Victim of Deceit and Self-Deceit: The Role of the State in Undermining Jim Brady's Radical Métis Socialist Politics

by

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Abstract

James (Jim) Brady (1908-1967) was a Métis communist community organizer in Alberta and Saskatchewan through the mid-20th century. He played an instrumental role in the creation of the Métis Association of Alberta and the Alberta Métis Settlements, and spent four decades organizing resource cooperatives in predominantly Indigenous communities in the northern prairies. Using the James Brady fonds, housed at the Glenbow Museum, archival materials from the Gabriel Dumont Institute, and the small body of secondary literature pertaining to Brady, I conduct a discourse analysis informed by Mary Jane McCallum's Indigenous right of reply, Chris Andersen's concept of density, and Kim TallBear's "standing with" methodology to approach Brady's life and work.

My research outlines Brady's political vision: Métis socialist liberation in solidarity with the broader working class, and how his struggle to realize this vision through his work establishing the Settlements and resource cooperatives was sabotaged by the actions and policy decisions of the state at the provincial level. Rather than supporting self-determination, the capitalist Alberta and socialist Saskatchewan governments' actions undermined Métis political and economic success, and reinforced their marginalization. Understanding Brady's life and work provides important lessons for contemporary Métis radicals on the need to orient our efforts away from state recognition and involvement to solidarity-based relational praxis.

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Introduction

How I Got Here

I first heard the name Jim Brady shortly after moving back to Alberta in 2016 to start graduate school. Leaving my position as the latest in a series of anarchist women presidents of my labour union, the Association of McGill University Support Employees, in the midst of negotiating two collective agreements across the table from a notoriously hostile employer to return to an environment in which organized labour is commonly seen as at best an anachronism, and at worst the enemy of legitimate capitalist enterprise was both a culture shock and disheartening, to say the least. I knew something of the radical labour history of the prairies, but less about where and how Indigenous people and workers fit into those often unconsciously white-centric, nostalgic narratives of socialisms gone by.

As an Indigenous labour organizer, considering the role of workers and work in relation to Indigenous dispossession has been of interest to me for several years, particularly in the areas of urban expansion and resource extraction, as well as how Indigenous people have been marginalized within the economy and the labour movement itself (Swain 2017). As a leftist, I was excited to discover that Indigenous workers in the mid-20th century were taking up Marxist-Leninist politics and analyzing their classed conditions as *Indigenous* in ways that resisted the homogenizing tendencies of socialist and communist political thought. To learn that the Métis Nation of Alberta was started by a militant communist and modeled after a labour union (O'Byrne 2013, 312-313) with a vision for a Métis economic future free from capitalism was, considering its present political and economic affiliations, mind blowing. This work is the cumulative extension and result of those initial revelations.

This analysis of Brady's life and work is intended to accomplish two things: first, to re-illuminate the militant left-wing Métis political foundations of what are arguably the most dynamic and lasting Métis political projects in history; and second, to explore how the Canadian state's involvement (in this case, at the provincial level) in Brady's political-economic projects served to constrain his and Métis people's bids for political and economic self-determination in the mid-20th century.

This thesis is organized into three chapters. The first explores Jim Brady's political development and goals. Understanding the basis and overall goals of Brady's politics gives us a better understanding of the choices he made in his organizing work. This chapter argues that he was organizing to integrate the Métis of the northern prairies into the broader working class in order to ensure their place in a Leninist socialist revolution. Brady's conception of Métis liberation was grounded in and depended on their liberation as workers, rather than as an Indigenous nation.

With this foundational knowledge of Brady's political vision, Chapter two focuses on Brady's participation in the formation (and, briefly, administration of one) of the Métis Settlements in Alberta, and elucidates the ways in which Alberta state actors and legislation co-opted the MAA's goal of securing an independent land base upon which the Métis could politically and economically self-determine in order to maintain the marginalization of the Métis and elide their responsibility to an Indigenous people. This period marks Brady's first direct and sustained dealing with the hostile hegemonic colonial power and motives of the state. The Ewing Commission and subsequent development of the Settlements would leave him disillusioned and profoundly affected his later organizing efforts, which would be focused more on resource cooperatives and popular education, rather than political mobilization.

While his experiences with the state while fighting for the establishment of the Métis Settlements may have left Brady disappointed, he remained sufficiently politically motivated to continue working towards Métis economic self-determination by establishing resource cooperatives. Chapter three looks at his most enduring organizing project(s), the cooperatives that he helped to develop across the northern prairie provinces. The coops represent Brady's attempt to educate and organize a liberatory, independent Métis working class through socialist labour forms. Most of Brady's cooperative organizing took place in pre-WWII Alberta under United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) and Social Credit governments, and in post-WWII Saskatchewan under a nominally Socialist Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) ruling party. This chapter demonstrates that whether Socialist or capitalist, under Great Depression era financial constraints or a post-war economic boom, or according to social welfare or assimilationist ideologies, state interventions into these projects stymied and ultimately contributed to the failure of every coop that Brady set up. In fact, Brady's loyalty to the coop model itself was a weakness in his strategic thinking—there was simply not a critical mass of Métis who were willing or able to transform their relationship to labour so drastically.

The rest of this introduction will provide some background on Brady, discuss my concerns with the "Great Métis Man of History" narrative, briefly touch upon the role and actions of the modern state, and elucidate some of my theoretical and methodological considerations when approaching the researching and writing of this thesis.

Brady's Life

James (Jim) Patrick Brady Junior was born March 11, 1908 in St. Paul de Metis to James Brady, an Irish immigrant, and Philomena Archange Garneau, the first Métis registered nurse in Alberta and the daughter of Laurent Garneau, a significant figure in the Northwest Resistance

(Brady ca. 1959-1967, 2. James Brady Fonds M-125-6. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta) and prominent Edmonton businessman. The second of eight children, Jim could often be found ensconced in a shed some ways away from the house, in which he would sometimes spend days reading and studying—an early indication of his solitary and studious nature (Brady Sisters to Murray Dobbin 1977, 37). In 1918, Philomena Archange passed away and the family was split up, with most of the children being placed with family, and eventually into convents and missions, while Jim stayed with his father, possibly because of tuberculosis or a similar illness that had plagued him since he had been a young child (Brady Sisters to Murray Dobbin 1977, 3, 13).

He completed eighth grade, and after being expelled and then working more informally with tutors, won the Governor General's medal in 1922 (Brady ca. 1959-1967, 6. James Brady Fonds M-125-6. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). Thereafter, he was primarily self-educated, reading widely and learning from those with whom he lived and worked. Through the 1920s and 30s, Brady developed his Marxist-Leninist political analysis (his analysis will be discussed further in Chapter one) and worked as a labourer in central and northern Alberta. During this time, he began to organize resource cooperatives in Métis communities, most notably Lac La Biche (discussed further in Chapter three). In 1932 he joined the newly formed Métis Association of Alberta (Brady ca. 1959-1967, 8. James Brady Fonds M-125-6. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta), and began his now famous lifelong association with Malcolm Norris.

The 1930s were spent labouring, organizing, and mobilizing towards developing what would become the Settlements; the practical, on-the-ground work in the cities with politicians and with destitute Métis in communities (Brady was fluent in English and French, and while he eventually learned to understand Cree, he never spoke it, which proved to be a limitation in northern communities). He was also heavily involved in the ideological and strategic

development of the Association. Like all members of the MAA executive, Brady's community organizing work in the 20s and 30s was for the most part completely unfunded, taking place outside of work or during periods of unemployment. There were no salaried activists among the Métis—a reality which would, to an extent, change for Brady and others in the years after WWII, when he and Norris were hired by the CCF.

After the Ewing Commission in 1934 and the *Metis Population Betterment Act* of 1938, Brady distanced himself from the MAA, but was persuaded to take on the role of supervisor of the Wolf Lake Settlement in the early 1940s. His daily reports from that time show him to be attempting to defend what he sees as incursions from the Roman Catholic Church (through Joe Dion) (Brady 1941-1943. James Brady Fonds M-125-37b. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta) and to balance his role as government-appointed administrator with his reality as a grassroots Métis communist, for example by attempting to mediate Settlement inhabitants' conflicts and extralegal/illegal activities without engaging racist colonial state legal processes (discussed further in Chapter two). Brady was also involved in setting up resource cooperatives in several Settlements, a project he hoped would provide the Métis with an independent economic base, and which the provincial government hoped would replace the social welfare it was reluctant to provide (discussed further in Chapters one and two).

Brady joined the Canadian military in 1943 and fought on the European Front from 1944-45, regularly journaling about his experiences. He was injured at least twice, the latter incident leading to bronchial issues which kept him hospitalized for several weeks upon his return to Canada and which would plague him intermittently for the rest of his life (Jim Brady to Art Davis #1 1960, 5-6).

From the 1940s until his death in 1967, Brady worked on-and-off for the CCF government in Saskatchewan, doing cooperative organization and education work in communities throughout the north as part of their resource extraction expansion initiatives (discussed further in Chapter three). His relationship with government politicians and politics had become increasingly tense, likely because of what he considered to be the failures in the outcomes of his Settlement organizing. He continued to take on various physical labour contracts and in 1953 became a prospector (Hatt n.d.b., 2). In addition, he kept up his grassroots education and mobilization work, exceeding his CCF Department of Natural Resources (DNR) coop development mandate to bring his vision of Métis socialism to the Indigenous communities with whom he worked (Andre Bouthillette to Murray Dobbin 1978, 28-29).

While he spent much of the last decades of his life traveling among communities in the northern prairies, by the early-1950s Brady was living primarily in La Ronge, Saskatchewan between contracts. He had ended up in La Ronge after being run out of Cumberland House, supposedly by a lack of support from the DNR after rumours began to circulate that Brady had fathered children with two Cumberland House women (Quiring 2004, 20). His one-room cabin was famously lined with thousands of books, and characteristic of the Brady family's generosity, he often slept on the ground or outside in order that others in the community who needed to could take his bed. As well as providing some financial support to at least two sets of children (Brady 1951-1966. James Brady Fonds M-125-11, M-125-13. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta), he often gave or lent the little money he had to La Ronge community members (Dobbin 1981, 196). Broke and, it has been suggested, somewhat depressed (Ken Collier to Murray Dobbin 1976, 3), Brady became rather eccentric in his later years, sometimes so lost in thought

he would walk through La Ronge in the dead of winter eating a raw onion with his shirt wide open to the cold (Andre Bouthillette to Murray Dobbin 1978, 13).

In 1967, Brady and Absalom Halkett left on a prospecting trip to Foster Lakes in northern Saskatchewan. Both men disappeared, and their bodies were never found. An extended investigation by the RCMP turned up few additional clues, with the officer in charge of the investigation concluding that they were likely killed by bears, possibly because they were hungry and attempted to hunt and eat a baby bear, falling afoul of its mother (Clyde Conrad to Murray Dobbin 1976, 11). However, two men with years of experience in the bush would have been unlikely to make such a basic error.[1] Dobbin briefly notes the anti-Indigenous and anti-communist history and character of the RCMP as a possible factor in the lack of closure in this case (Dobbin 1981, 249). Many still suspect foul play, suggesting that Brady's communist politics led to a politically-motivated murder. Another theory centers his notorious womanizing and a vengeful husband or son as the probable cause (Dobbin 1981, 249-250). A passage from Dobbin and intriguing note from the Gabriel Dumont Institute suggests that not only was it murder, but that people know whom the murderer likely is, but chose not to name him (Dobbin 1981, 249).[2]

After Brady's death, the majority of his papers, including his decades of scrapbooks, were moved to the Glenbow Archives. His manuscripts—presumably his memoirs, which he had begun work on, and his incomplete English translation of Marcel Giraud's *Le Métis Canadien: Son Rôle Dans L'Historie des Provinces de L'Ouest* (1945)—were collected by Howard Adams

[1] Dobbin has noted that Brady did not have extensive experience in the back country, however he had been prospecting in the north on-and-off for over a decade, and would have had working knowledge and experience regarding wildlife, including bear safety.

[2] Author Michael Nest is currently conducting research specifically on Brady's unsolved disappearance which could bring new information to light.

and housed at the University of Saskatchewan (A. Brady n.d., 702, in Ken Hatt Files). Unfortunately, his library—thousands of books, likely heavily annotated (Brady Sisters to Murray Dobbin 1977, 12)—disappeared.[3] Although an important figure in both Métis and Canadian labour history, he remains relatively unknown outside northern prairie communities.

Anti-Celebrity

> We must guard against the conception that it is the leading members who make for our successes. The Alberta Metis population must make the final decisions (Brady to Dion 1940, 2. James Brady Fonds M-125-27. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

While researching and writing this thesis, I have been wary of extending the Gospel of Saints Grant, Riel, and Dumont into the 20th century by canonizing a new "Great Métis Man of History" (David Parent, per comm. March 13, 2018). As Adam Gaudry (2014) points out with regards to the übermensch mythos that has been ascribed to the aforementioned 19th century men, while contemporary views might position them as uniquely agentic, during their times, in actuality, "This 'man of consequence' mentality was not an individual mountain-man ideal, and was much more communitarian in outlook" (Gaudry 2014, 82). All of Brady's work and organizing would have come to nothing without the intensive and prolonged labour of the other members of Alberta's Métis "Fabulous Five:" Malcolm Norris, Joe Dion, Felix Calihoo, and Peter Tomkins; Indigenous community members; workers; and Settlement inhabitants. Brady has been described both as a reluctant leader (Dobbin 1981, 197) and an isolated intellectual (Robert

[3] A scrap of paper from Ken Hatt's notes suggested it may have been relocated at some point and for unknown reasons to the Rouleau high school's library. When I called the school to inquire however, they had no knowledge of this history, and since I assume it would be notable if a high school library in small town Saskatchewan were filled with socialist literature from the early-mid 1900s, it seems like this is a dead end. More likely, the books ended up redistributed throughout the prairies, a fitting legacy to Brady's life and work.

J. Deverell to Murray Dobbin 1976, 2; Dobbin 1981, 63), but his work and legacy are collective accomplishments.

Rather than learning from Brady specifically, I hope that readers will learn from his political goals and work, which was the work of hundreds of cooperative workers, community members, and Métis grassroots organizers. That being said, this text does work to contextualize Brady and how his life and the historical moment in which he lived translated to his ideological stance and influenced his work with the MAA and in cooperative development, and thus the history and conditions of Métis in the prairies. Brady's life work was for the betterment and liberation of the Métis people, and it would be not only disingenuous, but analytically limiting, to divorce those projects from the man and the ideological objectives that motivated him.

Brady organized to ensure that Métis would have a place in the socialist revolution and have the social, political, and economic capacity to self-determine their labour power and their relationships with other workers. As will be discussed further in Chapter one, Brady foresaw the dangers of the colonial state co-opting and undermining Métis attempts at determining their own futures. Currently, we are post-Daniels decision (2016) and post-TRC (2014), and Indigenous groups and Canada are looking to take advantage of the present moment of "reconciliation." Both the Métis Nation of Alberta and the Métis Settlements General Council are in talks with the federal government on issues of land, administration, and jurisdiction, a mirror of the path reluctantly taken by Brady and the MAA 80 years ago. Ironically, these bodies are the result of the state's unilateral intervention to split Settlement administration from the MAA, against the wishes of the MAA executive (Moffett 2007, 30).

In Brady's time, the actions of both the CCF and Social Credit provincial governments aligned with the administrative expansion of the state that was occurring across Canada as a consequence of modernity. I turn now to a brief discussion of this phenomenon.

The Colonial State and Modernity

When it comes to both radical socialist and Indigenous perspectives, the state can be understood primarily as a vehicle for and legitimizer of certain kinds of violence. In Leninist thought (to which Brady ascribed, as will be discussed further in Chapter one), the state is a consequence of irreconcilable class antagonisms that functions specifically in the service of the bourgeoisie to oppress the proletariat (Lenin 1969, 9). For Lenin, the state arises as a mechanism to control the working masses and facilitate their exploitation for the enrichment of the ruling classes. For Indigenous thinkers, the state operates for "the collective organization of violence upon indigenous peoples, historically and in the present" (Nichols 2014, 447). It is the institutionalization of ongoing settler colonialism that serves the continued dispossession of Indigenous peoples of our "lands and self-determining authority" (Coulthard 2014, 7). Processes of violence can precede the imposition of state control over Indigenous lands (Blackhawk 2006), but through the state, violence, and, as is particularly relevant to this work, the violence of dispossession becomes normativized and legalized through a variety of institutions within the state hierarchy. In Canada in the 19th and early 20th century, this violence was characterized by what have been termed "hard" tactics of physical removals, germ warfare and starvation tactics (Daschuk 2013), and other extermination policies. From the latter part of the 1910s onward, however, these tactics began to shift with the development of the modern Canadian state.

The rise of the modern state, with its new focuses on welfare, rationality, control, and the construction of the citizen, occurred concurrently with Brady's upbringing and political radicalization. Dummit traces this timeline:

> It took root with the progressive impulse of the social gospel before and during the Great War; it sprouted in the growing role of the practical sciences in both public life and the universities in the 1920s; and it grew to adolescence dealing the seemingly insoluble problems of the Depression in the following decade (Dummit 2007, 8).

Values of rational control and self-control as means to achieve a linear and disciplined progress came to characterize the policies and actions of the modern state, and among both capitalist and communist sectors of society, "reason" and "expertise" became the watchwords of the new order (Dummit 2007, 12). In Chapters two and three, it is readily apparent how narratives of progress underscore Social Credit and CCF actions and policies with regards to Métis in the north. While past state actions had relied in large part on the physical dispossession of Indigenous people from their lands, the modern state's colonial policies "involved not only 'geographical incursion' but also the ideological construction of a hierarchy of white progress, culture, and history" (Sangster 2011, 26).

Despite the narrative that the Canadian state shifted from "hard" to "soft" colonial tactics in the 19th and 20th centuries, Nichols notes that "While this transition to soft tactics has certainly occurred in some fields of governance, it is coeval with the growth of a whole shadow system of hard infrastructure that is every bit as material, physical and coercive as ever" (Nichols 2014, 448), suggesting that it is more accurate to describe the shift of state tactics of control as moving from explicitly coercive to more implicitly so, but backed by the same kinds of coercive institutions. State recognition and cultural inclusion are two tactics which the state began to employ more earnestly. Audra Simpson, in thinking about the practice of state recognition of

Indigenous cultural difference through narratives of multicultural inclusion, is worth quoting here:

> This inclusion, or juridical form of recognition, is only performed, however, *if* the problem of cultural difference and alterity does not post too appalling a challenge to norms of the settler society, norms that are revealed largely through law in the form of decisions over the sturdiness, vitality, and purity of the cultural alterity before it (Simpson 2014, 20).

Brady, and Indigenous people in the northern prairies more generally, would discover that the supposed benevolence of the modern state was little more than a veneer for the more overtly coercive aspects of its policies, and that its eagerness to incorporate Indigenous northerners into modern mainstream Canada would be tempered by its reluctance to grant them any but the most shallow recognition of their cultural difference, and no acknowledgement of their capacity or right to self-determination.

It is important to understand that the tactics employed by the CCF and Social Credit governments, from their highest-level policy makers to on-the-ground representatives, were the modern extension of those tactics used by their federal and provincial predecessors during their violent colonial campaigns on the prairies in the 19th century. This thesis elucidates how the promises of modernity were ultimately not extended to Métis in Alberta and Saskatchewan except as second-class, hyperexploited labourers or at the cost of total assimilation. Scholars have traced the ways that the extension of government policies and influence in the late-19th and early-20th centuries increased the dependence of and, often, privation experienced by Indigenous communities in the prairies (Tough 1996; Barron 1997; McCormack 2010). However, as McCormack astutely points out, “Aboriginal peoples never relinquished their own narratives or attempts to control their own circumstances and destinies. When the state imposed increasingly restrictive legislation and regulatory structures, both encouraging and forcing Aboriginal peoples

to abandon their own ways of belief and thought, local people always tried to mitigate such initiatives and, when necessary, opposed them" (McCormack 2010, 11). Brady's work was very much about mitigating the incursions of the state into Métis society, and, and will be discussed throughout this text, his work sometimes came into tension with how other Métis were navigating those same impositions.

Methods

Brady's lifelong practice of methodically recording, saving, and scrapbooking everything from newspaper articles, journals, and letters to receipts, pamphlets, and notes has left a material legacy that now populates an extensive public archive that provides fertile ground for delving into these issues. Interviews done by Murray Dobbin and Art Davis provide additional insight into Brady's life. Finally, the small but excellent body of secondary work—published and unpublished—by Dobbin, Ken Hatt, David Quiring, Chantal Roy Denis, R'Chie Moffett, and Nicole O'Byrne provide much-needed guideposts and contextual framing in terms of 20th century Métis society, socialism, and provincial prairie politics. In addition to these directly relevant texts, I consulted Lenin's work and works on global socialisms, Canadian prairie communist and labour histories, Canadian Wheat Pool records, and Indigenous political organizing histories to develop the necessary background knowledge to comprehend the vectors at which Brady's work was at an intersection.

Applying feminist standpoint theory (Hill Collins 1999), I am attentive to the intersecting lenses through which I am engaging with my subject. As far as I have been able to ascertain, I am the first Métis woman to do in-depth academic work on Jim Brady (I also want to acknowledge Chantal Roy Denis's excellent Master's thesis on the Wolf Lake Métis Settlement, which engages with Brady's Supervisor journals). I am also indebted to Kim TallBear's

articulation of the concept of "standing with" to combat the tendency towards "distanced objectivity" (2017, 84) that standpoint theory can engender. I am a Métis from Alberta, a member of the MNA, and someone invested in Indigenous liberation and self-determination. I also do not live on the Settlements or have close family that live there, and my family's history of dispossession places us in southern Saskatchewan/Alberta and northern Montana, meaning that the 20th century northern prairie socio-political-economic contexts about which I write are not ones within my direct or inherited experience.

In short, my situatedness is not a matter of being simply an insider or an outsider in the histories and communities about which I am writing. As TallBear says, "I do not simply study Indigenous communities. I inhabit them, both locally and globally, within and outside of the academy … I work for Indigenous flourishing. I also critique toward that end" (TallBear 2017, 81). Academically speaking, as Brendan Hokowhitu observes, "it is not only the confrontation of colonial knowledge that needs to take place. For a healthy Indigenous Studies to develop, Indigenous peoples and cultures must also endure criticism and self-reflection" (Hokowhitu 2011, 11-12). I would extend this observation to Indigenous politics and political bodies. I hope that this particular lens onto Brady's work encourages critical self-reflection among Métis in Alberta and supports the creative generation of alternative ways of organizing ourselves in the face of ongoing colonial oppression that do not necessarily rely on constitutional recognition or have us banking on state administrative incrementalism.

Relatedly, McCallum's iteration of the Indigenous "right of reply" in working with historical documents (McCallum 2017, 280) also influences my approach to the both the archives and the secondary material taken up in this research. While, and perhaps because Brady's archival fonds at the Glenbow Museum in particular have not been generated or curated through

a colonial institution (even as they are housed in one), they represent an often deeply personal set of documents, arguably a life's work in and of themselves. Brady, of course, did not know he was going to disappear suddenly in his fifties, and so never had the opportunity to choose what materials would survive him to be stored, cataloged, and studied. Thus, while his archives are an incredible glimpse into his mind and life, they are also to some extent its textual detritus, some items of which are personal to the point of impropriety. In my engagement with this material, both in how I take it up and in my strategic silences, I am thus replying not only to the historical and contemporary colonial narratives that position the Métis as deficient, diseased, and maladapted, but also to those within the Métis institutions that owe their existence in part to Brady's work, to the white male writers who have been his primary biographers, and, to a certain extent, to Brady himself. I hope to be attentive to the responsibilities that come with this kind of work, even as I assert my right of reply as a Métis feminist and anarchist scholar to the life and work of someone I have come to consider as a political relation.[4]

In 2016, the year I began my graduate work, the Water Protectors at Standing Rock were facing intense state repression and, subsequently, months of judicial and legal action. This extended to the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta, where at least one student was being actively harassed and investigated by the RCMP for their involvement. Considering my own past involvement with state (and university) surveillance and criminalization, state "security" tactics such as network mapping, the history and present reality of the RCMP as an anti-Indigenous paramilitary and surveillance force, and the potential consequences—direct and indirect—for any participants in my research, I chose not to seek out interviews with people who knew Brady personally. I recognize that this represents a significant limitation for this document.

[4] This relationship to Brady and his politics is not uncomplicated. See Appendix I for a brief discussion on Métis historiography, Brady, and gender.

And while there have been many times over the past year that I have wished I could ask someone to contextualize a particular piece of the archives or provide additional background information, and despite several Métis wryly reminding me that "they're watching all of us anyway," I cannot regret choosing caution in this instance. I was fortunate to have access to interviews conducted by Murray Dobbin and Art Davis in the 1960s and 70s, which were immensely helpful. I hope that future Métis researchers on Brady and his work can incorporate contemporary voices, and I look forward to seeing what new insights they will bring.

In the body of this thesis, I interact very little with colonial-decolonial/traditional-colonized binary rhetoric, nor do I frame Brady's political goals or the actual outcomes of his projects in such terms. Similarly, I am not interested in proving or disproving that Alberta Métis in the 20th century, Brady himself, or his political goals were or were not "authentic" in conformity with Métis cultural understandings. In this case, these binaristic framings would be in danger of flattening and eliding the nuanced and specific ways in which Métis people understood ourselves and navigated state neglect/interventions in our lives in the mid-century. In addition, Indigenous people in general and Métis in particular are often subject to the "one foot in each canoe" rhetoric that posits that we struggle to reconcile our Indigenous culture and values with the European overculture that surrounds us. Even Dobbin takes up this unfortunate trope when he describes Brady as "trying to function in two separate worlds but alienated from both" (Dobbin 1981, 17). This narrative limits and unnecessarily excludes Indigenous people from engaging actively and critically with non-Indigenous thought and society. In rejecting these limiting discourses, I turn to Andersen's (2009) concept of "density" to elucidate my approach. Brady's life as a Métis, his political education and labour among both whites and Indigenous people (discussed further in Chapter one), and his allegiance to and remixing of Leninism are all

examples writ small of Andersen's assertion that "Indigenous peoples and our communities … are knowers not just of Indigeneity, but of whiteness as well" (2009, 91). To put it another way: Brady's politics, work, organizing, and projects are all authentically and legitimately Métis because he and other Métis were living and doing them.

*****

Focusing on Brady's life and work enables an analysis of Métis political and economic organizing history that traces the origins of contemporary Alberta Métis organizations' political and economic strategies. It many ways it seems like Alberta Métis organizations have come full circle, if not ideologically, at least in terms of how they view their footing in relation to the needs of the Métis people and the willingness of the settler state to support some form of Indigenous self-determination. Our history as a people has arguably already been marked by two major episodes of government betrayal and denial of our rights as Indigenous people: The Manitoba Act/Scrip dispossession in the 19th century and the manipulation of Métis demands by the Ewing Commission/*Metis Population Betterment Act* in the 1930s. Rather than taking these instances (and the many more betrayals experienced by Indigenous people at the hands of the state) as impetus to look elsewhere to build Métis political-economic power and autonomy, I fear that we risk repeating history. In addition to celebrating the gains that the work of Brady and others won for Métis in the prairies, and learning from the pitfalls they encountered, let this text inspire us to find new strategies that move beyond the limitations of socialist and capitalist state forms in our struggle for liberation. I turn now to an exploration and analysis of Brady's politics.

Chapter One: Brady's Political Vision

> Brady's 35-year history as a political activist would reveal and unwavering commitment to socialism but a commitment acted out in the interests of native people (Dobbin 1981, 111).
>
> I love a good fight and I'm not afraid to meet any damned white man that ever drew breath (Brady to Dion 1933).

Introduction

Jim Brady was working towards a Métis Association of Alberta, a Métis land base, and Métis resource cooperatives to function as economic and political foundations for an essentially integrationist agenda. He saw integration into Canadian working class as the best means by which to secure the future of the Métis. One of Brady's greatest strengths was his ability to see beyond the immediate struggle and its initial victories to the challenges and struggles beyond (Dobbin 1981, 62). This is key to understanding his political goals and the strategies he employed, both in his own life and in what he wanted for the Métis. This chapter will explore various aspects of Brady's politics to demonstrate that, rather than working towards a nationalist liberation movement for the Métis, as has been sometimes read onto his political projects (Dobbin 1981, 17-18; Moffett 1982), Brady was attempting to bring Métis in line with communist revolutionary movements, particularly the program articulated by Lenin and promoted by the Comintern[5] through the Communist Party of Canada (CPC), which will be discussed later in this chapter. Brady's political theorizing should not be understood as simply parroting Soviet propaganda or tactics, nor was his socialism entirely in line with the explicitly assimilationist agenda of the CCF. Rather, Brady's work prioritized an analysis that centered

[5] The Comintern, also known as the Third International, was an international communist organization tasked with guiding the course of the international communist movement. It will be discussed further below.

colonialism as a consequence of capitalism, and Métis liberation as tied up in an anti-colonial, anti-capitalist struggle.

This chapter will first outline Brady's political education, both formal and informal, as establishing the foundations upon which his projects and political affiliations were based. Understanding Brady's political origins allows us to better understand the strategies he employed in his struggle for Métis liberation, as well as why and how he developed those goals. Second, this chapter will delve into Brady's analysis of Métis history and contemporary socio-political-economic conditions, demonstrating that they provide an alternative narrative to Métis dispossession that privileges the political agency of the Métis people and centers capitalism, colonialism, and white supremacy, rather than Métis deficiency, as the underlying causes of early-20th century Métis immiseration. Next, this chapter will explore the effects of the CPC and Comintern's policies on Brady's political thinking and actions. It will then discuss Brady's adherence to a Leninist political program for the Métis, exploring why he believed that Leninism offered the best chance for liberation. Brady's Leninism would structure his political goals and the tactics by which he set out to achieve them. Finally, this chapter will intervene on the assumption that Brady's politics were nationalist and/or anti-colonial on their face, demonstrating that his work was specifically integrationist, and that he believed that the Métis, and indeed all Indigenous peoples on the prairies no longer constituted nations.

This close examination of Brady's politics and how he came to them in the specific historical period in which he lived provides a more detailed lens through which to analyze the organizing strategies he employed and provides more insight into what kinds of impacts he hoped to achieve with his work, as well as how state interventions (invited and uninvited) into

his projects and the lives of the Métis with whom he worked undercut his vision for Métis liberation.

Political Education

> It was not simply intellectual curiosity which led Jim Brady to become a socialist and a Marxist. He arrived at a radical analysis because he was a worker in a world torn by the struggle between opposing social classes. He was part of the working class and absorbed the ideas that were debated and applied by working people in their struggle for social and economic justice (Dobbin 1981, 51).

Brady's family was involved socially and politically in his home community of St. Paul des Metis from before his birth. Both of his parents were strong influences, instilling values of tolerance and generosity into all the Brady children. Brady's Irish father held anti-imperialist views and is described as a "radical Liberal" who ran for office in 1917 and continued to campaign and organize for the party and other causes after his defeat. Brady's mother is described as being exceedingly generous and practical, and of a similar political bent (Brady Sisters to Murray Dobbin 1977, 44, 48; Dobbin 1981, 45).

Relatively well off financially, the Bradys saw themselves as "benefactors" in the community, and James Sr. lived by the adage "Ability plus opportunity spells responsibility" (Brady Sisters to Murray Dobbin 1977, 24). He and Philomena Archange would provide free or by-trade legal and medical services to those who could not afford to pay, and their home often hosted strangers and passers-through (Brady Sisters to Murray Dobbin 1977, 49; Dobbin 1981, 44-45). Brady's sisters even recall a Christmas when they were required to give their toys and Christmas dinner to a nearby family whose house had burned down (Brady Sisters to Murray Dobbin 1977, 19). From a young age, Jim out of all the siblings most demonstrated this tendency towards expansive generosity (Brady Sisters to Murray Dobbin 1977, 5-6; Dobbin 1981, 45), a

character trait that would be remarked upon by friends and relations in his later years as well (John Cook to Murray Dobbin 1976, 8-9; Brady Sisters to Murray Dobbin 1977, 16).

The Brady home was also a theater for political debate and discussion, and the children were always invited to listen, and sometimes to participate. James Sr. believed that a good discussion was part of the etiquette of being a guest, so it is likely that the Brady children were exposed to many viewpoints and knowledges by the constant stream of visitors that the family hosted (Brady Sisters to Murray Dobbin 1977, 17-19; Dobbin 1981, 46).

Although Brady was shielded by his middle-class status from racism for a time, by the age of seven he was actively experiencing it from his peers and families in the community (Brady ca. 1959-1967, 4. James Brady Fonds M-125-6. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). After being expelled from school for participating in what he terms "race riots," (Brady ca. 1959-1967, 6. James Brady Fonds M-125-6. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta; Moffett 2007, 27) he continued his education informally, learning from Métis community members and the white immigrant labourers with whom he worked and socialized. Ken Hatt describes two broad fields of education to which Brady had access in the 1910s and 1920s:

> First, there were friends who taught him about the Metis and their role in Canadian history … From them, Brady gained detailed information about the Riel rebellions … A second thrust of Brady's informal education came from immigrants to Canada who taught him about Socialism and Communism … In many cases his references to these persons involves political activity or revolution—his was hardly a simple academic interest in 'politics' (Hatt 1976, 7-8).

Dobbin notes that Brady took this education seriously, spending his non-working hours reading and learning, as did many working-class labourers of the era.

> To the present generation of Canadians, Brady's attention to political theory and political development may seem exceptional, but in the twenties it was common among workers. Many working people were disillusioned with the Canadian land of opportunity. For a huge portion of Canadian workers, life was a daily ordeal, one which brought with it a search for an explanation and an alternative (Dobbin 1981, 49-51).

Brady's commitment to the working class, to equality and tolerance, and to the Métis people all influenced the development of his uniquely militant political drive. His politics were grounded in an ethic of solidarity and liberation for not just the Métis, but the entire Canadian working class; anti-bourgeoise and anti-fascist; and above all, community-based. Brady would continue to be an avid reader and recorder throughout his life, often noting little more than his location, the weather, and the title or titles of his latest books in his daily journals (Brady 1960-1964. James Brady Fonds M-125-4—M-125-5. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). His early and ongoing education, from a diverse group of teachers, including his own experience, instilled in Brady a pride in his history and identity as Métis, and a critical mindset that would inspire his and belief in and commitment to Métis political and economic liberation.

Historical Analysis

Brady drew inspiration from the Métis nationalists of the 19th century, characterizing the 1885 Resistance in particular as "our struggle for national liberation or a future destiny of our own" (Jim Brady to Art Davis 1960 #5, 18). A keen student of Métis history, he reimagined the popular conception of the Métis "Rebellions" not as the last hurrahs of a backwards, maladapted people unable to stand against a superior white population, but rather as national liberation struggles that were undermined by pernicious outside influences (James Brady to F.J. Buck, March 6, 1942. James Brady Fonds M-125-37a. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta; O'Byrne 2013, 331-332), particularly capitalism and white occupation of Indigenous lands. He writes,

> This transition from primitive social relations to capitalism found its political expression in the struggle to establish parliamentary democracy and responsible goevrnment [*sic*]; to which was added the winning of an independent national existence. In the early [R]ed River period, this national feeling had been coalesced in the battle against the semi feudal [*sic*] de[ce]ntralization of the Hudson's Bay Company regime; and after the surrender of Rupert's Land it was born of the struggle against the octopus clutch of the exploiting vanguard of white settlement (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

This analysis was in direct contradiction to the mainstream narrative of Métis history, and particularly Métis dispossession through the Scrip system as being the result of the natural and social deficiencies of an inferior and disappearing race, ill-adapted to the requirements of civilization and modernity (Giraud 1945, 469-524; Ens and Sawchuk 2016, 276). The MAA's written submission to the Ewing Commission displays both Brady's analytical mark and the awareness that a narrative rejecting deficiency went against the accepted discourse:

> The history of the Metis of Western Canada is really the history of their attempts to defend their constitutional rights against the encroachment of nascent monopoly capital. It is incorrect to place them as bewildered victims who did not know how to protect themselves against the vicious features which marked the penetration of the white man into the Western prairies (MAA in Dobbin 1981, 89-90).

Through this analysis, Brady and the MAA radically re-centered the Métis as the authorities on their own history, as capable agents in relation to Canada, and in defiance of state narratives that naturalized their suffering and decline. This reclaiming positioned Métis as intellectual and political equals in both historical and contemporary times, able to bridge their collective interests as Indigenous people with modern socio-political-economic thought and action.

Brady's lifelong study of Métis history, informed by socialism, was also foundational to his understanding of contemporary Métis struggle, and his own role in it. He saw himself as taking up the work and role of previous Métis leaders to struggle against capital and the economic dispossession of his people (this will be discussed further in Chapter two's discussion the Métis class system). Communism provided a strong theoretical foundation and, in the first few years after the October Revolution, inspiring examples of oppressed peoples gaining self-determined political and economic governance. Like many, Brady may have felt that the proletarian revolution was just over the horizon.

The Communist Party of Canada and the Comintern

Brady was a member of the Comintern-guided CPC for much of his life (James Brady Fonds M-125-59a. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta), including during the tumult of the 1920s and 1930s, when many believed that capitalism was reaching a crisis point and that a socialist revolution was, if not inevitable, at least very likely to occur (Burger 1980, 86). After the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, the Comintern was established by Lenin in 1919 to "created [*sic*] and direct a world party with national units, named 'Communist', to replace and destroy the influence of the existing socialist parties which, according to Lenin, had become hopelessly reformist rather than revolutionary" (Penner in Burger 1980, 71). Although the program of the Comintern changed once Joseph Stalin took control in 1924, as members of the Comintern these new, more militant national parties were tasked with organizing and leading a global socialist revolution, with the Soviet Union as the guiding light and primary example (Burger 1980, 72-73).

Brady was a strong believer in the politics of the CPC and the Comintern. For example, as a committed anti-fascist, in 1937 Brady had attempted to travel to Spain to join the fight against Franco's fascist regime (the Canadian government denied him a visa) (Dobbin 1981, 115). During World War II however, the Soviet-German Treaty of Non-Aggression was signed in 1939 and the Comintern changed its policies; "the CPC's stance become one of 'imperialist' denouncing of the war, focusing criticisms on England and France" (Burger 1980, 110). Consequently, the CPC forbade its members from joining the war effort. In spite of his deep hatred of fascists both in Canada and Europe, Brady waited to enlist until after the Comintern (through the CPC) declared the war a truly anti-fascist one in 1941 (Dobbin 1981, 138). (It has also been suggested that the Canadian government barred Brady from enlisting for several years due to his politics (Dorion n.d., 2).) The CPC has been criticized for being *too* subordinate to the

Comintern, sometimes at the expense of the Canadian socialist struggle (Burger 1980, 120), and it seems like Brady, at least in this case, shared the CPC's view on the matter and was content to toe the party line.

In order to become a member of the Comintern, parties had to meet the "Conditions of Admission to the Communist International," also known as the "Twenty-One Conditions." These conditions ensured party unity and were developed to prevent the infiltration and usurpation of the national units by reformers and centrists. They also laid out Lenin's strategy for organizing the world's proletarians. Two of the Conditions in particular would have attracted Brady to the CPC, or have been attractive to him as a member. #5:

> Regular and systematic agitation is indispensable in the countryside. The working class cannot consolidate its victory without support from at least a section of the farm labourers and poor peasants, and without neutralising, through its policy, part of the rest of the rural population. In the present period communist activity in the countryside is of primary importance. It should be conducted, in the main, through revolutionary *worker*-Communists who have contacts with the rural areas. To forgo this work or entrust it to unreliable semi-reformist elements is tantamount to renouncing the proletarian revolution.

And #8, which states:

> Parties in countries whose bourgeoisie possess colonies and oppress other nations must pursue a most well-defined and clear-cut policy in respect of colonies and oppressed nations. Any party wishing to join the Third International must ruthlessly expose the colonial machinations of the imperialists of its "own" country, must support—in deed, not merely in word—every colonial liberation movement, demand the expulsion of its compatriot imperialists from the colonies, inculcate in the hearts of the workers of its own country an attitude of true brotherhood with the working population of the colonies and the oppressed nations, and conduct systematic agitation among the armed forces against all oppression of the colonial peoples (Lenin 1965b., 206-211).

And while it is clear that in the early-mid 20th century neither the concepts of colonizer or colony were applied to Canada or the United States in relation to the Indigenous peoples living there, Brady took this clear anti-colonialist/anti-imperialist stance and expanded his own communist analysis to include the colonial projects of Canada. Sections of the Communist Party

of Canada would eventually, in Brady's later years, come out explicitly in favour of Indigenous equality and self-government, and against assimilation (Beeching March 25, 1963. James Brady Fonds M-125-49. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). Indeed, while Brady's application of communist principles, and particularly Leninism, to the socio-political-economic conditions of northern prairie Metis was unique, marginalized people on nearly every continent were doing the same to organize and inspire large-scale radical and revolutionary political movements.

A Few Examples of the Influence of Lenin and the Comintern in the Mid-20th Century

The anti-colonial orientation of the Russian communists and the early years of the Comintern were inspiring to marginalized revolutionaries across the world. The theories of Marx, Engels, and subsequently Lenin, Stalin, and to a lesser degree, Trotsky, came to inform some of the most famous revolutionary leaders and movements of the 20th century. Lenin in particular was widely highly regarded; the October Revolution and Lenin's own theories and policies were seen as Marx's and Engel's theories in action. For mid-20th century socialists, "Lenin had no master in the theory and practice of making a party and a revolution" (Cohen 1964, 3).

It is unclear exactly how much Brady would have known about the anti-colonial and communist/communist-inspired revolutionary and national movements that were occurring, but as a member of the Communist Party he would have received news of international happenings through their papers and newsletters. His infamously large library, full of socialist literature, and his commitment to solidarity and unification of class struggles also suggests he had at least a working knowledge of many of these revolutionary goings on.

Brady was one of many radical socialists to take up the theories of Marxist-Leninism and apply them dynamically to the history and contemporary realities of his community, though he

has not received the same level of recognition as some of his contemporaries. The near-ubiquity of Lenin's and the Comintern's influence on socialist movements in Brady's time demonstrates that marginalized people, especially those suffering under colonial and imperial regimes, found the theories and praxes espoused by the former instructive when applied to their own contexts, and "Although the apparent success of the Soviet revolution inevitably meant its dominance as a blueprint for socialist revolution, local communists interpreted Comintern and, more broadly, Marxist ideas in terms of their own traditions and experiences" (Drew 2003, 167). Lenin's adoption of the Comintern "approach afforded flexibility and appealed to a diverse constellation of socialists, communists, trade unionists, civil liberties reformers, pacifists, Pan-Africanists, and anticolonial nationalists seeking to construct a common platform for a global struggle against imperialist powers and capitalist classes" (Louro 2018, 22).

The creation of the Comintern in the early 1920s had impacts that reverberated throughout the global left. In Africa, the Communist Party in Algeria was forced to reckon with its own colonial tendencies in the 1920s and 1930s. The majority French members of the Party initially resisted the Comintern's call for the liberation of North Africa, but were given a public dressing down by Trotsky, who accused them of representing a "slave mentality." Subsequently, although they remained a minority, Party members took up anti-racist, class-centric analyses that argued "Travailleurs de tous pays, unissez-vous … Même et surtout, les indigènes!" (Workers of all countries, unite … even and above all, the natives!) (Drew 2003, 184-186), a clear reflection of Lenin's plan for a unified proletariat in colonial nations (discussed further below).

In South Africa, the communists took the directive of the Comintern that party membership in colonial societies should reflect population demographics seriously, becoming majority Black by the end of the 1920s (Drew 2003, 168). The call for workers of all races to

unite in the face of capitalist and imperialist exploitation was also taken seriously by the African population, which had experienced rapid and hyperexploitative proletarianization in the service of the mineral resource extraction economy. As the Comintern began to shift its focus from an imminent European revolution to broader anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggles (Drew 2003, 177), South African party members focused on national liberation. Communists would carry their anti-imperialist struggle into the second half of the 20th century, becoming key supporters of the anti-apartheid movement.

It was not just political parties that took up Leninist theories to inform their movements. Some of the most famous communist leaders and theoreticians would be indebted to Lenin's and the Comintern's work. Perhaps the most well-known is Mao Tse-tung, a Chinese Communist Party member who began to expand upon Lenin's theories of class and apply them to the Chinese context in the 1920s. He read the Chinese Revolution through a Leninist and Stalinist lens (Cohen 1964, 30-31, 72), developing the Maoist tradition of state communism and leading China through the Cultural Revolution. Ghanian revolutionary, first Prime Minister, and President Kwame Nkrumah was open about the influence of Leninism on his political theory and revolutionary tendency, and retooled the theories of European communists into practical relevance to the African, and particularly Ghanian contexts (Rooney 2007, 256). Finally, the "most original figure in the history of Spanish revolutionary Marxism," Joaquín Maurín, CNT member and Leninist, was convinced through Lenin of the need for revolutionary violence organized according to anarchosyndicalist principles (Payne 2004, 13). Relatedly, it was the Comintern's eventual decision to intervene in the Spanish Civil War that led directly to the creation of the International Brigades, the same anti-fascist forces that Brady attempted to join in 1937 (Richardson 1982, 15).

In his later years Brady was openly interested in and supportive of the actions of the Black Panther Party in the United States, who were themselves theoretical descendants of Marx, Lenin, Mao, Nkrumah, and Castro, among others (Austin 2006, 7). Unfortunately, he did not see their forms of organization and struggle as immediately relevant to the struggles of the mostly rural northern Métis in Saskatchewan, owing to the concentrated urban population of Black Americans around which the Panthers' strategies were built (Dobbin 1982, 234). Nevertheless, while Brady may have been ideologically isolated on the local level, he was part of a community of socialist theoreticians and revolutionaries in the 20th century that spanned decades and continents, all of whom were engaging with the ideas of Marx and Lenin, and remixing and applying them to their own historical and contemporary contexts. Brady's Leninism reflected the circumstances of the Métis.

Brady's Leninism

Brady believed that economic prosperity and integration would provide Métis with political-economic clout similar to that of the white labour movement of the time and would decrease racism through assumed solidarity among the working class. He certainly considered the working class as the Métis' natural allies (presuming he could integrate the Métis into the settler economy), stating, "We have no independent social base other than the working class. With the working class as the necessary assisting force, we can be strong. If we go against the democratic forces we are converted into nothing" (Brady in Hatt 1985, 67). He held this opinion until well after he had given up on the Settlements as sites of Métis political and economic liberation (Brady's disillusionment with the Settlements will be discussed further in Chapter two). Indeed, Brady saw "close work associations with white people" as the only way to orient nomadic Métis approaches to labour towards a "tradition of industrial work" (Jim Brady to Art

Davis 1960, #4 11). As mentioned above, for many racialized and colonized communists around the world, "It was the 'great experiment' underway in the Soviet Union that inspired the hopes and dreams of many … [the] discourse represented the Soviets as antiimperialist comrades to the oppressed peoples of the colonial world. (Louro 2018, 22). Brady was confident he could tap into that national and international solidarity through socialist unification.

Brady was committed to finding common ground and building solidarity between the white working class and the Métis, and the following quote combines this commitment, his socialist analysis of history, and his belief that a united working class is inherently or inevitably anti-oppressive:

> Our country which has been built by many generations of working people, including our own, today does not belong to the people of Canada. A half a hundred people in Canada own the factories, railroads[,] minesand [*sic*] all other sources of life. And what they do not own outright they control through their banks and trusts.
>
> Our ideals are the ideals of the common people throughout the world. We rejoice at the success of the common people in other lands and exalt in our solidarity throughout the world in the common fight for human liberty, human happiness and peace and progress. It is our pride as Canadians, as common people of Canada, that makes us rejoice at th[e] rout of Rommel in Africa and the glorious Soviet victory at Stalingrad. As Canadians we desire and fight actively for freedom fo for [*sic*] the enslaved peoples as well as victory for ourselves (Brady 1942. James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

This analysis—that the Canadian working class is collectively anti-oppressive, and that white workers and the Métis can be united through their shared history and positionality as workers—reflects Brady's political allegiance to Leninism, which has been described as so profound as to be akin to "worship" (Andre Bouthillette to Murray Dobbin 1978, 17). This analysis mirrors Lenin's and the Third International's stance on the capitalist nature of imperialism.

By the turn of the 19th century, Socialist parties across Europe had developed policies and passed motions in opposition to colonial expansion, recognizing in it the alliance between bourgeoise capitalist interests and the government, as well as the exploitation of workers in the colonized territories. One such resolution, from the German Social Democratic Party in 1900, is demonstrative of the main thrust of socialist thought on the issue at the time:

> Colonialism sprang "in the first instance from the insatiable demands of the *bourgeoisie* to find ever new investment outlets for its continually accumulating capital, as well as from the drive for new markets." The policy depended "on the forcible annexation of foreign lands and the ruthless subjugation and exploitation of the indigenous people." It made "the exploiting elements" even more savage, and demoralized those "who strive to satisfy their greed by the most objectionable and even inhuman means," Against all such "policies of plundering and exploitation", Social Democracy "as the enemy of all oppression and exploitation of one people by another would protest as powerfully as possible". The resolution went on to demand "that the necessary and desirable cultural contacts between all the peoples of the world should be achieved by means compatible with the preservation of the rights, liberties and independence of those peoples who can be won for modern culture and civilization only by the force of teaching and example" (Braunthal 1966, 308, Vol. 1).

As indicated by the above passage, the integration of Indigenous peoples into the European conception of Western modernity was still considered desirable, and the focus on "rights, liberties, and independence" was later tempered by the perception of Indigenous peoples as less capable of determining what was best for them, with a Comintern resolution stating "for the peoples of the colonies, 'that degree of freedom and independence appropriate to their stage of development, with the understanding that complete freedom of the colonies must be the ultimate aim'" (Braunthal 1966, 308, Vol.1).

In *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination* (1977), Lenin similarly argues that contemporary imperialism and colonialism serves the bourgeoisie in their ongoing oppression of the working class in both the colonized and colonizer nations. Socialist revolution, according to Lenin, can only be achieved by uniting the working class. Not only should the working class in

oppressor nations combat the imperialism of their own nations "for otherwise recognition of the equal rights of nations and international solidarity of the workers in reality remains an empty phrase, a hypocritical gesture" (Lenin 1977, 68), but "the Socialists of the *oppressed* nations must unequivocally fight for complete unity of the *workers* of both the oppressed and the oppressor nationalities (which also means organizational unity)" (Lenin 1977, 65). He also arguably goes further than his Euro-Socialist comrades by asserting that "Victorious socialism must achieve complete democracy and, consequently, not only bring about the complete equality of nations, but also give effect to the right of oppressed nations to self-determination, *i.e.*, the right to free political secession" (Lenin 1977, 73). This could explain, at least in part, why Brady continued to look to integrate Métis into the white working class throughout his life. His thinking on this matter sits in uncomfortable tension with his own recognition of the racism of the Canadian labour movement and white workers; he observes, certainly from long experience, that "where the majority of the people are white … I would find considerable hostility against myself" (Jim Brady to Art Davis 1960, #3 9).

Brady also felt there was a strong connection between colonialism and fascism, declaring that, for example, "It is safe to assume the majority of Dutch people are pro-Nazi in their sentiment, as befits a first-class colonial power" (Brady 1944-1945, 33. James Brady Fonds M-125-1. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta) and remarking of the contemporary accusation leveled against the Métis of not understanding "the duties and responsibilities of citizenship": "There is an essential kinship between these statements and the Herrenvolk methods of German Fascism" (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). He makes this connection several times, also noting Canada's war time actions as being more similar to Germany's than to anti-fascist nations', noting that the German removal of

potential French anti-Nazi resistors during the occupation was "A tactic similar to the removal of our Japanese population from the Pacific coast area" (Brady 1944-1945, 4. James Brady Fonds M-125-1. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

Leninism and classical Marxism provide a template for Socialist revolution that may have attracted Brady. His methodical mindset—characterized by his ability to strategize several steps ahead—may have been part of what made Leninism so attractive to him. Leninism projects and predicts itself into a future foreseeable through the completion of specific socio-economic-political stages—the revolutionary Socialist state being only a mid-point in the liberatory communist struggle. While touting the importance of democracy and the self-determination of nations to socialist unity, Lenin goes on to state that "complete communism," his ultimate goal, can only be achieved with the abolition of both nations and democracy (Lenin 1977, 73). It could be that Brady's political project relied on an alliance with the white working class in order to prepare the Métis as a people for this latter stage of communism; a type of liberation through, and then beyond, integration. Both the Settlements and the cooperatives then, would have been meant as transitional projects. Brady himself hints at this stream of thought in his later years:

> [Indigenous peoples] are and have been the victims of colonialism as well as any Asian or African, but they must be freed from all of the pernicious influences that this system of colonialism has forced upon them in British North America. They must be freed of the disabilities which colonialism has imposed upon them, or the vestiges of colonialism still impose upon them. Consequently, what we would refer to vaguely as the national liberation of the Indian peoples and the Metis people in Canada, cannot be completed until Canada as a whole, and the western world as a whole, free themselves of that vicious system which has imposed these conditions on a conquered people. You see, the problem was you were dealing simply with the problems of a conquered nation and a defeated people. You see, our struggle for national liberation or a future destiny of our own, that struggle was fought out on the banks of the Saskatchewan River more than two generations ago (Jim Brady to Art Davis 1960, #5 17-18).

Integration

> Our Metis people made a grand contribution to the democratic struggle. We have seen the passing of the buffalo, the Hudson's Bay Co., and the passing of our tradition to the militant labor movement of our time who are the true inheritors of our tradition of democratic struggle and we know that with their help we shall see the passing of the monopolists of the 20th century (Brady in Hatt 1976, 13).

> The ultimate aim is our absorption into the general stream of Canada (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds, M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

Brady's political projects in the 1930s-1960s were not nationalist in the way that we might understand Métis nationalism today. Beginning with his work with the MAA and true to his Marxist ethos, he read the Alberta economic-political landscape through a class lens, allowing him to group poor Halfbreeds and non-Status Indians as members of the same dispossessed "nomadic" class (Dobbin 1981, 91). Indeed, non-Status Indians were at that time considered half-breeds by provincial and federal authorities as well (Dobbin 1981, 55). Membership in the MAA was open to "anyone with Indian ancestry, including Métis, non-status, and treaty Indians … anyone who was pursuing a traditional livelihood of hunting, fishing, and trapping…" (O'Bryne 2013, 324). Brady felt that many of these nomadic Métis and Indians had been pushed into or kept in the lifestyle because of white encroachment and racism, and that if they had the opportunity to undertake more economically viable work, they would not only thrive, but they would develop the capacity to become a politically self-determining people (Dobbin 1985, 124).

Ultimately however, Brady believed that, as a Native People, the Métis were already doomed, extending his class-based analysis of Métis history to the contemporary period, writing as early as 1942 that

> Of course, the Metis as a nation unit are breaking down and disintegrating. This is true. Our breakd dow n [*sic*] has been a complex and lengthy process. It is not simply a spontaneous process, but a struggle connected with the conflict of classes. We have a rich historic experience of that conflict. As a racial group which must leave the historic stage we are unconvinced that our role is finished. We have no independent social base other

> than the working class. With the working class as the necessary assisting force we can be strong. If we go against the democratic forces we are converted to nothing (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48, Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

He saw the Métis as a "conquered" and "defeated" people, asserting that

> I think it would be nonsensical for anyone to assume that he should be a separate nation, because the present day Metis lack... For one thing, they no longer possess an autonomous territory of their own with a culture which is strictly indigenous to that territory and free from outside influences. For that reason, you see, the Metis are no longer in a nation. In the past they had aspirations to a nation and historically at one time, and how it points out in would have been possible to have created a native state in North America. But that period has receded definitely and there is no longer that possibility on account of they are no longer a homogeneous group of people with a culture that is unique in itself, having an autonomous territory of its own (Jim Brady to Art Davis #5 1960, 17-18).

Brady's vision was ultimately integrationist because he was relying on this predominantly class-based analysis. Raised middle class and extremely well-educated for a Métis of his time, as well as self-educated, he did not see his work as challenging the colonial state itself, but rather the state's deliberate negligence towards Métis and Indians. He felt that integration into the broader Canadian economy and working class was the only solution against Métis extinction, and that a well-organized and relatively independent Métis base was the best defense against further encroachment: "The Métis have no other weapon except organization" (Brady to Joseph Dion 1940, 2. James Brady Fonds M-125-27. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). Brady was a strong believer in the power and importance of solidarity as both a liberatory tactic and a prerequisite for self-determination (Jim Brady to Art Davis #5 17-18). But somewhat paradoxically, he also saw liberation as the integration of the Métis into whitestream Canada, writing "We want our in independence [*sic*] and initiative. These are the arms by which we shall forge our emancipation. The ultimate aim is our absorption into the general stream of Canada." (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

Brady's failure of imagination here was based in his Socialist thinking, leading to a fundamental misrecognition of nomadic Métis lifeways. As a lifelong labourer and member of the Métis working class, Brady looked to workers' struggles and organizing tactics to inform his own work. As such, his ultimate vision for the MAA and Settlements was one in which Métis economic stability—achieved through Métis-run resource cooperatives and in solidarity with the white working class—would provide the strength Métis needed to successfully resist future white/government interventions. "Power is the essential lever for our transformation" (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta), he claimed, and as a Marxist, he believed that an organized working class was the ultimate locus of power. However, as Dobbin points out in relation to the CCF's socialist resource cooperative policies in northern Saskatchewan, Brady's conception of economic power based on a model of white wage labour was "totally disrupting the stability of the Metis' traditional life pattern and replacing it with social and economic chaos" (Dobbin 1981, 184). This will be discussed further in Chapter three.

While Brady worked to proletarianize the Métis into white labour relations, and while he did claim that the Métis had been defeated and no longer constituted a nation, there are indications that he foresaw a distinct future for the Métis. In a 1960 letter promoting the work of the CCF in the north, Brady says, "there can and will be a future when the Indian people have their own leaders, run their own business and do what their community needs done and do it themselves" (Brady to Matthew Eninew May 27, 1960. James Brady Fonds M-125-56. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). He also, in the previously quoted discussion with Art Davis, hints at a distinctly Indian/Métis liberation that could proceed from socialist revolution in Canada:

> Consequently, what we would refer to vaguely as the national liberation of the Indian peoples and the Metis people in Canada, cannot be completed until Canada as a whole,

> and the western world as a whole, free themselves of that vicious system which has imposed these conditions on a conquered people" (Jim Brady to Art Davis #5 1960, 17-18).

As to what this distinct future could look like, or indeed how to achieve it, there is no record of Brady's thoughts. Seeing the cycle of Métis struggle as unbroken for generations, he may have intended to leave those future strategies for the next generation: "Our history has embodied an indefeasible ideal- the longing is always bormn [*sic*] afresh in each generation for a promised land, into which, perhaps like Moses we will never enter into but which gives rise to the heroic and never ending adventure of our racial struggle for existence that is none the less e[m]pathetic (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

Conclusion

The centrality of tolerance, generosity, and political engagement to Brady's early childhood and political education underscored the need for collective liberation and solidarity between and among peoples. Encountering radical socialist politics in the 1920s from immigrant labourers with whom he worked and Métis history and politics from relations and community members, he synthesized both into a liberatory Métis socialism. His socialism was grounded in the Leninist ethos that was spread in the early years after the October Revolution and developed and disseminated in Canada by the Comintern and CPC, as well as in the contemporary political and economic realities of northern prairie Métis. Through these lenses, Brady developed a narrative of Métis history that radically shifted the catalysts of 20th century Métis destitution and marginalization from their natural deficiencies to the vagaries of colonial capitalism and white exploitation; he would subsequently mobilize this narrative to make a case for an autonomous and recognized Métis land base.

Land, in Brady's view, would provide the foundation upon which the Métis could build collective political and economic strength, re-orienting them towards white labour relationships

which would in turn build solidarity with the white working class and align the Métis with the coming socialist revolution, outlined in stages by Lenin. Leninism's (at least nominal) anti-fascist and anti-colonial tenets, as well as its emphasis on the right of peoples to political and economic self-determination were taken up by Brady and applied to the Alberta Métis context. An organized and mobilized Métis working class could work with the larger white working class and, in turn, have its own interests protected. Believing that the Métis no longer had the capacity to be a nation unto themselves, Brady instead was struggling to liberate the Métis as part of the national and global proletariat. Whether he believed there was a distinct Métis future post-revolution is unclear. What is clear is that Brady felt that the Métis' best chance for survival and security was as workers under socialism.

As I will explore further in the following chapters, two of his major political projects: the Métis Settlements and resource cooperatives, were in the service of this goal. In both instances, Brady's vision was drastically undermined by settler governments that could neither truly conceive of nor allow a unified and politically-economically independent Métis people. The grassroots organizing that Brady took up in the 1930s with the MAA was working to unite the interests and will of the Métis to gain the political power necessary to force the state to recognize its responsibility towards the Métis. However, Brady's first experience attempting to work with the state in the lead up to and during the Ewing Commission would be an unequivocal demonstration that capitalist colonial state interests continued to trump Métis interests, even when they seemed to intersect.

Chapter 2: The Settlements

Introduction

> The Metis cannot be subservient to any other body except a democratic government duly elected by the people (Brady to F.J. Buck, March 6, 1942. James Brady Fonds M-125-37a. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

The Alberta Métis Settlements are currently the only contemporary colonial government-recognized Métis land base in existence. Run by the Métis Settlements General Council and, unlike other state-recognized Indigenous land, administrated provincially, the Settlements were legislated into being in the late 1930s with the *Metis Population Betterment Act* after nearly a decade of grassroots organizing and government lobbying by the Métis Association of Alberta. Twelve pieces of land in central and northern Alberta were initially set aside for the use of the Métis, but due to an overestimation of the productivity of the land in certain areas initially deemed suitable that number has since decreased to eight (for more on later Settlement life and organizing, see Bell 1994; Pocklington 1991; Alberta Native Affairs Secretariat 1985; May 1984; Horstman and May 1982; Metis Association of Alberta et al. 1981; Desjarlais, Jacknife, and Lepine 1979).

It is clear that the Settlements enabled part of the Métis population of Alberta to retain their community and lifeways in the face of increasing settler incursion into the north in the inter- and post-war years. It is also inarguable that the Settlements were and remain important loci of Métis linguistic and cultural praxis and transmission. Rather than making a blanket judgment as to the overall success or failure of the Settlements, I am looking in this chapter to determine, based on Brady's overall political goals, whether and how working with the state to form the Settlements was beneficial to his vision. Brady believed that Métis land could act as a stage upon which to play out his Leninist vision of Métis socialism; that it could be both the

economic foundation and the political bastion of Métis society. As discussed in the previous chapter, Brady believed that Métis needed to take control and responsibility over their own lives and futures, and that land was the conduit by which they could ensure their survival in the rapidly changing prairie north.

In (somewhat reluctantly) turning to the state to obtain the legitimacy he and the MAA felt was necessary to achieve these goals, Brady overestimated both his capacity to maintain control of the narrative he had so carefully crafted of Métis life and dispossession, and the MAA's ability to sustain a mobilized and politically active Métis community. The political education and mobilization of MAA members in communities throughout central and northern Alberta could not be sustained through the years of wrangling between and with the provincial and federal governments. It would take nearly a decade from the MAA's first meeting to the establishment of the Settlements, and while some executive members would remain more focused on the immediate needs of the membership, much of the energy and resources of the organization became devoted to the legislative struggle, rather than the on-the-ground work of education, mobilization, and the practical needs of communities.

In addition, by hijacking the story of the origins of Métis destitution from settler/state capitalist colonial interference to the more accepted deficiency/pathology narrative, the Ewing Commissioners ensured that Settlement Métis would remain economically and politically marginalized: instead of as squatters on Crown land and road allowances, as wards of the state in what were in many ways provincially-run reservations, complete with their own version of Indian Agents.

In in this chapter I will first discuss Brady's conception of the Métis class system. His articulation of the "progressive" and "nomadic" Métis classes is key to the MAA's written

submission to the Ewing Commission, to his historical analysis of Métis society, and more fundamentally, his own role in Métis struggle.

Secondly, I will examine Brady's reluctance to take up the strategy which the MAA eventually decided to pursue: a constitutional fight with the provincial government. Outside of Malcolm Norris, the MAA executive saw land primarily as a way to alleviate immediate Métis suffering, rather than as a site through which to build a self-determining Métis society. Brady was wary of engaging with the government through its own processes on its terms, rather than the terms set by a powerful and mobilized Métis people. His wariness would prove to be well-founded.

Next, I will look at Ewing Commission itself, demonstrating that in spite of the best efforts of the MAA to re-frame Métis society as politically and economically capable, agentic, and independent, the Commissioners never sincerely entertained the possibility of a self-determining Métis people, seeing land as a cheap way to provide welfare to a destitute people. Instead acting in sympathetic good faith, the Commission's hostility to the MAA and its rejection of their evidence and arguments would force them on the defensive to the point of taking up the very narratives of deficiency their entire strategy sought to reject. The findings of the Commission and resulting *Metis Population Betterment Act* would render Métis wards of the state, and the MAA would be summarily sidelined as the recognized representatives of the Métis.

Finally, I will look at the early years of the Settlements, and Brady's attempt to salvage his vision of an economically and politically independent Métis people on their newly recognized land. A lack of agricultural support, increased trapping by whites, changing membership eligibility requirements, continuing economic marginalization, and a lack of political and decision-making power stymied any political-economic organizing, and without the

representative clout of the MAA there was little that inhabitants could do to improve their conditions. As supervisor of Wolf Lake, Brady was forced to balance his Indian Agent-like role as government employee and sometimes enforcer with his allegiance to the Métis and their struggles, a far cry from his dream of a self-governing Métis society from a decade previous.

Ultimately, this chapter will demonstrate that the history of the formation of the Alberta Métis Settlements was a stark demonstration of the authoritarian power of the state. Brady's and the MAA's reliance on the good faith of the government to sympathize with the Métis struggle and support the will of the Métis through their representative organization led to a reification of the pathology and deficiency narratives the MAA had hoped to reject, and severely undermined the MAA itself, while placing Métis Settlement inhabitants under the bureaucratic control of the Alberta government. While on their face the Settlements looked like a victory, in terms of Brady's political goals for the Métis of Alberta, by 1942 he was in some ways further from achieving them than when he first joined the MAA.

The Nomadic and the Progressive Métis

Underscoring Brady's conception of the role that land would play in Métis liberation was his understanding of a Métis class system. Métis, according to this reading, were divided into two groups: the "progressive" and the "nomadic." These classes were pseudo-dynastic in that they functioned both as labour-based/economic groupings, while also marking specific family lineages that could be traced through history to the present day, marking contemporary members of the classes as their inheritors as well. Métis mobility *between* the classes is only briefly discussed, although Brady himself describes one of his aunts as part of the "Metis bourgeoise" (Brady ca. 1959-1967. James Brady Fonds M-125-6. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta),

suggesting that, even in the early part of the 20th century, there was some mobility into the whitestream classes.

While much of his political thought and strategizing was rooted in Marxist—and especially Leninist—theory, this class analysis of Métis society notably broke from Marxist conceptions of class and class dynamics. In Brady's reading of the Métis class system, the progressive "upper" class did not exploit the nomadic "lower" class. Rather, the progressives were historically the leaders and liberators of the Métis as a whole, an analysis which Dobbin notes "contradicted everything the [Communist Party]'s analysis stood for. According to the Marxist analysis of industrial society such alliances did not occur" (Dobbin 1981, 112). Interestingly, it also diverges from common perceptions of Métis socio-political divisions adhered to by some academics—that is, along linguistic or religious lines (see Giraud 1945; Hogue 2015; Ens and Sawchuk 2016; Hatt 1976, 1).

Progressive Métis were those who had, if not seamlessly, then at least more successfully integrated into the whitestream economy as agriculturalists and businessmen. They were the (sometimes literal, sometimes ideological/political) descendants of men like Riel and Grant, leaders among the Métis who, after the tumult of 1885, had left their nomadic relations to fend for themselves in on the shrinking margins of settler society (Dobbin 1981, 66; Giraud 1945, 2:453-467; Ens and Sawchuk 2016, 273-274). According to this analysis, Brady himself was, and understood himself as a progressive by virtue of both his heritage as a grandson of Laurent Garneau and his education.

The nomadic Métis on the other hand were those who had not managed to successfully integrate into Canadian economic or social life. In the early-mid 20th century, comprising the "destitute" Métis squatting on Crown lands and sometimes in the cities, these Métis relied on a

combination of subsistence hunting, trapping, and fishing, and menial wage labour. But even that meagre ground was shrinking beneath them. Brady noted that "the time when the Indian [o]r Metis could escape from industry by a free nomadic life belongs to the memory of the past" (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds, M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). Hunting and trapping were bringing in fewer yields, and the fur market was being undercut by increasing white incursions into Métis territory (O'Byrne 2013, 316). Modern advances in technology, medicine, and education were not making their way to Métis communities, and nomadic Métis had few opportunities to better their individual conditions.

According to Brady's analysis, the nomadic Métis historically tended to turn to those outside of their class for leadership and assistance, as they had turned to Joe Dion to represent their interests in the late 1920s. The time had come to build a long-term relationship of solidarity between the classes, and to provide the nomadic Métis with the education and tools they would need to take up Métis struggles themselves. Brady writes forcefully of the need for solidarity between the classes and for progressive Métis to once again take up their historic leadership role:

> Perhaps the difference between a well to do land holding Metis, possessed of some measure of education and a worldly substance and an ignorant backwoods nomad has been too great. It may be that the progressive type who have lived a lifetime in advanced communities has felt that an association in the same organization as an illiterate bush ranger, would serve no useful purpose.
>
> His civil rights have been useless to him and will be so until he realizes that every Metis is vitally necessary to the other and that one national union of all classes and grades must be the ultimate goals (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds, M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

Brady had "pinned his long-term hopes for Métis liberation, whatever the outcome of the [Ewing Commission] hearings, on the alliance between the nomads and progressives" (Dobbin 1981, 92). Brady's class analysis and vision of a united people subsequently influenced how he organized with the MAA and his approach to the issue of land.

The MAA, Organizing, and Strategizing for a Métis Land Base

After joining the Métis Association of Alberta in 1932, Brady took on an instrumental role in lobbying the provincial government for a recognized Métis land base. While it was one of the main projects of the early MAA leadership and solidly backed by its membership, it was Brady and Malcolm Norris who viewed a reserve or colony system as the Métis' best chance at maintaining political and cultural autonomy, and as the means to provide opportunities to build the economic base required to achieve them. Although the other executive members were sympathetic to the two Marxists' overtly political goals for what would eventually become the Settlements, they saw the project as one primarily geared towards relieving the plight of destitute Métis in the province (Dobbin 1981, 67). This is significant because it elucidates how much of the MAA's final official position and strategy it owes to the labour and politics of Brady and Norris, and Brady in particular, who has been referred to as the MAA's "theoretician" on the campaign (Hatt 1985, 66). Brady had already been involved with organizing resource cooperatives in central/northern Alberta (most notably in Lac La Biche (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds, M-125-53. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta)), and, as discussed in the previous chapter, saw the possibility of gaining an independent Métis land base as the perfect opportunity to mobilize towards a long term socialist economic foundation that would provide the structural framework through which to organize and mobilize a true Métis working class.

The strategy that the MAA eventually settled upon in the early 30s—to take up a legal battle for Métis constitutional rights—was not Brady's first choice. His great belief in the powers of solidarity and an organized, politicized people to effect change are evident in how he ranked the three broad strategies he believed could pressure the government into ending their decades of neglect of the Métis. His preferred mode of action was the direct and sustained petitioning of the

government by the Métis; going the constitutional route was his second; finally—and this may have been at least in part a reflection of his lack of faith in the white Albertan public as well as the small Métis voting population—to apply pressure through a voting campaign (Dobbin 1981, 68; Hatt 1976, 22). Brady spent much of the 1920s and early 30s doing education and mobilization work among the nomadic Métis of the provincial north, and while that work was most immediately geared towards developing cooperatives and raising the standard of living through socialist organizing principles, Brady was also looking to the long term to develop a politically conscious Métis working class that was active, mobilized, and responsive.

Dobbin suggests that part of Brady's reluctance to engage the government through a constitutional process was grounded in his stated belief in collective Métis power, and that socio-political-economic organization would be useless in what would inevitably be a protracted legal battle (Dobbin 1981, 69). His stance was also likely informed again by his materialist analysis of Métis history that positioned the dispossession and destitution of the Métis as the consequence of capitalist settler state interests, as well as his awareness of the anti-communist turn of the government. This trend would become more pronounced with the election of the Social Credit Party under William "Bible Bill" Aberhart in 1935, at which point the *Royal Commission on the Condition of the Halfbreed Population of the Province of Alberta* (the Ewing Commission) had already been appointed. From the beginning, Brady was wary of engaging with the government, both as a Métis and as a socialist, stating "No capitalist government would ever agree to the complete abolition of the Métis question. Thus it will not be a question of Métis rehabilitation but of restricting certain undesirable sides of the question and limiting certain excesses… objectively no reconstruction of the Métis will come about" (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds, M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). And with the election of a majority

Social Credit government, the political terrain became even more rocky: the previous UFA government had been in a precarious position and knew it. The MAA could no longer rely on the political goodwill engendered by electoral desperation—this struggle would be more explicitly adversarial (Dobbin 1981, 89).

The Ewing Commission

> I am astounded at the size of the movement and am strongly of the opinion that it cannot be ignored (Dechene to Reid in O'Byrne 2013, 318).
>
> Canadian governments in the past had conferred special status on native people for only one reason: to remove or otherwise pacify them in order to facilitate the settlement of the West (Dobbin 1981, 59-60).

Whatever he may have perceived as the limitations of the constitutional route, Brady, along with Malcolm Norris and Joe Dion, took on much of the "liaison" work that the MAA required for the legal process to be successful—lobbying and advocating for the Métis with politicians from the various political parties (UFA, Liberals, Social Credit) who were in power and were powerful opposition during the decade that it took for the project to become reality. In the lead up to the Ewing Commission hearings, Brady also worked to articulate his own Métis socialist historical materialist account of the Resistances and Scrip program to present to the Commissioners. In contradiction to the Commissioners' assertion that the Settlements were to act as a socio-economic brace for a dysfunctional population in need of government-controlled intervention and welfare, Brady's history showed a group of people with political and economic agency, who actively resisted white and capitalist incursions onto their lands and into their lives, and who were subsequently forced into the economic and political margins by those same forces (Hatt 1985, 66-67; O'Byrne 2013, 332).

It also underscored that historic and ongoing mistreatment and discrimination at the hands of the Canadian state and white Canadian population were the foundation of Métis

destitution; framing the MAA's demands as stemming from the wrongdoing of those in power (O'Byrne 2013, 313) and the historic rights of the Métis as an Indigenous people (Roy Denis 2017, 92-93). At the same time, this framework established the Métis as an Indigenous political collective with the MAA as its legitimate representative body, with the authority to negotiate on behalf of and to govern the Métis people and any Métis land that might result from the Commission (Moffett 2007, 43). The provincial government had by this point at least nominally accepted the MAA as the legitimate representative organization of the Métis (Dobbin 1981, 59-60), a notable achievement in an era in which generally the only recognized Indigenous political bodies were those designed and installed by Canada. As became increasingly clear through the Commission proceedings however, the government did not intend to allow this independent Indigenous governing body to continue without state oversight and control.

The first major blow to the MAA's (and Brady's) goal of an independent Métis land base was when Commissioners refused to allow the hearing of Brady's historical analysis or other historical evidence. They had been given information on Brady and Norris that described them as "dangerous political radicals." The communist leanings of the MAA's written submission combined with a historical basis for Métis claims which could possibly challenge the legality of the Alberta government's treatment of the Métis (Moffett 2007, 44-45) were possibly too much to tolerate. Faced with an Indigenous *and* socialist threat, the Ewing Commissioners from the start ensured that it was Métis deficiency, rather than Métis economic and political autonomy, that took narrative precedence (Ens and Sawchuk 2016, 276).

Even before the Settlements were established, the Alberta government made it clear that self-determination would never be a real option for the Métis. Brady and the MAA executive fought hard to prevent the Settlements from becoming a Métis poverty ghetto, but the all-white,

provincially-appointed Ewing Commissioners undermined that goal almost immediately. Rather than seeing their obligations towards the Métis as stemming from underlying Aboriginal rights or as a way redress historical dispossession, the Commission framed the situation as strictly economic, stating, "In the first place, the scrip was issued in extinguishment of any supposed right which the half-breed had to special consideration. But the Government of this Province is now faced, not with a legal or contractual right, but with an actual condition of privation, penury, and suffering" (Report of the Royal Commission on the Condition of the Halfbreed Population of the Province of Alberta 1936, 3).

This framing allowed the Commission to avoid any gesture towards the peoplehood or political autonomy of the Métis, and to position any land grant as a form of cheap welfare. In addition, the Commission chose to define Métis as indigents for the purpose of access to this form of relief. This was, interestingly, a definition initially forwarded by Malcolm Norris, MAA spokesperson for the Commission, and was not subsequently challenged by himself or other MAA members (Dobbin 1981, 95). This effectively torpedoed the kind of economic and political solidarity between nomadic and progressive Métis on which Brady had banked his long-term strategy (Dobbin 1981, 92). Additionally, by this definition neither Brady nor Norris would have been eligible for Settlement membership.

The definition also fit in nicely with two strategies undertaken by the provincial government: what Ken Hatt has described as the "pathology model," which he argues "tends to impose a form of substantive rationality on discussions. This model is generally favoured by those who wish to defend the *status quo*" (Hatt 1985, 69). The second strategy taken up by the Commissioners was the "imputation of blame" which sought to ascribe fault to the Métis for their own conditions of destitution. Both were mobilized during the Commission hearings to

underscore the need for a welfare scheme for the Métis in order to establish "a sophisticated process of blaming the victim." Hatt describes the structure of the hearings:

> first there was a statement by a witness about a pathological condition or conditions, then the witness was asked to describe a remedy to that condition. Finally, there was an effort to elicit a rationale which related the remedy to the conditions … The situation of the Métis was thus considered analogous to illness; reference to historical, political or economic argument was strictly discouraged (Hatt 1985, 69-70).

The pathology model was supported by most government officials and the Commissioner (Hatt 1985, 77).

Although the MAA strove to center Métis economic and political capability throughout the hearings, they were outnumbered by so-called "experts" whose opinions of Métis society fit comfortably within the pathology model. The Commissioners apparently did not even question any of the Métis for whom the MAA was the representative body (Moffett 2007, 42). Much of the "evidence" these experts forwarded was deeply racist, supporting the idea that the Métis were racially unfit to live or compete in the white world. An example of this tendency is articulated in this statement by a Dr. Quesnel, who would later be appointed a Settlement supervisor by the Alberta government:

> This same ignorance which has persisted amongst them for centuries, has made them indolent and given them a sub-normal mentality, all these deficiencies are conducive to laziness, laziness predisposes to poverty, and poverty in an ignorant, indolent race, means filth and filth brings disease (Quesnel in O'Byrne 2013, 334).

These statements went unchallenged by both the Commissioners, who were looking to "forge a causal link between the failures of those Métis and their circumstances" (Moffett 2007, 47-48), and, strangely, the MAA executive, who were perhaps still counting on their reasoned analysis and ethical standpoint to sway the proceedings.

In contrast to the white experts, the MAA executive were treated with borderline contempt by the Commissioners, questioned multiple times about their credentials and

capabilities (Ens and Sawchuk 2016, 278), and finally, interrogated with such blatant hostility that on the second day the MAA decided to pull back and rely exclusively on their written submission rather than any oral testimony, except in certain cases to clarify and answer questions (O'Byrne 2013, 332-333). In what has been called a "desperate gamble," Brady decided to abandon his previous tactic of social and political unity to emphasize the differences between the progressive and nomadic Métis (Moffett 2007, 45). In doing so, the MAA had no option but to take up the pathology model and the racial deficiency it implied (O'Byrne 2013, 333).

In the end, the Commission recommended a reserve-like land scheme to train Métis in the agricultural skills needed to integrate into the white economy. While nominally opposing Indian-like ward status for the Métis, the administrative system recommended by the Commissioners and adopted by the *Metis Population Betterment Act* in 1938 made Settlement inhabitants functionally wards of the state. Perhaps most harmful to Brady's vision of a unified Métis population, it was a government-appointed official, rather than the politically autonomous MAA, who would oversee the administration of the Settlements and their inhabitants. Brady presciently articulated his fears about the effect of such an administrative split on the Métis movement, saying,

> This duality of organization would thus destroy the unity which the Metis have achieved after much effort and would de[c]apitate the movement…
>
> The Executive Committee would be excluded from any effective participation in the defence of Metis interests. It would neutralize us as the spokesman of the Metis people and would reduce the local government sponsored associations to the condition whereby thy would have to accept the government officials. In this case the main hope of creating for ourselves small local autonomy conducted according to the best democratic tradition and behaviour in which we Metis have given example of historical devotion would be wiped out from the start … without the Executive Committee the government created organizations would be putty in the hands of political pandered [*sic*] and opportunists (Brady in Hatt 1976, 25)

This move would soon shatter the previous cohesion of the MAA while allowing the government to deal primarily with the Settlement administration, sidelining the non-affiliated organization (O'Byrne 2013, 336; 338).

The MAA had been counting on their mobilized base and their sense of the moral justness of their cause. Although by that point the executive had years of community organizing experience, they simply were not prepared for the vitriol and power of a challenged colonial government. They expected to be treated, if not like equals, at least with sympathy. Brady, strategist and theoretician, had underestimated the will of the state to maintain its power and control, and to exercise it so blatantly to write its own history and narrative of Métis suffering and the remedies best suited to address the "Métis problem." While this was the first time in generations that the Métis had mobilized to pressure the government into action, for the Canadian state, it was just the latest instance a long history of managing Indigenous discontent.

Upon the passage of the *Metis Population Betterment Act*, Brady articulated his fears for the future of these new Settlements. The

> peril, perhaps the gravest of all, lies in the fact that these colonies are threatened as much by success as by failure. For if they do not succeed it means misery, ruin, dispersal and a general rush for safety, on the other hand, [if] they attain prosperity they attract a crowd of members who lack the enthusiasm and faith of the earlier ones and who are attracted by self-interest … A solidarity that is compulsory is of no moral value (Brady in O'Byrne 2013, 343).

Through nearly a decade of organizing and then lobbying, Brady had seen his socialist vision drastically undermined by the Ewing Commission and the Alberta government, and he foresaw that any radical transformation of the Settlements from legislated welfare scheme to land base for Métis self-determination was dependent upon the inhabitants maintaining solidarity and working towards political and economic autonomy. In legislating a separate, provincially-controlled governing body for the Settlements, the Act had dealt a major blow to the MAA, dividing

ideologies, resources, and members in ways that still reverberate to this day. The division had serious immediate impacts as well, throwing the MAA executive into turmoil and disunity that weakened the organization to the point that, by 1940, the Alberta government withdrew its recognition of the Association as a representative body (Dobbin 1981, 126).

There is evidence that suggests that in the early years of the Settlements Brady believed that the MAA could salvage some of their power and vision on the ground. In a letter to Joe Dion in 1940, he recommends that "To root our organization deeply among the Métis we must concentrate our work in every settlement area. Each colony must become a stronghold of the Métis Association … We must secure a flexibility — an ability to readjust ourselves to the rapidly changing conditions of our struggle" (Brady to Dion in Hatt 1985, 68). Perhaps this is why, despite his general disillusionment and disappointment with the conduct and outcome of the Ewing Commission and Settlement development processes, he agreed, in 1942, to take on the role of supervisor of the Wolf Lake Settlement.

After the Ewing Commission: Brady and the Early Years of the Settlements

> In the fifty years since the struggle on the Saskatchewan we have not undergone any change in our social status. It is the fault of the governments for the basic economic changes will produce correspondent social changes (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

Two years after the passage of the Act, the government changed its membership requirements and redefined Métis to exclude non-Status Indians (Beharry 1984, 1), a further blow to the MAA and Brady's vision, which saw shared class and historical interests between nomadic Métis and non-Status Indians. This political maneuver effectively excluded as many as one third of potential Settlement inhabitants (Dobbin 1981, 67). The Métis were prevented from having autonomy even over their own membership criteria.

While the Settlements provided the Métis who moved there with a land base on which to start developing economically, it became clear that the agricultural prosperity that Brady and the Alberta government had envisioned for Settlement inhabitants was not going to be forthcoming. Several of the Settlements were shut down in the first two years because the initial surveys of the land had overstated their suitability for farming (Dobbin 1981, 130). In addition, because all Settlement land was Alberta Crown land, the Métis had no collateral for loans for farm equipment and other resources that would have increased agricultural productivity enough to be economically competitive with white farmers (O'Byrne 2013, 342). It was standard practice for farmers to mortgage their land to become and remain economically viable, and the organization of the Settlements rendered full participation in the agricultural economy virtually impossible (Metis Task Force in Beharry 1942, 6). While this was nominally to protect Settlement inhabitants from predatory creditors, it left the Métis in a ward-like relationship with the provincial government where their economic capacity and interests were regulated and supervised by the state (O'Byrne 2013, 342).

During the Commission, both the Catholic Church and state officials had undermined the MAA as the legitimate voice of the Métis and blocked it from becoming the governing body of the Settlements. The MAA had, from its inaugural meeting, pushed for administrative/governance control over any eventual Métis land base, "a provision aimed, almost certainly by Brady, at countering the possibility of the movement being weakened and divided once the reserves were established" (Dobbin 1981, 62). During the Ewing Commission the religious authorities pushed for Church-governed "conservation" sites and government agents advocated for a cheap way to distribute welfare (Hatt 1985, 75-77).

Seeing the Church (through Dion and Father Lacombe) again attempt to gain a foothold in the administration of the Settlements in 1942, Brady wrote emphatically of the necessity that "the Métis question should be kept free of all political or religious prejudices. Progress can only be made on the basis of a voluntary effort coordinated into an economic and social plan free of all prejudice," and with reference to the clergy's influence in the 1885 Resistance noted that "We have always been duped by those who asserted they were our friends" (James Brady to F.J. Buck, March 6, 1942. James Brady Fonds M-125-37a. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

Settlement administration rested with the Alberta government, who had the power to appoint and remove Settlement supervisors and even the Métis inhabitants themselves. This also contributed to the Métis' ward-like status, in contradiction to the government's stated purpose and against everything for which Brady and the MAA had been advocating for the better part of a decade. This was noted with chagrin by Settlement inhabitants, who turned to Brady for answers:

> Now, I am here in this colony No.7 is nearly three years now, the experience i [*sic*] got to-day all they [*sic*] CREAM goes to white-people and Metis get nothing … Now, i [*sic*] don't like these white-man Supervisor, its al right [*sic*] a Metis Supervisor, the i [*sic*] was understand about us it was not the white-man to control us, in the first place the white man he got no experience about Metis living… (Norbert Beauregard to Brady, July 24, 1942. James Brady Fonds M-125-37a. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

In his role as supervisor of the Wolf Lake Settlement in the early 1940s, Brady himself operated with a keen sense of the tension that existed between the need to fulfill his official responsibilities as a government employee and his disappointment with the imposed political and economic limitations of the Settlements, and sometimes with the Métis Settlement inhabitants themselves. His Wolf Lake Reports show him acting as a mediator, port authority, moral arbitrator, and sometimes cop as he attempted to promote and balance his own political-economic vision with the realities of the nomadic Métis' lifeways. The fact that Brady attempted

to keep and resolve Settlement conflict within the bounds of the Settlements suggests that he was still committed to developing them into self-governing political spaces. Domestic violence, assault, theft from the government and among settlement inhabitants, impersonation of government officials, smuggling, and trapping violations were just some of the issues he dealt with that occurred with varying degrees of regularity. Government policy granted settlement supervisors policing powers, and Brady certainly would have had access to state policing apparatuses as well, but instead of exposing inhabitants to the violence and discrimination of the colonial legal system he chose to try to keep it in the community wherever possible.

These social issues were likely the result of continuing, and sometimes increasing economic pressures. As Roy Denis notes, Wolf Lake and other Settlements remained marginalized, as 20th century trapping regulations increasingly allowed white trappers into traditional Métis areas. Without the MAA, there was no real political organization to support and fight for inhabitants' rights, which were once again ignored by the provincial government (Roy Denis 2017, 93, 99).

In light of the conditions he witnessed in Wolf Lake and the other Settlements, his own disillusionment with the Ewing Commission process, and the subsequent weakening of the MAA, it is no surprise Brady recognized early on that the Settlements could not be the vehicle for a strong socialist Métis working class. While he was reluctantly involved for a few years as the Supervisor of Wolf Lake, the experience left him even more convinced that Métis liberation could only occur through integration into the Canadian economy and alliance with the white working class.

Conclusion

> It is perfectly true that these people are like children, helpless and irresponsible (Rankine to Harvie in Dobbin 1981, 104).

The Ewing Commission and formation of the Alberta Métis Settlements have been called a "failure, a successful failure perhaps, but a failure equaled only in Métis history to the defeat at Batoche" (Redbird in Moffett 2007, 1). While this somewhat hyperbolic take underplays the incremental gains and subsequent work that Métis undertook in the proceeding decades to continue to fight for self-determination, what it does underscore is that it is not only obtaining land, but the conditions under which the land is obtained that matter. The Alberta government, through the Ewing Commission and *Metis Population Betterment Act*, created administrative and legislative conditions that stymied Brady's political and economic vision for the Métis.

Dobbin phrases the crux of the problem succinctly: "The [Métis] movement's success was due primarily to the demonstration of widespread discontent. The association had to continue to demonstrate its political unity, its influence in the Metis communities and its ability to rally support among a majority of Metis" (Dobbin 1981, 71). By splitting the political representation and the literal population of Métis, the government effectively eroded the foundation upon which the MAA was built: a unified and mobilized critical mass of Métis. Installing often non-Native supervisors on the Settlements, preventing Métis from participating in the economy on an equal footing with whites, replacing Métis political representation with government-legislated bodies: the Alberta government took up nearly identical tactics to those of the federal government with regard to Indian reserves. Métis political and economic power, which had seemed to Brady at the beginning of the 1930s to be well within reach, had been broken again by a state that would, simply put, not undermine its own political power by granting autonomy to the Métis (Dobbin 1981, 103). By pushing the welfare narrative, the government and its actors ensured that it would be even more difficult to achieve the political and economic autonomy that Brady envisioned in his dream of Métis socialist liberation. Indeed,

although the Settlements were successfully formed in 1940, Métis Settlement inhabitants would continue to fight for political and administrative autonomy for decades.

I am not arguing that the Settlements are themselves failures—decades of organizing undertaken by Métis Settlement inhabitants led to their eventual administrative emancipation from the provincial government in 1990 and demonstrates that Alberta Métis generally are still playing the "long game" when it comes to our political goals. Two of Brady's major organizational accomplishments, the Métis Settlements General Council and the Métis Nation of Alberta have "followed in his footsteps" to enter into legal talks with the government (this time federal) separately to discuss Métis land and rights (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada 2017; Métis Nation of Alberta 2017). Brady's vision for unified Alberta Métis population with political and economic autonomy seems to have died with the Ewing Commission.

The formation of the Alberta Métis Settlements was characterized by a stark display of the authoritarian power and motives of the colonial state. The tentative support that the MAA had received from the UFA government supporting a self-governing Métis land base evaporated when the Social Credit party came to power. Brady's iteration of a unique Métis class system, predicated on solidarity between the nomadic and progressive classes, as well as his historical account of Métis dispossession that privileged Métis political agency were co-opted and rejected, respectively, by the state-appointed Ewing Commission, which instead invested itself in the mainstream narrative of Métis deficiency. Brady and the MAA were forced to take up the deficiency narrative in an attempt to salvage some of their political vision for a Métis land base, but the Commission, and subsequently the government through the *Metis Population Betterment Act*, ultimately imposed its will and made Settlement inhabitants effectively wards of the state. Perhaps most harmful to Brady's political goals, the government unilaterally split Settlement

administration from the MAA, placing the former firmly under the control of the Department of Welfare and undercutting the political and representative authority of the latter. This effectively curtailed both political and economic development on the Settlements, and left Brady deeply disillusioned with a decade of mobilization and organizing.

After his tenure as supervisor at Wolf Lake, Brady never lived in any of the Settlements, and was only ever tangentially involved with later iterations of the MAA. After the war, he spent most of his remaining years in Saskatchewan, working on-and-off with the sitting CCF government and continuing to pick up labour contracts where and when he could. While he remained politically active and devoted to spreading socialism among the Indigenous communities in which he found himself, it was the resource cooperatives that were arguably his primary organizing focus in the later years of his life, and to which this analysis now turns.

Chapter Three: The Cooperatives

> Control of our natural resources is the cornerstone upon which we must build. We must be able to conduct our own agencies of physical life and well being, This is the self reliant way, the eindependent [*sic*] and self respecting way. We do not want to travel the path of a paternalistic and patronizing system of public welfare. We want our independence and initiative. These are the arms by which we shall forge our emancipation (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

Introduction

Brady organized resource cooperatives in northern Indigenous communities throughout the western prairies over the course of his life. Coops represent the most sustained form of project-based organizing in which he partook. While it is unclear exactly when or why Brady first took up resource cooperatives as a strategy for Métis liberation, his intentions for them remained the same across nearly four decades: to build an economic base from which to gain a measure of political self-determination alongside improving the lives and livelihoods of the nomadic/destitute Métis in the northern prairies. The vast majority of the coops that Brady organized were short-lived, and at times the introduction of cooperatives to the north occurred concurrently with state-sponsored modernization initiatives that actually decreased the autonomy and wellbeing of the communities in which they operated. In spite of their limited success, Brady maintained the belief that coops were a worthwhile strategy for Indigenous people, and especially Métis, to undertake to ensure their ongoing survival.

The consistent failure of the coops was due in part to two interrelated issues which Brady, as an organizer, was unable to overcome. The first is that while Brady strongly identified as Métis and spent most of his life—even while he was working for various governments— as a labourer among Indigenous people, his approach to organizing remained essentially paternalistic and skewed towards the same narratives of deficiency that the

government was promoting about the Métis. The disconnect between Brady's analysis of the Métis situation and his political goals, and the complexity of Métis worldviews and relationships to labour led to his misrecognition of the reasons why Métis were resistant to joining cooperative ventures and/or abandoned the co-ops. As discussed in Chapter one, Brady held the common socialist belief in the inherent superiority of his political worldview (a view shared by the CFF) and believed that only through white socialist labour relationships could the Métis find liberation. The Métis with whom he worked, however, largely did not share this view because, I argue, it conflicted fundamentally with traditional Métis trade relationships and did not offer substantial benefits or ameliorations to already existing economic conditions.

The second issue lay in the role of provincial governments and departments in the development and administration of the coops. In spite of the very different socio-political-economic contexts in which they were operating, both the pre-WWII Social Credit government in Alberta and the post-WWII CCF government in Saskatchewan worked explicitly against Métis economic self-determination, instead taking an assimilative approach to labour. In Alberta, the coops and the Settlements on which they were situated were seen as an interim relief scheme to elevate Métis into the mainstream Canadian economy. In Saskatchewan, the coops were seen as a way to incorporate Métis into the broader economy while opening the north for resource extraction to enrich the entire population. However, in both cases government policies ensured that Métis saw little of the wealth that their lands and labour generated.

This chapter will examine in detail the reasons for the failure of Brady's cooperatives, arguing that they were ineffective both because of the aforementioned misrecognition of Métis relationships to trade and labour, and because in both periods of Brady's coop organizing, the settler state developed policies and administrative practices that situated cooperatives as a vector

for assimilation; self-determination was not only never on the table, it was directly contradictory to the goals of the state. While the former issue does point to a serious analytical oversight in Brady's approach to economic organizing, it is the latter factor that fundamentally prevented the coops from being the political-economic platform for the Métis that he was convinced they could be.

This chapter will first outline Brady's "waves" of organizing in pre- and post-WWII Alberta and Saskatchewan. While Brady remained committed to cooperatives as a tactic to achieve economic security and liberation for the Métis, both the pre- and post-war contexts in which he was organizing and the Alberta and Saskatchewan provincial governments' approaches to cooperative development differed significantly. It will then explore Brady's misrecognition of Métis relationships to labour, and how that misrecognition contributed to the failure of the coops. One of the factors in the universal failure of Brady's coops is that he did not take into consideration the complexities of nomadic Métis labour traditions; this limited his ability and will to adjust his economic strategies to better reflect the on-the-ground realities of Métis labour. Finally, it will look into how the administrative decisions undertaken by the provincial governments of each wave prevented Métis economic success as cooperative members and alienated them from the cooperative model. As discussed in Chapter one, Brady saw the path towards Métis liberation as inextricably tied to the broader proletarian struggle. And despite what he saw as the political and economic setbacks of the Settlements (discussed in Chapter two), Brady continued to build towards independent economic stability for the Métis. A strong socialist Métis working class, built through cooperative labour, was the key to developing Métis independence and socio-political organizational skills.

The Two Waves of Coop Organizing

It is significant to note the differences in the political and economic contexts that characterized both "waves" of Brady's coop organizing. Because of the socio-political and geographic differences between pre-War Alberta and post-war Saskatchewan, I have chosen to frame the "waves" using WWII as the dividing point. Brady also did most of his Alberta organizing in the pre-War period, and most of his Saskatchewan organizing post-War. The first wave coops, the pre- and early-Settlement coops in Alberta, were organized immediately before and during the Great Depression, most under the majority Social Credit government that had reluctantly inherited the "Métis Problem" from their UFA predecessors and, as discussed in Chapter two, was attempting to "solve" it through practical assimilation and administration as cheaply as possible. While some information does exist on the coops with which Brady was involved before the creation of the Settlements, this chapter will focus on the coops that were attempted on the Settlements in the late 30s and early 40s. It seems as though in this instance it was Brady and the MAA who promoted resource cooperatives to the provincial government as an inexpensive means by which the Métis could achieve economic independence from state relief and could be incorporated into the larger Alberta economy.

The second wave occurred post-WWII in Saskatchewan under Douglas' socialist CCF government as part of their broader "Humanity First" ethos. In northern Saskatchewan, "Humanity First" meant both opening up northern resource extraction for the benefit of the provincial population, and integrating northern Indigenous peoples into that broader population through "self-help, education, and political activism" (Barron 1997, 31). Cooperative development was seen as an integral economic project that would match up well with "Native values" (Barron 1997, 172) and provide an avenue to assimilation into mainstream provincial economy. Brady, while disillusioned with the Settlements, was still committed to the cooperative

model and after returning from the war took work with the CCF's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) educating on and developing coops in north Saskatchewan. The paternalistic control that the CCF extended over northern industry, its discriminatory labour and distribution practices, and its refusal to materially support northern Indigenous workers would all contribute to the failure of the coops. One element in Brady's thinking that he shared with both the Social Credit and CCF governments was his understanding of Métis labour relationships.

Métis Relationships to Labour and Trade

> Aboriginal people found it far more difficult to adjust to the post-treaty [eight] regime, premised as it was on the hegemony of the nation-state and its Euro-Canadian managers, the subordination of Aboriginal people and their economy, and the imposition of a capitalist system of individual ownership and control (McCormack 2010, 273).
>
> Not uncommonly, Indians did not take their business to the local co-op, preferring instead to deal with the HBC factor or other traders who, unlike those at the co-op, were often long-time residents who spoke the Indian dialect (Barron 1997, 172).

Brady felt that individual market trade and labour relationships would lead inevitably to the exploitation of Métis by non-Natives, and with good reason. Economic conditions in Métis communities in the northern prairies were, generally speaking, dire, and what Euro-Canadian institutions and individuals were present in the region did little to alleviate the suffering. Financial abuse by HBC factors, for example, was rampant in parts of Saskatchewan well into the 20th century, where they would withhold Métis and Indian relief cheques in payment of debts, against future credit, or simply never produce the money, sometimes forging recipients' signatures (Barron 1997, 196-197). Company traders in the fur economy systemically suppressed buying prices for Indigenous trappers, and although the power and reach of the HBC had decreased significantly by the 20th century, the practice remained. Brady saw cooperatives in

part as a method to combat these types of practices, and give Métis more control and oversight over the fruits of their labour (Brady in Hatt n.d., 39).

Exploitation was not the only force that characterized early- and mid-century trade relationships between Métis and non-Natives in the northern prairies, however. Laliberte and Satzewich note that while exploitation was certainly severe and widespread, the assumption that Indigenous people were "helpless" in the face of state and capitalist forces is "based on a partial picture of social reality in which Native people are seen to exist largely outside of the extant system of productive relations in Canada" (Laliberte and Satzewich 1999, 67-68). Michel Hogue (2015) has written extensively on the creative and canny ways that Métis navigated the changing political and economic landscapes of the prairies in the 19th century; that dynamic and strategic engagement with colonial power continued to structure Métis lifeways into the 20th century. Faced with rapidly changing socio-economic conditions, Indigenous economic practices in the north had evolved in ways that were flexible, relatively independent, and did not interfere with their fundamental cultural values and seasonal activities (McCormack 2010, 44-45). Rather than being bowled over by and subsumed into/ejected from the Canadian economy entirely, Métis in the northern prairies had actively carved out an economic niche for themselves that, while highly marginal, allowed them some measure of freedom and cultural autonomy.

Indigenous relationships with non-Native traders were also more complex than a simple exploited/exploiter binary would account for. The flexible and varying nature of Métis/Indigenous economic activities included not just trapping, but hunting, fishing, gardening, raising small herds of cattle, making hay, and more, ensuring that Métis were never totally reliant on either the trade or wage economies for survival (Roy Denis 2017, 78; McCormack 2010, 42-43). This flexibility was also apparent in the extent to which Métis could choose to participate in

wage labour and had the capacity to negotiate or even reject rates offered by fur traders (McCormack 2010, 23). Trade relationships were also reciprocal, with trading companies (admittedly often reluctantly) providing resources to Indigenous families in times of hardship. As McCormack observes, this form of assistance cannot be conflated with government welfare initiatives, as it was drawn from the net profit of the HBC and other companies and essentially returned to labourers in the form of goods. "Occasional assistance provided by the trading companies was a way of helping the Indians make a living wage, not equivalent to twentieth-century government support for people displaced from the production process" (McCormack 2010, 44). Rather than short-term support to *return* workers to productive labour, trade company assistance operated as an integral part of that labour, and represented a responsibility that those companies were expected to fulfill to maintain the trade relationship.

It is important to note that the "flexibility" and "independence" enjoyed by Métis in this period were always circumscribed and constrained, not just by colonial state and capitalist institutions and markets (see Laliberte and Satzewich 1999), but also by the natural cycles of the land: a bad fish or fur season could push people into wage labour just as reliably as state proletarianization projects, in spite of trading company resources, and a good season could minimize wage work. And while relationships of the trade economy were in some ways reciprocal, the massive profits accumulated by the HBC over the nearly three and a half centuries of its existence attest to its and other trading companies' mass exploitation of Indigenous labour and resources. But again, northern prairie Métis were not passive figures on the economic stage: they actively engaged with these institutions and navigated challenging economic circumstances, and in doing so forged specific kinds of understandings and relationships, not just with individual companies or employees, but with their own labour.

Brady, having grown up in a relatively affluent family, relatively close to the resources and services of urban areas, and geographically distanced from his northern brethren and their histories, was not able to fully grasp the complexities of these relationships, or if he did, simply was not willing to significantly adjust his own goals to better reflect Métis realities. His division of Métis into the nomadic and progressive classes contributed to his perception of Métis engagement with the coops as well. As discussed in Chapter one, his conception of self-determination was rooted in raising the nomadic classes to progressive levels, a fundamentally integrationist project. He was attempting to graft socialist organizational and labour models onto communities, rather than building culturally-relevant and responsive frameworks *with* communities. This mirrors the actions of both the Alberta and Saskatchewan governments with regards to Métis economic integration.

Brady agreed to an extent with the mainstream narrative that the Métis were short-sighted and hyper-individualistic, unable, through ignorance or greed, to maintain the necessary solidarity to ensure the success of the coops and avoid exploitation (Dobbin 1981, 197-198). However, he did not consider the traditional Métis relationships of trade that would have been informing how cooperative members were approaching their labour and their understanding of the coops. For the Métis whose economic activities had not yet been folded into the modern economy, relationships of trade were still very much based in *relationships* with individual traders and companies, with specific understandings of the responsibilities of each party. From this perspective, it makes sense that if the cooperative organization was unable to reciprocate in the ways that members needed/expected, that they would return to the kinds of relationships that they knew could, even if those relationships were, on their face, more exploitative.

In addition, the practical necessities involved with cooperative membership meant that nomadic Métis would be required to become significantly more sedentary—remaining close to processing plants and specific extraction areas during set times of the year, and, depending on the type of coop, during set times of the day. This meant losing much of the flexibility of labour type and travel that they had previously enjoyed, and likely disrupted certain activities integral to Métis culture, such as visiting, trapping, and hunting that were seasonally dependent (Roy Denis 2017, 71). Barron, for example, writes of the common practice of Métis running up their credit locally during the winter months and subsequently leaving their communities in the spring to take on wage labour to pay down those debts (Barron 1997, 53). Dobbin briefly describes the common practice of northern trappers to rely almost entirely on HBC credit, spending any surplus almost immediately: "Cash itself was incidental to the credit system. It was used for entertainment or conspicuous spending on small luxuries, symbolic of his prowess as a trapper. Money, what little there was, was rarely saved" (Dobbin 1981, 184). This is a way of relating to labour and money that would have been interrupted by the coop model, particularly in the start-up phase.

Brady's reports and journals through the 30s and 40s, as his interview with Art Davis in 1960 reveal a frustration with, and sometimes derision towards the Métis with whom he was living and working. He expressed sympathy with white northern coop administrative staff, saying, "The Indians and the Metis are past masters at the art of passive resistance" (Jim Brady to Art Davis 1960 #2, 11). This is a notable statement, as it seems he never stopped to consider whether Métis resistance to/non-participation in/manipulation of his cooperative schemes were legitimate Indigenous responses to the attempted reformations of their labour relationships. He also referred to the Métis with whom he organized as "like children" (Andre Bouthillette to

Murray Dobbin 1978, 13-14, 20). This is a symptom of a fundamental disconnect between Brady and the nomadic Métis—although he was living and working with them, he still saw himself as ultimately in a charity role and the Métis as in need of saving. Or, more accurately, as in need of being educated into socialism to save themselves. In focusing solely on the destitution and exploitation he encountered, and by zeroing in on a solution that *he* felt best addressed the problems, he ultimately took up the same paternalistic view of the Métis as the governments with which he worked. Brady's problem was that he was trying to slot the square peg of Métis realities into the round hole of his socialist politics, and it appears that he never seriously considered alternative economic models. His vision for Métis liberation, as discussed in Chapter one, depended on reorienting Métis relationships to labour to align with those of the white working class, and for Brady, a socialist cooperative framework offered the best bet for organizing a mobilized, educated, and economically secure working population (Dobbin 1981, 124).

This is not to say that Brady was attempting to force communities to take up his model against the wishes of community members. The text of a notice explaining the functioning and benefits of a cooperative structure, likely written by Brady, certainly would have been of interest to Métis fishers:

> WHAT IS A FISH POOL OR A CO-OPERATIVE. It is an organization that enables YOU to ship your fish to the market at the lowest price possible and thereby enables you to get the full market price. The POOL is not a profit making organization; it is there to help you get the FULL MARKET PRICE.
>
> Now do you want a CO-OPERATIVE to get the full market price? If you do, then you must do what is required: that is you must ship your fish and when it is sold you will get your money in full. Operating charges are made to buy boxes, pay for ice, packing etc. but these charges are small compARED [*sic*] TO WHAT BUYERS charge. If you want the CO-OPERATIVE to pay cash for fish you must first of all save the money yourself. Then the CO-OPERATIVE will pay you cash from your deposit. (1936-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-65a. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

There is evidence that his efforts were appreciated and valued by communities and that his advice was actively sought out (Horace Sewap to Brady, March 5, 1951. James Brady Fonds M-125-53. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta); it is not as though Métis were against taking up opportunities to improve their economic circumstances. However, the often early rejection or abandonment of cooperative labour and principles, on the Settlements and in Saskatchewan, suggests that the structural issues that plagued the coops were just one of the contributing factors to their inviability. The cooperative model itself was both an insufficient and inappropriate replacement for traditional Métis labour forms. This, in combination with the ways in which the Alberta and Saskatchewan governments chose to administrate Métis coops ensured that they would not be a viable economic alternative for Métis in the north. Each provincial government had its own reasoning behind and strategies devoted to preventing Métis economic independence through cooperative labour. It is these to which I now turn.

Integration, Assimilation, and State Intervention

First Wave: Alberta

> Brady seems to have viewed producer co-operatives as a transitional form of social organization for a people not yet an integral part of the Canadian working class. The producer co-ops would serve, politically, to teach the Metis the value of collective action. In order for the Metis to fashion their own future, to fight for self-determination outside direction of government schemes, their nomadic individualism would have to be challenged (Dobbin 1981, 124).

Brady was involved in organizing cooperatives from at least the mid-1930s onward, including the Lac La Biche Fish Producers, the Interlakes Fishing Pool at Wabumun, and the Atikameg Cooperative Fisheries at Utikuma Lake (Hatt 1976, 17). In spite of his disappointment with the Ewing Commission and subsequent adoption of the *Metis Population Betterment Act* (discussed in Chapter two), Brady seems to have pinned his hopes for long-term Métis self-determination in Alberta on Settlement-based resource cooperatives (Dobbin 1981, 123).

Resource cooperatives had a strong history on the prairies, and Brady would certainly have seen the political implications of an organized cooperative membership base. Successfully organizing Métis resource cooperatives on the Settlements would have political as well as economic implications, and could be the platform upon which to re-build the Métis movement that had been so drastically undermined by the Ewing Commissioners. Cooperatives could bring the Métis independence from a hostile government.

However, the Canadian Wheat Pool, the most successful cooperative model of the time, was profoundly dependent on the government for support, and was in turn heavily administrated by it. Rather than representing an independent economic organizing form, Canada's foremost cooperative required intervention to protect its members and outputs. Even this venture was successful in large part because "the Canadian Wheat Board, through its power to fix a minimum price, through its power to receive national financing, and through its power to transfer deficits to the Government of Canada, really acted as a buffer between chaotic conditions in the international wheat market and the farmers on the land in Western Canada" (Canadian Wheat Board 1957, 7). Additionally, the largest and most successful coops were agricultural, and were formed by farmers who were already well-established and middle class. The function of these coops was to protect the interests and middle class status of the members. In the case of the Métis, coops were nominally supposed to provide and maintain the start up capital to sustain the coop and *eventually* provide a living to their members, and to protect the members from predatory, racist buyers.

The cooperatives also needed to accomplish these things with little to no support from a government that wanted to continue to avoid providing financial and infrastructural support to the coop memberships. The provincial government was nominally in support of developing

coops on the Settlements (Dobbin 1981, 124), however in practice, government policies and actions detrimentally impacted coop success. As discussed in Chapter two, the Settlements, from the Alberta government's point of view, were meant to be an inexpensive form of relief, and the government had ensured through legislation that Métis did not own their Settlement land and could not use it as collateral on the capital necessary to invest in the coops. The same government was unwilling to itself invest in the equipment and infrastructure that Métis could have accessed had they owned their land (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds, M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). In fact, the government was doing things like providing "relief" to Métis Settlement inhabitants in exchange for building their own roads (Dobbin 1981, 129), extracting their labour without legally employing them, which would have not only impacted their ability to undertake other kinds of work during that time, but also underscores how few resources the government would commit to the Settlements. In addition, the provincial government simply did not provide the insurance against market fluctuations or seasonal scarcity that larger coops, like the Canadian Wheat Pool, enjoyed. While the government claimed to want to lift destitute Métis out of poverty and integrate them into the mainstream economy, it refused to provide the necessary start-up or maintenance support to achieve this.

In addition, economic realities were a constant plague on the viability of the cooperatives. With no safety net and only very minor (if any) profits in the first few years of their existence, market prices had a massive impact on the viability of the locals. Because the government saw the coops as a means to supplement or replace social relief, it did not provide the resources to install a unified cooperative organization to monitor and support local members. Dobbin also suggests that provincial authorities were themselves complicit in actively sabotaging the cooperatives (Dobbin 1981, 123). These factors made it difficult to avoid exploitation by white

buyers. Many of the cooperative managers were white from outside the coop communities, with little interest or investment in their success (Dobbin 1981, 123). For example, while Brady initially described the Atikameg Cooperative Fisheries at Utikuma Lake as a "notable success," (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta) which replaced government aid by 1940 (Dobbin 1981, 130), the coop itself only lasted a couple of years. Hatt attributes the failure of this and the other early coops to being "undermined by the political influence of competing 'private' interests, or the subversion by buyers in the larger market" (Hatt 1976, 17-18). Brady himself saw Métis abandonment of cooperative principles as indicative of an ignorant individualism that privileged short-term gain at the expense of solidarity. In 1940, demonstrating this belief, he wrote to Dion that "the Métis will always be the victims of deceit and self-deceit as long as they have not learned to discover the interests of one of another" (Brady in Moffett 2007, 29).

Both Hatt's and Brady's assessment of the situation understates the role of the state in the failure of these coops. Individualizing the problem down to cooperative members being lured away and fleeced by private buyers does not take into account the economic circumstances of the Métis at the time, nor the history of their engagement with northern labour and trade markets. Considering Métis labour relations and the lack of institutional material support from the Alberta government—and the limitations on property and growth legislated in the *Metis Population Betterment Act* discussed in Chapter two—it makes sense that Métis would continue to sell to private buyers. The Settlements were billed, by both the Alberta government and the MAA, as a means for destitute Métis to attain economic security; as Dobbin notes, however, "The government's determination to cut costs made any prospect of 'betterment' on the colonies remote" (Dobbin 1981, 128). Métis were strategically navigating the relief-minded policies of

the government that had been developed and implemented to undermine Métis unity and self-determination to gain that security in ways that made sense to them.

Brady was also critical of the Social Credit government, realizing that they could not be relied upon to support Métis economic integration, much less self-determination (Dobbin 1981, 135). His decade of organizing with the MAA to win the recognition and support of the colonial government had demonstrated to him that the state's capitalist interests positioned it inherently at odds with his goals for Métis liberation:

> Even if the authorities achieved their aim partially, that is, reduc[e] this degredation [*sic*] to a minimum, they would not destroy the roots of the social system wherein the Metis question is an inherent problem. Thus at the best it won't be a question of reconstructing the Metis or of destroying the social anarchy and exploitation which gives rise to the Metis question, but of restricting certain undesirable sides of it, and limiting certain excesses (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

The Settlements and the struggling coops Brady had organized could not be vehicles to build the Métis working class. He would never entirely give up on the liberatory potential of cooperatives however, and on his return from the war, the new CCF government offered what may have seemed to be a new opportunity to test out his theories with what must have looked like a significantly more sympathetic political regime.

Second Wave: Saskatchewan

Brady's experiences in Alberta may have further convinced him that Métis interests were best served by joining the larger workers' struggle (Dobbin 1981, 136). He had learned from his decade of organizing in Alberta that it wasn't enough to simply organize Métis at the base producer level as cooperative members, Métis needed to have more control over their labour output and its administration. He notes in 1942 that "If we begin with minor cooperative ventures bringing about Metis rehabilitation depends to a great extent on the organizers or the skilled

technical workers who can be won step by step to the side of cooperative principles of organization" (Brady in Hatt 1976, 18). White managers, Settlement supervisors, and department officials had—sometimes actively—worked against the interests of the Métis, and white control over Métis labour had been a deciding factor in the weakening of the coops. Speaking of future cooperative organizing, Brady asserts that "A crucial factor in further improvement will be whatever stimulates the interest of the native member. This is not a concession to the individualistic spirit. The appeal to self-interest is essential in this work among natives; when it is lacking, disaster follows" (Brady in Hatt 1976, 18). This thinking may be in part what convinced him to agree to Norris' request that Brady take over his post at Deschambeault Lake in 1947, the beginning of his employment with the CCF. It would also prove to be a prescient comment, as Brady would find that the socialists were as reluctant as the capitalists had been to make space for Indigenous management in the cooperative structure.

Saskatchewan offered a new political and economic environment in which Brady could work to fulfill his political goals. He found the economic situation in northern Saskatchewan in the late 40s as least as dire as that of northern Alberta in the late 20s and early 30s. The few Indigenous wage workers there were were experiencing immense hardship, and opportunities to better their conditions were few. He describes the situation:

> The native worker in northern Saskatchewan depends upon casual a temporary labor in the unskilled classifications which provides no real security. The same applies to women workers in the fish processing industry. [V]ery limited income is received by women workers in native handicrafts. This source is unorganized and provides small returns for the laborious time expended complexity processing both the raw materials and the finished product and which must be disposed of in a precarious and uncertain market. A table of comparative wages would mean very little because of its complexity, a difierent [*sic*] criteria of value must be employed. Because of the higher living costs in northern areas. The native especially the untrained young adolescent man has fears for his future within the constricted confines of a trapping and fishing economy. Their mentality is not being transformed; no new concept of life is evolving where life can be exciting,challeng[*sic*] challenging and intensely interesting. This is an aspect which

> cannot be measured in a 'standard of living analysis' yet it is as equally important as any statistics that could be quoted. It is the challenge which integrated education must meet. (Brady 1925-1940.[6] James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

Dobbin corroborates that Indigenous people in the north had little access to wage labour, and even less political organization than had been present in Alberta in the 1920s (Dobbin 1981, 166-167).

Brady must have felt confident that both his own presence and his experience in coop development could help alleviate this situation through economic and political mobilizing. His work in Saskatchewan, particularly as a field officer with the DNR, was characterized by a focus on education aimed at building local coop members' capacity to run their own affairs, above and beyond what other field officers were required to do (Andre Bouthillette to Murray Dobbin 1978, 28-29). Brady still saw coops as a way for Métis to attain self-determination, and with government support for and investment in cooperative ventures, the situation seemed to be an improvement over the government neglect he experienced on the Settlements.

Unfortunately, Brady's commitment to self-determination was not shared by the new CCF government. The CCF took a not dissimilar view to Lenin's (see Chapter one) with regard to the inherent superiority of socialism, in this case, Euro-Canadian socialism.

> Eurocentrism appeared even more strongly in the CCF than in some other sectors of society. The idealists of the party believed in the perfectability of society and that the group to which they belonged had progressed further towards perfection than any other in the history of humankind. Additional justification for assimilation came from the socialists' use of class analysis. This theory minimized the importance of, and even discouraged, preserving racial and cultural distinctions (Quiring 2004, 41-42).

This ideological standpoint manifested through their explicitly assimilatory policies throughout the province, but particularly in the north. Cooperative development was used as a

[6] The archives place this text between 1925-1940, however it was more likely written in the late-40s to early-50s

form of modern community development that would convince Indigenous northerners of the superiority of white society while integrating them into the modern economy. Barron observes that the mandate of the DNR was much broader than its name would imply, noting that the northern resource economy was approached as a "last frontier" by the government, and that

> subsumed in the concept of the last frontier was the clear understanding that development of the resources could not be dissociated from the development of the people who used them because of the importance of natural resources to the economy of northern people. The DNR was mandated not only as a manager of the northern economy but also as a manager of the people who inhabited the land (Barron 1997 144).

Similar to Brady's goal of re-orienting Métis' relationships to labour to reflect whites', the CCF, through the DNR, looked to transform the ways that Métis and Indians in the north lived and laboured in order to more closely align with those of the mainstream economy and culture. Brady saw a Métis working class as the foundation upon which they could organize towards political and economic self-determination. The CCF, on the other hand, saw it as a way to provide services to a desperately underserved population, and, as it would turn out even more importantly, as a way to open up the north to increased resource extraction. The CCF considered the economic assimilation of Indigenous northerners to be an act that would not only benefit destitute Natives themselves, but the whole province, by making the north accessible to enterprise. Tommy Douglas, in a 1945 speech to Canada's elite, spoke of the "tremendous natural resources waiting to be developed," in part through government-based cooperatives (Douglas April 5, 1945). The belief that northern resource revenue belonged to and should benefit the whole province justified state control over northern resource extraction.

The benefits of new industry however, would not be applied equally, nor would the self-congratulatory egalitarianism of the CCF extend to Indigenous workers. Métis were still seen as deficient and were excluded from nearly all work outside of manual labour as well as opportunities for advancement (Barron 1997, 256). And, similar to the Ewing Commission's take

on the causes of contemporary Métis socio-economic conditions (see Chapter two), while the socialist government was quick to blame poverty and social issues on the injustices of the capitalist system, the blame for Métis destitution was often attributed to the Métis themselves (Barron 1997 263).

The coops themselves were rife with discrimination at nearly every level. “Departmental reports clearly indicate that, despite government incentives and prodding, the Métis found most co-op ventures, especially [resource] cooperatives, an alienating and unworkable experience” (Barron 1990, 52-53). For one thing, government trading stores initially only dealt in cash (Quiring 2004, 122), making them inaccessible to the majority of Métis, who, as previously described, were accustomed to operating on credit. Again, management and administrative positions within production plants, marketing boards, and coop stores were given mostly to whites, often people who were not from the communities in which they worked. These two factors contributed to Métis not wanting to deal with cooperative agents. Additionally, more lucrative work in mining and timber was dominated almost exclusively by whites; Indigenous labourers were relegated to the fish and fur economy (Quiring 2004, 101).

Government policies also discriminated against northern Indigenous coop members financially. The DNR, for example, chose to sink fisheries profits into welfare and industry improvement, rather than by circulating that wealth back to coop members in the form of higher prices for their catch (Barron 1997, 152), contributing to, and sometimes increasing, their financial precarity. Distribution inequality was also an issue across the province as a whole. Reports highlighted the disparities between the new resource-generated wealth being enjoyed in the south and the meagre distribution of that same capital in the north; these reports were subsequently repressed (Dobbin 1981, 212). And perhaps most fundamentally, CCF officials had

significantly overestimated the capacity of Indigenous northern resource economies (Quiring 2004, 101). The "Indigenous" industries, regulated by the CCF, could not meet the needs of the Indigenous population. As economic conditions worsened, racist fears of freeloading Natives fueled stingy health, welfare, and education benefits in the north, while the south continued to thrive off of the profits of northern industry (Quiring 2004, 255).

By 1956, only 45% of fishers in the north were coop members, and most of the coops "existed in name only." While the government chose to blame the fishers for their lack of engagement, the top down control of the coops made local engagement difficult, and the blatant paternalism of the generally white officials further discouraged local input (Barron 1997, 154). Brady, by this point, had ceased organizing with the CCF, likely in part because of his semi-forced removal from Cumberland House (see Introduction) and in part because of his disgust with their operations.

Quiring observes the paradoxical relationship between the CCF's stated goals and their governance strategies: "On the one hand, the assimilation policy implemented by the CCF required and encouraged Aboriginals to give up a nomadic lifestyle, live in a cash economy, learn English, and become literate. Yet on the other hand, economic segregation and the CCF failure to help Aboriginal northerners move into industrial occupations, including mining and forestry, guaranteed that complete assimilation would not happen" (Quiring 2004 99-100). The racism and over-administration of the CCF effectively prevented Indigenous coop members from accessing the kinds of positions they would have needed to fill to effect the changes needed to lift themselves out of poverty. The only real choice offered them was to continue as marginalized members or to leave the coops. In fact, "It was precisely the integrationist goals of the CCF, coupled with its strong egalitarian strain, that locked the Douglas government into conventional

solutions. There was no experimentation with even minor forms of self-determination, nor any acknowledgment of national or even special status for the Métis" (Barron 1990, 262). The progressive, socialist leanings of the CCF left no space for Métis to organize collectively as Métis, instead relegating them to the same kinds economic and social marginalization that Alberta Métis had experienced on the Settlements. The CCF continued to restructure the economy with no input from and little engagement with Indigenous northerners, and, as one report found, "the government's policies were totally disrupting the stability of the Metis' traditional life pattern and replacing it with social and economic chaos" (Dobbin 1981, 184).

In the 60s, Brady took up the struggle again and attempted to transform government practices from the inside. He and a few others tried to promote the idea of a "single agency" in the north that would "coordinate and consolidate service delivery, give some profile in cabinet to northern concerns, and allow northerners greater input in fashioning their own institutions"—essentially, a semi-independent, self-governing political and economic organizing body. The CCF rejected the idea on the basis that it would interfere with their assimilatory agenda (Dobbin 1981, 209-210; Barron 1997, 174). In 1962, Douglas himself publicly dismissed Brady's concerns about the CCF's treatment of Indigenous people in the north at a CCF convention. By 1963, Brady had given up on his conviction that the CCF would act sympathetically to the northern Métis cause (Dobbin 1981, 210-213).

In the final years of his life, Brady was politically alienated from the CCF. His bitterness towards them is evident when he writes to Norris, "After twenty years of monumental blundering the CCF in the north are no longer a political force. The Indians and Metis detest them … You know the CCF administration … has always had a class induced fear of the natives. They could never see beyond the standard administrational approach and the methods of the classical

colonialist" (Brady in Dobbin 1981, 233). Disillusioned by the state socialists of Saskatchewan as he had been by the capitalists of Alberta, Brady subsequently focused his organizing efforts more locally in La Ronge, but his last years were marked by pessimism; sadly, he seemed "completely defeated" (Dobbin 1981, 235).

Conclusion

> Subjectively these Metis experts think they are rehabilitating the Metis, but objectively the present basis of society which engenders this vicious situation is preserved among them. Therefore, objectively no rehabilitation, and a planned program will not come about.
>
> The question of economic demo[c]racy is entirely omiited[*sic*] from their c[o]nception. Whta[*sic*] can [they] do even with the best inetntions[*sic*] if they are unable to riase[*sic*] the Metis question of self government and have not the power to carry out their proposals. (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

Brady spent the majority of his life involved, in some way or another, in organizing resource cooperatives in predominantly Métis communities in the northern prairies. While the two waves of organizing—pre- and post-WWII—took place under seemingly disparate circumstances, with different economic situations, ruling governments, and ideologies, all of the coops Brady organized eventually failed. In part, this failure was caused by Brady's own understanding of Métis relationships to and traditions of labour and the ways in which cooperatives both disrupted and provided insufficient replacements for them. Brady misrecognized Métis abandonment of cooperatives as an expression of Métis' short-sighted individualism, rather than the continuation of reciprocal—if unequal—trade relationships that provided the kinds of flexibility and freedom of movement and choice that cooperatives could not offer. The issue was not simply economic, cooperatives required a drastic shift in Métis lifeways that Brady did not, or would not, account for in his organizing theory and praxis.

Of course, Brady's political failures of imagination were only one facet of the problem. The role of the state in the failure of the coops stems from their perception of the purpose of developing coops in Métis communities. The Alberta government saw cooperatives as a means by which to save money that would otherwise have to be spent on welfare for the destitute Métis inhabitants of the Settlements. They would also integrate Métis into the mainstream economy, providing them with the skills and experience to become productive workers in the mainstream capitalist economy. The CCF saw cooperatives as the key to northern economic development, to open up the resources of the north for the benefit of the whole province. They would also act as an explicitly assimilatory mechanism, modernizing the northern Métis who would generate this new provincial wealth.

While the Alberta provincial governments withheld the resources necessary for the coops of the Métis Settlements to become self-sustaining, the CCF government in Saskatchewan supported the coops they instituted in the north, but in so doing came to heavily administrate them, limiting both coop success and the control that local members could wield over their own labour conditions. In neither case was either government prepared to consider the coops as a means to build Métis economic and political self-determination. While Brady may have thought he could have siphoned the resources of the state to provide the material and educational support needed for northern coops to become sites of political self-determination, the CCF's unwavering grip on the administration and wealth of the north rendered that kind of diversion impossible.

Tellingly, Brady came to characterize the relative neglect of the former as preferable to the overly-bureaucratic system of the latter, stating

> I actually got far better support and understanding from the Alberta government than I got from our own CCF government of Saskatchewan. They were more fully aware of the necessity for doing things. That's rather odd in view of the fact that they were a reactionary Social Credit government, and in many respects Fascist-minded in some of

> their attitudes. But nevertheless they were far more realistic, I believe (Jim Brady to Art Davis 1960, #3 11).

While there is no indication that he ever gave up on cooperative organizing as a fundamental part of his political vision, nor on the centrality of solidarity between the Métis classes and between Indigenous people and whites, by the end of his life it seems that Brady had learned that neither capitalist nor socialist governments would facilitate Métis political and economic self-determination. The lesson was a deeply bitter one for the radical Métis organizer. While Brady would come to characterize his lifetime of organizing as "wasted" (Dobbin 1981, 233), his work and legacy has had far reaching impacts on Métis people and politics across the prairies, and even what he would have considered his biggest defeats contain a vital lesson for contemporary Métis radicals: the colonial state will never support our self-determination, and any gains we make will be on their terms and part of their agenda.

Conclusion

> Leaders should not be above criticism. Let us admit bluntly that as leaders we have allowed a condition of disunity to confuse those whose interests were confided to our charge. We must recognize our mistakes, now and have the courage to admit them freely, and follow a course of action which is steadfast and will ensure an adequate defense of our social and economic interests … Unless a radical change is effected the ideals for which we struggled will be degraded to the nauseating level of political chicanery and petty officialdom (Brady in Hatt 1976, 21).

Colonial Governments' Gonna Colonize

> You cannot compel a government to cause themselves a loss for the sake of Metis requirements. Without getting rid of capitalism and abandoning the … private ownership of the means of production you cannot bring about Metis rehabilitation (Brady in Dobbin 1981, 135).

Dobbin notes that Brady's active organizing occurred sporadically throughout his life—he took months, and sometimes years in which he would retreat from more public organizing work. Indeed, he has been described as a private intellectual and theorist, especially in relation to his colleague, Malcolm Norris (Robert J. Deverell to Murray Dobbin 1976, 2; Dobbin 1981, 63). Whether these "breaks" were the result of simply needing to step back from the fray to rest, of disappointment with the movement, or of external factors, they demonstrate that, by the at least late 1930s, Brady had recognized that he was playing the long game, that his work and goals would take decades, if not lifetimes to come to fruition.

The fire and excitement of working for the Métis' place in what he may have believed to be an inevitable socialist revolution in the 1920s and early 1930s seems to have been significantly doused by his disillusionment firstly with the outcomes of the Ewing Commission and later by the bureaucratic repression of the CCF. While I don't want to paint Brady in his later years as yet another bitter and disappointed radical, it is difficult to avoid the fact that what others would consider to be some of his greatest successes (the MAA and the Settlements in

particular), he considered failures. Brady was organizing towards a new socio-political-economic order for the Métis. And in both the cases I have discussed—the Settlements and the resource cooperatives—it was the policies, actions, and inaction of governments that assured that instead of a new world, Métis could only access secondary status in the state-approved status quo.

This thesis has attempted to demonstrate that, without fail, state involvement torpedoed Brady's political and economic goals for the Métis. As a militant Leninist, Brady was invested in—rather than a purely anti-colonial Métis struggle—developing a collective socialist political and economic consciousness in order to bring northern Métis in line with a Leninist anti-colonial program. In Chapter one I discussed Brady's belief that Métis liberation would only occur through an alignment with the white working class, which entailed reorienting Métis relationships to labour in order that they could take their place in the proletarian revolution. Brady's political education at the hands of socialist immigrants and Métis thinkers and his subsequent materialist analysis of Métis history had convinced him that the Métis no longer had the organization or resources required to be a nation. Instead, he took up a Leninist ideology and a commitment to party communism and applied it to the socio-political-economic circumstances of the nomadic Métis.

This unique political viewpoint, which he brought with him to the MAA and which fueled all his major organizing projects, was ultimately that integration into and solidarity with the broader working class in preparation for the socialist revolution was the Métis' best hope for liberation. Knowing the ideological foundation of Brady's politics and understanding his political goals informs how we understand the reasons why he undertook the work that he did and why, by the end of his life, he considered his work to have been a waste.

Chapter two explored Brady's first major organizing project: securing a land base for the Métis in northern Alberta. While the other members of the Fabulous Five may have seen Métis land as a way to relieve the immediate impoverishment and suffering of the Métis, Brady and fellow Marxist Malcolm Norris saw land as the foundation upon which to build a strong politically and economically self-determining Métis people who could organize and enact solidarity as socialist members of the broader working class. In service of this goal, Brady developed a unique, historically-based class analysis, arguing that the nomadic and progressive classes traditionally supported one another. He saw himself as an inheritor of the progressive leadership tradition, and his approach to attaining land for the Métis was undertaken as an extension of that role. Although he did not entirely trust the capitalist governments of Alberta to protect Métis interests, Brady, along with the rest of the MAA executive and with the support of the membership, worked to bring the plight of the Métis to the attention of the provincial government. Backed by a strong and united Métis movement, the government eventually struck a commission to investigate and make recommendations on Métis problem. Between the call for a commission and its formation however, the beleaguered UFA was toppled and replaced by a majority Social Credit government that was significantly less inclined to behave sympathetically towards the Métis.

The subsequent Ewing Commission proved to be hostile to the MAA and its political goals. The racism evinced by both the white "Métis experts" and the Commissioners themselves manifested in their framing of the Métis problem being the result of Métis pathological deficiency and subnormality, in contrast to the MAA's—and specifically Brady's—narrative of Métis dispossession through capitalist and colonial exploitation. The Commission refused to even consider Brady's historical account of present Métis conditions, and situated their own

deficiency narrative so to take precedence over the MAA's framing of the Métis as an Indigenous political collective with the capacity to politically and economically self-determine. The Commission was thus able to re-frame the issue of providing the Métis with land to reflect their own desire to institute a cheap relief scheme. The subsequent *Metis Population Betterment Act* legislated the Commission's deficiency narrative, creating the Settlements but effectively rendering Métis inhabitants wards of the state and installing a government-run representative body to oversee them. The political unity Brady was relying on for successful Métis organization collapsed, and even his attempt to re-build from within as supervisor at Wolf Lake failed.

Brady's second major project, organizing resource cooperatives, would span the majority of his life and take him into communities across the northern prairies. In Chapter three, I discuss the ways in which government interventions into Indigenous resource cooperatives actively forestalled their capacity to achieve what Brady's political strategy required them to. Additionally, Brady himself, by misrecognizing already-existing Métis relationships to labour, was unable to make cooperatives a sustainable alternative to those Métis labour forms.

While the origins of Brady's commitment to the cooperative model are unclear, he was firm in his belief that they offered the best chance for Métis self-determination through economic organization across nearly four decades. His coop organizing took place in two waves: pre-WWII Alberta under the capitalist Social Credit government and in post-WWII Saskatchewan under the socialist CCF government, and although the political, social, and economic landscapes of each wave differed significantly from one another, the strategies employed by both the respective governments and Brady were strikingly similar during each wave.

Brady saw existing Métis labour relationships as exploitative, an assessment that, while not entirely inaccurate, failed to account for the nuances and complexities that characterized how

Métis related to and understood their labour. Traditional trade economy relationships between trappers and trading companies, for example, included reciprocal elements that somewhat cushioned families during periods of scarcity and incorporated the flexibility to participate in seasonal economic and cultural activities. Métis themselves were never entirely dependent on resource economy activities like trapping or fishing, strategically employing wage labour, trade, and domestically-centered and seasonal subsistence activities. The cooperative model simply could not replace the flexibility, variability, and reciprocity of these labour traditions. And with both governments actively preventing Métis cooperatives from thriving, and Métis members from participating fully in coop activities, it is no wonder that Métis did not experience resource cooperatives as a viable or independent labour alternative. Brady's own paternalistic attitudes towards his fellow Métis prevented him from seriously considering altering his approach to coops, or indeed, considering whether coops were the best strategy to achieve Métis economic self-determination.

Cooperatives in the prairies had a strong history, but the most successful of them, the Canadian Wheat Pool, was heavily administrated and at times subsidized by the government in order to act as a buffer to protect the interests of middle class farmers. This was in stark contrast to the Alberta Settlement coops, which were start-ups aimed at *eventually* being able to support their destitute members by replacing government relief payments. The provincial government's determination to spend as little money as possible on the Settlements ensured that the cooperatives could never compete with private and non-Métis producers. Métis had almost no start-up capital and lacked the ability to put their land up as collateral for loans—a common practice for new farmers and producers—because under the *Betterment Act* they did not own their land. The government did not step in to provide the infrastructure or resources necessary

either, and government agents actually worked to sabotage the coops. While a couple Settlements did manage to replace relief payments with cooperative income, even those endeavours lasted only a few years, the structural racism and lack of support, as well as active enticement from private buyers led to Métis abandoning the coops.

On his return from the war, Brady again took to coop organizing, this time in CCF-governed northern Saskatchewan. In some ways, the socialist CCF government, with its "Humanity First" motto and its egalitarian ethos, may have seemed like a more supportive and understanding body with which Brady could work. However, convinced of the superiority of socialism, the CCF's policies in the north were explicitly assimilationist, without challenging the existing social order that politically and economically marginalized Métis and Indians. The government was using coops to open the north for resource extraction and to assimilate Natives into the modern economy while at the same time maintaining the racially-based labour hierarchies that had always existed and without adequately supporting or remunerating Indigenous cooperative members.

After his semi-imposed exile from Cumberland House in the 1950s, Brady returned to the political fray in the early 1960s to mobilize towards the development of a semi-independent political and economic governing body for the north. His proposal, however was summarily rejected and his concerns dismissed by a government that was more concerned with northern revenue than northern peoples. By 1963, Brady had given up on the CCF, and spent his last years in La Ronge doing local work and harm reduction, but he had given up on larger-scale theorizing and organizing. Whether he would have bounced back from his disappointment again to take up the struggle, as he had in 1947 when he moved to Saskatchewan, we cannot know.

This analysis of Brady's politics, life, and work shows that his political plan: building an organized, mobilized, politically and economically self-determining Métis working class in solidarity with the broader workers' movement was only ever undermined by colonial government intervention into his projects. Brady was not looking to simply alleviate Métis suffering, he was working towards a radically altered political-economic-social order: Métis socialist liberation. Brady took advantage of what he saw as opportunities to begin building towards that goal: first by securing Métis land, then through developing cooperatives. While both the Alberta and Saskatchewan governments claimed that Métis economic and social wellbeing were priorities, in practice their policies and actions were detrimental to the socio-political-economic conditions in which Métis lived, and stymied any attempts at economic or political independence. Neither the capitalist nor socialist governments ever seriously considered Métis self-determination, and they chose to exercise their power to maintain a racist, colonial, and classist status quo, rather than risk a strong and independent Métis population in solidarity with other marginalized peoples. We can understand Brady's projects as 20th century evidence, like the 19th century's *Manitoba Act* and Scrip system, of government betrayal.

WWBD? What Would Brady Do?

I have been asked what I think Brady would have thought about the current state of Métis politics. What would Brady think about the Settlements? About the MNA? About Métis labour? To put it frankly, who cares? Brady, for better or worse, abandoned the Settlements and the MNA in the early 1940s, neither are his project anymore. They have changed and evolved to reflect the goals of those who became involved and the needs of their memberships. Part of why I explicitly discussed my reluctance to ascribe Brady the kind of hero worship accorded to the "Great Métis Men of History" (see Introduction) is because, like Riel, Grant, and Dumont, what

matters is not what Brady's opinions would have been about our contemporary struggles, but, by looking back on his struggles, how his work can inform and inspire us in the present, not justify or constrain our actions.

These sorts of thought experiments also assume that Brady's politics would have remained static throughout the decades, which, while possible, is also not incredibly helpful. This thesis has demonstrated that Brady, his politics, his strategies, and his goals were very much products of his time and the socio-political-economic contexts in which he lived and worked. While radical for his time, much of what Brady was working towards would be considered quite conservative by contemporary radical Indigenous organizers, if for no other reason than the context in which he was working is so vastly different from today. Take the resistance at Standing Rock, which I mentioned at the beginning of this work. Brady worked his entire life to get Métis a place in mainstream resource extraction economies; he would have very likely been pro-pipeline. During his life, oil extraction, pipeline spills, and climate change were simply not issues for northern prairie Métis. His treatment and sexualization of women (see Appendix I) would have also (one can hope) excluded him from radical organizing spaces. Brady and his politics are simply not the metrics against which we want to be measuring our own work.

Above all, Brady's work instilled a sense of Métis pride among people experiencing some of the worst degradation and immiseration of 20th century Canada. He helped organize movements that inspired Métis across the prairies to take an active role in their political and economic futures for the first time in fifty years, and fifty years after his death, Métis have continued that work unabated, on our own terms and in response to the political and economic contexts in which we live. Brady's legacy lives on, it is up to contemporary Métis organizers to build on it, and to make space for those who come after us to do the same.

Where To Go From Here

> You cannot buy the revolution. You cannot make the revolution. You can only be the revolution. It is in your spirit, or it is nowhere (Le Guin 1974, 301).

> The opposite of dispossession is not possession. It is not accumulation. It is unforgetting. It is mattering (Morrill, Tuck, and the Super Futures Haunt Qollective 2016, 2).

Where our interests diverge from those of the colonial state, we can only expect that the state will work to ensure that its interests take priority, and that it will actively work to demobilize us and undermine our political power. These are certainly not new ideas, but contemporary Métis political efforts have been aimed almost exclusively at state recognition rather than capacity-building, political education, and solidarity work. As Métis, we must not rely on the state for the legitimacy or resources to govern ourselves. Brady and the MAA were at their most powerful before the Ewing Commission, backed by the unified, collective support of the Métis people of Alberta. They built their own legitimacy by working for and with the people, and in Brady's case, working towards a time when the Métis could grow and orient their power by acting in solidarity with other exploited groups.

Brady knew that Métis liberation could not occur in isolation, that it is tied to liberation from the forces of capitalism and colonialism that structure and maintain the Canadian state and industry. As Métis, it is time to consider that our responsibilities to our own people are part of a broader set of responsibilities that we hold as a people whose land is occupied by a hostile and illegitimate colonizing force, under which we both suffer and benefit. Asserting our rights over and fulfilling our responsibilities to our lands, communities, and future generations requires that we widen our gaze to account for the role that capitalism, colonialism, cisheteropatriarchy, ableism, classism, racism, etc. effect not only ourselves, but also how they structure how we relate to others.

I suggest that Métis take up the call to reorient Indigenous political mobilization around relationality rather than through traditional legal avenues and fields (Voth 2016, Andersen 2014b, Bourdieu 1987), specifically using the ethic of kinship. Métis kinship (wahkotowin) is a culturally specific and historically grounded way of valuing and being in the world that informs how Métis define interpersonal and inter-political relations between individuals, communities, and nations; describing how peoples are connected and co-constituted through dynamic and complex networks of relationships (Wildcat 2018; Innes 2013; Anderson 2011, 2000; Macdougall 2010).

Recent work has elucidated how Métis have practiced kin-making as part of our governance in ways that carry specific obligations towards those with whom we are in relation, situating these networks of relationality as a primary form of Métis politics (Hogue 2015, Gaudry 2014, Innes 2013). In addition, we should engage with models of relationality that extend beyond intra-Indigenous kin-making (Editorial Committee 2016; Haraway 2016, 2015; Mingus 2010; hooks 1984; Kropotkin 1919) to critically assess both the responsibilities Métis hold and to whom we are responsible, as well as how fulfilling those responsibilities is facilitated and/or constrained by our current relationship with Canada. A relational standpoint considers questions that emerge out of our responsibilities towards migrants to our lands, to other Indigenous peoples, to the land itself, and to future generations of Métis and non-Métis (Gaudry 2014; Walter and Andersen 2013; Wilson 2008).

In 1940, Brady said, "The Metis will always be fooled by the defenders of those who support the 'status quo' policy as long as they do not realize that every institution however absurd or rotten it may appear, is only a device to blind us, divide us, and deflect our strength into abortive inner dissension and chicanery and delay the way into liberation" (Brady in Hatt

1976, 13). It is time to reject the status quo and its institutions and to build together towards a liberatory new paradigm based in reciprocity and relationality.

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APPENDIX I: Attending to Gender

Andersen's (2014a) recent reframing of Métis peoplehood as political and nationalist in nature uses an events-based analysis of history that centers Métis as active political agents in relation to both the colonial state and other Indigenous nations in order to "highlight the relational peoplehood-based elements of this history as important antagonistic moments that sharpened relations between – and heightened collective self-understandings of – Métis and non-Métis Plains communities" (Andersen 2014a, 110). Andersen frames the qualities of Indigenous peoplehood as active and embodied collective identity and consciousness expressed through acts of political relationality- a web of being and doing, rather than a static, taken-for-granted state. Brady's life and work fit comfortably within this definition, demonstrating its relevance beyond the 19th century. However, it also highlights a significant limitation: the events that Andersen's work and other Métis historiographies consider significant are so devoid of the presence and actions of women that they essentially ask us to believe that Métis men unilaterally created and mobilized the internal socio-political-cultural conditions that led to collective political action. While contemporary (particularly Métis women) scholars are working to reorient our understanding of Métis political history and culture in ways that demonstrate the agency and centrality of women as political actors (see Macdougall 2010; St-Onge, Prodruchny, and Macdougall 2012 for examples), Métis women, as well as children; disabled; queer, trans, and Two-Spirit Métis; Black Métis; and non-Red River-based Métis remain marginalized in the historical narrative. These latter experiences have been even more thoroughly suppressed from our histories, and while I have chosen to focus on women specifically in this Appendix, I want to acknowledge the large gaps in the narrative that can and should be filled in future Métis

historical scholarship. Our understanding of our own history and peoplehood will remain incomplete without the stories and experiences of those who—through the imposition of the cisheteropatriarchy, Euro-ableism, anti-Blackness, and linear hierarchical authoritarian family structures—have been silenced.

It is important to draw attention to and address the lack of women in these histories. I recognize that this thesis risks expanding this tendency in spite of my best intentions and would like to acknowledge some of the constraints I encountered in attempting to address the gendered gaps in conducting this research. First, there are no large archival holdings of Métis women's texts. There was, for example, a Métis Women's Association of Alberta, but to my knowledge, there are no surviving documentation pertaining to their work. Likewise, while there is some writing by and about Métis women and their lives in the 20th century (see Campbell 1973; Dumont 1996; Strasbourg 1998; Dorion 1997; Kermoal 1998; Scofield 1999; McCallum 2014; St-Onge, Prodnuchy, and Mcdougall 2012), the literacy rates of Métis women and the kinds of every day domestic labour they would have been required to perform, often in addition to wage labour, also meant that they likely simply did not have the capability or time to record and scrapbook their daily lives. In the 1930's, the Ewing Commission noted that the majority of Métis were illiterate and that "80% of the half-breed population under 21 years of age, in the province of Alberta, are without education" (Ewing in Hatt n.d., 27). As late as 1971, the average Métis had no more than a fourth-grade education (LaRocque 2007, 58). Brady's prolific recording, reporting, and correspondence mark a significant exception, rather than rule, in terms of Métis literacy. Similarly, Brady likely did have the time to produce what became his archive in no small part because he did not live with any of his sets of children full-time, and was not involved in the time-intensive labour of child- or family-care in the same ways as those

children's mothers. While there is an acknowledged dearth of writing by and about Métis in the 20th century in general, when it comes to Métis women, and particularly Métis women's roles outside their immediate families, the canon shrinks even further.

Brady's interviewers and biographers, all white men, did not inquire deeply about issues of gender. Thus, the majority of the information about women's roles in Brady's politics and projects comes from Brady himself. What exists textually about Brady's views on women paints a complex, though not untroubling, picture. While Brady was considered a "good man" for his time, this is in comparison with the other men of his era and apparently means that he took some financial and social responsibility for at least some of his children (Andre Bouthillette to Murray Dobbin 1978, 17). As well, there is no indication that he was actively physically or sexually abusive towards women; which is to say that overall the bar was (and remains) low. In fact, there is evidence that suggests that Brady may have abandoned a woman and their children to privation so severe that one baby died in infancy and the mother may have been forced to give the other up for adoption (Norah Cook to Brady, 1951-1952. James Brady Fonds, M-125-8. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). While existing work on Brady has often made light of his well-known womanizing and multiple sets of children, this instance is a sobering reminder of the utter poverty experienced by Métis women in the mid-20th century, and their relative lack of options in the cases where neither their families nor the fathers of their children were willing to support them financially (LaRocque 2007, 59).

While Brady was certainly not a feminist by today's standards, there are indications that his views on women were relatively progressive. 20th century Leninism advocated for gender equality under socialism, and Brady himself supported women in word and deed, several instances of which have been documented. Dobbin briefly mentions Brady's intervention on

behalf of La Ronge women harassed by tourists and his support of the local anti-rape Indigenous girl gang, the "Bubble-gum Gang" (Dobbin 1981, 199), and Brady himself recounted looking after a young Métis woman from Peace River who was manipulated into the Edmonton sex work economy by a white man (Jim Brady to Art Davis #1 1960, 7-8). He also expressed disgust at the treatment of lower class "woman collaborators" in WWII being publicly shamed by crowds after German retreat, describing how "The poor little factory girls who obeyed their biological urges and slept with the Germans were mobbed, forced to kneel in the streets, and their heads forcibly shaven" as "sadistic" (Brady 1944, 29. In James Brady Fonds M-125-1. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta).

Notably, this quote, though sympathetic, emphasizes the women's sexual agency as the primary catalyst and explanation for their involvement in the relationships, rather than suggesting they may have been coerced directly or indirectly as a result of wartime poverty or violent misogyny. Brady had certainly witnessed gendered violence during his time as supervisor at Wolf Lake (Brady 1941-1942. In James Brady Fonds M-125-37b. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta) as well as at least one incident of sexual coercion of Indigenous women. To some extent, that his analysis makes room for an active and agentic female sexuality is heartening. However, as a materialist, his emphasis on sex rather than the gendered conditions of war that may have limited the woman's agency in a material sense suggests that he may have sexualized women (or at least attractive women/potential sexual partners) in ways that limited his analysis of their material conditions under war, capitalism, etc.

Brady's sexualization of women appears in other forms throughout his writing and in his interviews. For example, many of the mentions of women he made in his interviews and memoirs are coupled with an assessment of their physical attractiveness, often with florid

epithets such as “Aphrodite of the great north bushlands” (Brady ca. 1959-1967, in James Brady Fonds M-125-6. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta) or “Venus of the Bocage” (Brady 1944, 15. War Diaries. James Brady Fonds M-125-1. Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). It is also unclear whether he considered women as active comrades in the socialist struggle. In his political analysis, he did not speak specifically of women’s labour or roles, although there are indications that he recognized the validity of Indigenous women’s non-domestic labour (Brady 1925-1940. James Brady Fonds M-125-48, Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta). He may have considered women’s active and equal participation in socialist society a given, or he, like many Indigenous men, may have put gender liberation on the back burner in favour of a focus on racial equality (Green 2007, 25).