have a baby, one day it would be too late. But to have a child and be condemned to seeing him/her in prison . . . Of course, my mother would have offered to take care of the child, but it would have been terribly painful for my mother and father. They had enough on their plates just supporting me, without having to consider that. So we didn't have any children.

JM: And how did your mother hold up for all those years?

MP: With a lot of anxiety. But still, she attended the trial. And she finally brought my father with her once, for the judge's ruling. My father had paid \$2,000 in bail bonds. He had been called . . . Duplessis had tried to talk to him once, when my father was having lunch at the Ritz-Carlton with some friends, and my father had refused to speak to him. Twice . . . I had hidden twice when I was wanted for arrest. Both times, Kent was already in jail. The first time was before the vote in Valleyfield in '46, and the second was when I was accused of seditious conspiracy during the strike in Lachute. Kent was in jail, Édouard Gauthier was in jail, and so were two others. So I spent two or three days hidden in a house trying to finish the union's urgent business, on paper, at least. And when the lawyer came to get me, he brought my mother, so that she could come to the jail in Saint-Jérôme with me, which made things easier. And that time—this was during the strike in Lachute, of course—Duplessis had appointed a lieutenant who would be the only one to arrest me after the experience I had had with the man that I . . . who had so disgusted me and whom I had pushed back at. Duplessis had found it very inelegant, and so he had decided to appoint someone who would arrest me regularly. So it was this lieutenant. And he was with Sergeant Laferrière, who had witnessed the first arrest and who had seen for himself that the police officer had been rough. And this time, when I went to the jail in Saint-Jérôme with my lawyer Bernard Mergler and my mother, the lieutenant wasn't there. He was looking for me. They finally ended up locating him, and he came back. He looked pretty tired. I said, "I presume you went to Cornwall." He said, "Yes." Because the Gazette, I think . . . in any case, it was an English newspaper, had said I was in Cornwall trying to recruit sailors to bring back to Lachute [laughs], which was so ridiculous. So I said, "You believed your own propaganda!" Anyway, he put his hand on my shoulder and read me the warrant . . . This time, it was for seditious conspiracy, and I was locked up in a cell.

But it's true that they themselves created false propaganda, and then it had them running around. Every day during the trial for seditious conspiracy, once a day, Duplessis called the court in Saint-Jérôme and asked to speak to Noël Dorion. The governor of the prison would come into the courtroom and whisper in the judge's ear. The judge would wave off Dorion, who would excuse himself and go take the call. And then he would come back, sometimes after a pretty long absence. And he would look all serious, as though he were considering something important, and then the trial would start again. And it was obvious that it was The Boss who had called. All that, just to make an impression, clearly. So to make fun of that whole charade . . . One day Roger Ouimet had . . . he had told Mr. Godbout, who was the leader of the opposition, about it. And then he received a phone call from the leader of the opposition. So he left, waving in the same way, making the same gestures, and then he came back. But that only happened once.

JM: All those rumours, and the reactions of the people you knew. You told me once that you had been . . . I don't know, maybe on Sainte-Catherine Street in Montréal, and some people you knew had crossed the street so as not to be on the same sidewalk as you.

MP: Oh, that was an important woman who had attended my trial. I won't say her name. To support me, along with another feminist. And the next time she met Duplessis, she had wanted to shake his hand. But he had said, "She shakes hands with Madeleine Parent." She had been very hurt by that. So the next time she saw me on Sainte-Catherine Street, she ducked inside somewhere, so that she wouldn't have to speak to me. But it's true, when people shook my hand, when I was in the prisoner's box in the court in Saint-Jérôme, and all the police officers

were around, and Noël Dorion and all the others, Duplessis, who received regular reports, knew everything. And that had really shaken her up.

JM: After the trial, three union leaders spoke out in your favour.

MP: Yes. On February 20—this was in 1948—just a few days after we had been convicted of seditious conspiracy, an official statement was issued by the heads of the three main . . . of the three labour confederations here in Quebec, at the time. They were William Smith, president of the council of CIO unions and of the Canadian Labour Congress, in Canada; Gérard Picard, who at the time was president of the CCCL, and whose colleague Charpentier had served as witness for the Crown, against us; and Elphège Beaudoin, who was president of the Quebec Provincial Labour Federation. Of course, this was before the merging of the big CIO unions and the American Federation of Labor. So it was the three of them, and they issued a joint statement in which, first of all, they criticized the three witnesses from the unions who had testified against us for the Crown. They condemned the words of Duplessis, who had tried us publicly, both before our trial and while it was taking place. Before the conviction. They said it had been very wrong. And that they supported us. So first and foremost, it was a condemnation of the three creations of the Duplessis government, but it was also a very important gesture of solidarity. And it must be said that the fact that Gérard Picard had been elected president of the Catholic unions over Charpentier, who had fought him very hard and who had criticized him for meeting with us on an occasion when it was important to show solidarity against Dominion Textile—he had acted very, very boldly. And I think that Elphège Beaudoin was the driving force behind the statement. So even though Duplessis and certain union bureaucrats were still trying to destroy everything we had built, we had the support of the three main labour confederations in Quebec, and that was important.

At that time, in '48, it was the longest trial in Quebec history, and it was a trial that had been marked by the premier's interference against the defendants before, during, and after the trial. It had been a veritable witch hunt, and every rule of decency and justice had been violated, truly.

### **Anticommunism as a Weapon of Oppression (1940s and 1950s)**

Sophie Bissonnette: So what was Duplessis' goal, with that trial?

Madeleine Parent: It was really the trial of the militant union movement in Quebec at the time. It was pure McCarthyism. And according to Judge Cousineau, a strike was . . . to go onto the "*grève*" [which means both "strike" and "shore" in French] to bathe was insubordination. Striking against such generous employers was akin to a revolt. The employers were entitled to peace. They could run their businesses as they saw fit. We might as well have been two centuries in the past.

SB: Were you accused of being a communist?

MP: Well, I couldn't be accused of being a communist, because I wasn't one! But, for example, three union representatives who were in the employers' pockets said, "The people I know all say she's a communist." And it was repeated like a litany by those three people, despite the fact that the president of the Federation of Labour, Elphège Beaudoin, came to testify on my behalf. And Charles De Koninck, who was a professor of theology, and whom Noël Dorion had nearly likened to a priest when he was prosecuting us, analyzed the writings and said they were Marxist, and so it could be deduced that I must be a communist. But no one ever said, "She is



one," because they weren't able to. But it was all about making me out to be a witch. But despite all that, they hadn't convinced the jury. They'd had to intimidate them to get the conviction.

SB: Why was it so frightening to be accused of communism in those years?

MP: Well, first of all, in the Church . . . It's important to remember that during that period, Archbishop Charbonneau had been ousted from the Archdiocese of Montréal for supporting the workers. And he had, in fact, spoken personally to Gilbert Ayers on our behalf, among other things. It was the period . . . the post-Gouzenko period, when they wanted to take away all our wartime union gains, return us to abject poverty, and reduce the union movement to its pre-war strength. And above all, to destroy the unions that included women and the workers who had been greatly exploited. All of it had to be destroyed. So it was all part of the sort of hysteria they were trying to create.