

**The Compassionate Rebel:  
Ernest Winch and the Growth of Socialism in Western Canada  
(Original Subtitle: Ernest E. Winch and His Times)**

**By Dorothy G. Steeves  
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**(Synopsis Compiled by Angelina Heer, Simon Fraser University, 2010)**

Personal Notes:

--These chapters do not appear to have content related to New Vista. However, I did find some quotes that I thought were insightful in trying to understand Winch's perspective about life. I find myself craving to know what his values were as a CFF member while also taking the perspective that mental illness was a disease that needed to be cured. I find the two incompatible in logic.

--He fought against the capitalistic ideology; yet followed the scientific paradigm at the time which to my understanding was one that may not have considered social causes but rather biological (an individualistic notion)

**Chapter 3: The Budding Socialist (pp. 25-43)**

“Revolutionary ideas were in the air in British Columbia and it did not take Ernest Winch very long to absorb them. His own unhappy economic experiences as a newcomer to the province gave an acute point to the lessons offered by the life he saw surrounding him. He had come to Canada hoping to improve conditions for himself and his family, and it soon was clear that the new country offered no more security than the old. Not long after his arrival in Vancouver, the real estate boom of the pre-war years began to taper off. Unemployment grew to depression proportions – the ominous portent of war – and chances were specially precarious for those who sought jobs in the construction industry.” (25)

→ Funny how he moved to Canada to improve his conditions only to find out that the grass was no greener on the other side...I have heard very similar stories today from some Canadian immigrants

“Their [the socialists] theories of the new society which would bring an end to the tragedy of class-struggle were expressed in precise and uncompromising language which analyzed the contradictions of capitalism and explained the goal of socialism. At the same time it was realized that transitional reforms were necessary to relieve the worst injustices and to enable the workers to organize and educate themselves.” (27)

→ A desire for a new society that would end class-struggle

## Chapter 8: First Years in the Legislature and CCF Progress (pp. 93-106)

Quote by Winch

“A possible danger which I foresee, is that working-class representatives may, unintentionally and unconsciously, ‘fit in’ too well with the new environment and so lose the keen realization of the bitterness of working-class conditions. This can be prevented by insisting that, between sessions, they participate in the everyday struggles of the working-class movement – particularly the unemployed sections which represent the ultimate condition of an ever-growing mass of the exploited class. Another danger is that the innumerable cases of individual hardship which are brought to their attention, in the hope that something can be done to relieve them, may...develop a reformist complex – a striving to cope with effects instead of attacking causes. This can be guarded against by a careful watch over the type of propaganda which they put over from the public platform. This must be definitely revolutionary...”(95)

- ➔ Winch is aware of the possibility of becoming blind to the very cause one is fighting for, by falling into the patterns of the environment one lives in.
- ➔ Did this happen to Winch? In his focus on institutional reform, did he become so caught up in changing the institution by dealing with the effects of overcrowding than actually looking at the causes of overcrowding? There seems to be no reference to him analyzing different perspectives as to what mental illness actually means. He seemed to pay attention to quality of life which would be an effects issue not a causal issue.

“Ernest Winch was starting his long campaign for the classification of prisoners, the segregation of young people from hardened criminals and rehabilitation by education. For years he asked that the corrective institutions should be taken out of the hands of the Attorney-General and placed under the Department of Education. He was one of the pioneers of the modern theories of penology.” (100)

- ➔ Not familiar with theories of penology but his belief in rehabilitation involving education stands out

“He was already displaying his vast and alarming knowledge about social conditions in British Columbia. There wasn’t a major hospital which he hadn’t investigated and every bit of information was painstakingly tabulated and read to the House. Later he had charts on every conceivable social ill mimeographed and passed round to the members as a preliminary appetizer before he served up his speech.” (100)

- ➔ Winch was active in scouting out the social problems that existed at the time

“To avoid the schizophrenia involved in the conflict between theory and practice, priorities have to be chosen. Although Ernest Winch retained the old socialist beliefs and phrases and often flashed out into a denunciation of the system, his priority for more than twenty years was the binding up of wounds, the removal of misery within the confines of the old, established order.” (105)

- ➔ \*\*\*\*Was the “Winch contradiction” a result of this conflicting theory/reality in which he lived?

## **Chapter 10: Minister of the Institutions (pp. 122-134)**

### Personal Notes:

--This chapter is the main source for info on New Vista

--At times I found it difficult to assess what Winch's thoughts were because of the author's influence in her writing and the culture of the times. As usual, primary sources will be helpful in understanding his perspective.

--I grouped related items

### **Interest in the Institutions**

"He said that he got interested, because most of them [institutions] were either in or near his constituency. As he had determined that he would devote his full time to his legislative office, he assumed the responsibility of looking into these places. And look into them he did, into every nook and cranny." (122)

→ The beginning of Winch's interest in the institutions

"It was said that Ernest Winch had witnessed a close friend being railroaded into an asylum and that this stimulated his interest in the mental hospitals." (126)

→ Another possible reason for his interest in the asylum

### **Role of a Socialist Representative**

"Ernest wrote in an article in the CCF paper: "I fail to see that a socialist representative is illogical when he takes up individual problems or proposed reform measures in parliament as long as he keeps ever in mind the necessity of attacking the underlying social economic factor...." (123)

→ I find this statement possibly important in trying to understand Winch's perspective; but I am not quite sure what this statement means. It seems to me that Ernest is saying that the function of a socialist rep. is to attack the economic system; however, as long as a socialist rep. keeps this function in mind there is nothing wrong with the rep. to take up other issues.

→ Does this mean that the issues he took up are separate some how from economic issues?

### **Humanistic Approach**

"This was indeed his purpose in all the sad places, the jails and hospitals, which he visited so faithfully—he was a friend. He never scolded, never preached, or moralized, he just tried to understand. He brought little gifts of magazines, candy or smokes. If any case was brought to his notice in which he could use his influence for release or different treatment, he took infinite trouble to secure it. Probably nothing could be done for nine out of ten, but he never stopped trying." (125)

→ Winch seems to have practiced a humanistic approach to therapy similar idea to a 'Person-centered approach' as formulated by Carl Rogers in the 1940-50's

## Views on Madness and Treatment

“These wretched creatures [Colquitz inmates] were mentally ill, but not a cent was being spent for psychiatric treatment or occupational therapy. Ernest said often he was not surprised so few patients left the hospital recovered – they left only when carried out by an undertaker.” (125)

- Not sure if word choice is representative of Winch or Steeves?
- Belief in mental illness and recovery
- Belief in psychiatric treatment and occupational therapy as part of the recovery process

A quote used by Winch - “Your Commissioners are of the opinion there is no class of person can be termed ‘criminally insane’. Those who have committed or are likely to commit violent or unlawful acts by reason of their insanity are essentially a medical problem and not a legal one. They are, in no sense, criminal because their violent tendencies are due to disease.” (126)

- Viewed insanity as a ‘disease’ and that a person should not be held criminally responsible because they are sick and need treatment

“An appeal panel was established and another of his suggestions, that the term “insane” should be stricken out of the statutes forever and replaced by “mentally ill” was also accepted.” (127)

- Winch established an appeal panel and had the word ‘mentally ill’ replace insanity in the statutes
- \*\*\*It would be very interesting to know what year this took place and if it coincided with the antipsychiatry movement?

“ Commenting on the New Vista Home the Hon. H.H. Stevens wrote: “This is a grand piece of unselfish service to humanity...Mr. Winch contends that ‘mental sickness’ can be treated in the same way as physical illness and that no stigma should remain. He merits recognition and commendation for his thankless and untiring devotion to this worthwhile cause. ‘I was sick and ye visited me’.” (128)

- A reference to Winch’s actions on New Vista

## Overcrowding in the Asylum

“He went out to the public and told what he knew. This might be you, your son, your daughter, he said, for it can happen to anyone, any day. And the public began to realize gradually that there was a dark underground life in British Columbia where people existed without hope of a helping hand to pull them out of the pit into the sunshine. By creating the public opinion to back him up Ernest was sure that through knowledge and will-power many of these unfortunates could be returned to normal society and a useful life.” (122)

- Created public awareness as a means in helping return patients to the community
- Personal Notes: I find this point to be of interest because in his very attempt to educate the public about the atrocities that he has witnessed, he is also approaching mental illness from a disease standpoint which he believes a person can recover from. He has undoubtedly influenced social perception on how to view madness; thus, creating a whole slue of other issues in his effort to do good.

“Ernest wrote in an article in the CCF paper:...”The present overcrowding could be considerably reduced by adopting the “family care” system which is coming more and more into use in many progressive countries.” (123)

- Promotes the “Family Care” system as a solution to over-crowding
- Would love to know what he modeled this after!

“To the end of his life Ernest was to inveigh against over-crowding in the mental hospitals. The construction of new buildings just could not keep up with new commitments, as population soared. Admissions to hospitals were constantly exceeding discharges and deaths. In 1939 he figured that there were, in Essondale, nearly 1,000 patients in excess of the accommodation for which the buildings were designed....But Ernest contended that the appalling overcrowding prevented the recovery of many others.” (127)

→ According to Winch, overcrowding prevented recovery for many

“Gathering examples from all over the world, Ernest advocated from the very first that a psychopathic hospital should be established for observation, diagnosis and short-term treatment. This would relieve the overcrowding in other institutions and would prevent in many cases the necessity for outright commitment. He had noted through careful investigation that numbers of patients were being discharged after only a few months’ treatment. Why should the older hospitals, in their overcrowded condition, take in patients who were only temporarily affected and could be easily cured? There would be provision for those who did not respond well to be certified for admission to Essondale and more extended care. This was a suggestion welcomed by the overworked Essondale doctors. In 1948 British Columbia pioneered in the field by enacting “An Act Relating to Clinics of Psychological Medicine”. This provided for treatment during a maximum period of four months of patients who were to apply voluntarily or to be certified by two doctors. The new building was equipped with modern facilities for investigation of all types of abnormality and for grouping patients according to treatment need.” (128)

→ Winch thought that overcrowding could be resolved by establishing a psychopathic hospital for short-term treatment where observation and diagnosis could also take place.

→ He gathered examples of this idea from other parts of the world. Where?

→ It seems like the doctors may have liked this idea because of the staff shortage that existed at the time

### **Rationale Behind New Vista**

“One trouble was that many who could have left the institution found restoration to normal life very difficult. A transition period was needed to accustom the patient to the “outside”. Families often didn’t want their unfortunate relatives back in their midst, because of the fear that supposed stigma attached to them. If no jobs were open to the discharged patients governments which had paid for their maintenance inside the hospital refused to pay the smaller sum for their relief outside. There would have to be friends to assist them, to get them accustomed to the rush of modern living, to give them confidence in themselves. For a while Ernest took some of these people to his own home, where they became the responsibility of his hospitable wife and himself. Then he collected some money from interested people and bought an old house in Vancouver where he domiciled them under sheltered conditions, while he found them jobs wherever possible. This experiment was a great success. Many people who were friendless after twenty years of confinement and were finally released on probation were taken in until they were sufficiently re-adjusted to be on their own. The first matron was a discharged patient who knew exactly what the problems were. The project was incorporated under the name “New Vista Society”. Finally, the government, realizing that the scheme was sound and economical, took it over. The New Vista Society remained to inaugurate another and more famous service. For four years, 1946 to 1950, it edited a bright little magazine, called “New Horizons” which dealt with social questions. As may be surmised, the editor and scribe-in-chief was E.E. Winch, M.L.A.” (128)

→ Rationale behind New Vista and its purchase by the government.

### Feelings Regarding Doctors:

“The unofficial minister of the institutions had always been an adherent of unorthodox theories on health. It was not to be expected that he would give them up when he got into the Legislature. In his specialized work he came into contact with many doctors and while there was mutual respect there were inevitable differences of opinion.” (130)

- \*\*\*\*This is interesting. I need time to think about this one. Time that I do not have of course. In a nutshell, it would be worthy to know the unorthodox theories on health that he believed in and how they were different than the doctors of the time?
- It would also be interesting to know how much of his theories on health were influenced by his seeking information from international sources on social issues and modeling after them?
- Did he bring an outside perspective and assert it in B.C.?

“Although he could make use of medical knowledge when it suited his purpose, there were many occasions when Ernest said hard things about doctors...He charged the medical profession was intolerant because its livelihood was attacked and sought to protect its monopoly. The medical profession was far from infallible in diagnosis, he said, claiming that a doctor had once found in him all the symptoms of a heavy drinker. ‘I would rather remain alive by the administrations of an unqualified practitioner than have my death certificate engraved by a fully qualified medical man’ the Burnaby member concluded.” (130)

- Personal Note: I am confused by this indifference with doctors. My confusion is probably due to lack of info. My first reaction is that Winch is indirectly preaching the same thing as the Dr’s by suggesting that mental illness is a sickness to be cured. That belief alone leaves the door wide open for the medical profession to find symptoms of sickness that need to be cured. I am not sure how he is different here?
- After all, any other diseases are tested and diagnosed by a doctor and people are given treatment. This is precisely the problem with believing that a mental illness is a disease/sickness that needs to be cured.

“Some of his colleagues on the CFF benches did not go along with Ernest in his fierce opposition to vaccination, pasteurization of milk and fluoridation of water. On the fluoridation controversy he wrote to the press deploring the tendency of medical speakers to use opprobrious terms in relation to those opposed to the measure:

Winch: “It might be well to keep in mind the history of some ‘miracle drugs’ which, after being foisted upon the public were found, not only to be far from what had been claimed for them, but, in some instances, were actually detrimental...May I suggest, with all courtesy, that if the same publicity and crusading effort which is now being extended to ‘put over’ fluoridation, had been evidenced to good eating habits, a greater degree of success would have crowned those efforts.” (132)

- Winch is aware that horrific side-effects can occur as a result of some drugs.
- What is his stance on pharmaceutical drugs for mental illness?
- Personal note: If he is advocating short-term treatment, what kinds of treatment is he advocating?

“Ernest had his bouts with the dental profession also.” (132)

“In spite of these clashes with the medicos, relations were not strained. Perhaps he was like a famous socialist contemporary in England, George Bernard Shaw. Despite the Preface to Shaw’s play “The Doctor’s Dilemma” in which he declared medical practice to be a “murderous absurdity” the sardonic writer was not personally

antagonistic to doctors. According to Shaw's secretary "it was never really difficult to persuade him to call a doctor when he was really ill." (132)

"Ernest Winch was often a sick man..." (132)

### **Reaching to Outside Sources For a Solution**

"The methods of "chemotherapy" used in the Hoxsey Cancer Clinic in Dallas, Texas, roused curiosity and a subsequent enthusiasm in Ernest Winch, as he investigated the experiences of British Columbia residents....After a vain endeavor to persuade the government to have the Hoxsey experiment subjected to serious study by a committee, Ernest decided to go and see for himself." (133)

→ Another example of Winch reaching outside to find a solution

### **Potential Resources in UBC Papers**

"To get knowledge to build up his case he would ask questions-hundreds of them which could easily fill up half the order paper." (123)

→ Possible resource; might have notes in the UBC papers

"Ernest often used tattered little notebooks with notes written in tiny spidery writing – how he made head or tail out of them was a mystery." (124)

→ Possible resource in UBC papers

"Amongst the papers which Ernest Winch left to posterity there is a fat file recording the untiring efforts he made to have a patient released from Colquitz." (126)

→ Possible resource in UBC papers

## Chapter 11: Homo Sum (pp. 135-146P)

### Personal Notes:

-This chapter is not relevant to Vista/Winch; however, it does highlight Winch's view on other social issues such as delinquency, drug addiction, and alcoholism. Winch seems to take the view of educational, psychological and medical treatment. I chose to include some quotes to affirm Winch's position on a "cure" approach to mental health.

"She aroused his [Winch] immediate interest and brought her to the House Standing Committee on Social Welfare to explain her views on a scientific, rather than a judicial cure for delinquents. Dr. [Grace] Pailthorpe [a psychiatrist]...thought that 70% of the world's social offenders could become decent citizens by means of applied psychiatry...She was an energetic character and helped Ernest to establish another of his multifarious organizations which he created to drum up public support for his project. This one was the "Association for the Scientific Treatment of Delinquency", modelled after a similar group in Britain which was doing regular psychotherapeutic work for local and state authorities. The new association had as its object the promotion of research into the causes and prevention of crime and the establishment of observation centres and clinics for the diagnosis and treatment of delinquents. The venture...was not successful in penetrating very far into public consciousness. It died a natural death, when Dr. Pailthorpe...returned to Britain after the War. However, the Association issued some useful educational material" (137)

- ➔ Possible resource (highlighted in green)
- ➔ It might be interesting to see if and how the Association's ideas paralleled plans for mental health care in general.
- ➔ Perhaps unrelated or related. Interesting to think about the association between being criminal and being insane and how the use of the two words have influenced one another throughout history and the treatment that has been given for each.

"The outlook on the causes and cure of delinquency was changing in response to modern conditions..." (139)

- ➔ How has the outlook changed? What were the modern conditions that influenced the change?

"Dr. Pailthorpe had pointed out that much juvenile delinquency could be prevented if the tendencies were detected early enough and opportunities existed for difficult children to be treated medically and psychologically. It was not enough to say that a child had poor parents, or felt that he was not loved, or had an inferiority complex, then still to treat him as a criminal. Advice and assistance by those who had made scientific studies of human behavior should be made available to children, teachers and parents" (141)

- ➔ Notion to treat behavior 'medically and psychologically' – the idea that the problem rests within the individual

"In many respects people were freeing themselves from the fetters of ancient superstition. They no longer thought that insanity was the result of possession by devils and the argument that medical treatment and kindness was the answer to mental disease did not fall upon deaf ears in the life-time of Ernest Winch. It was different when it came to consideration of the treatment of delinquency and particularly of violent crime. The spirit of revenge dies hard. Probably there was no subject in which prejudices were more obstinately rooted than that of capital punishment." (141)



→ Does revenge die harder for violent crime than mental disease? Or is it just a different sort of revenge? For example, “trustees’ profiting off of the property of individuals who were institutionalized. The patient may not be wished to death but are basically left to die. Revenge also exists today, in that a person’s diagnosis can be used against them in terms of competence, intelligence, rationality etc... which can affect employment, housing etc...

“The files in which Ernest kept his records of the drug addiction problem contain the most voluminous of all his researches. He wrote to authorities in all the British dominions, the United States and a large number of European countries for information on the handling of this manner. He came to the conclusion that our approach to addiction had been all wrong. It was not a criminal but a medical question...He urged that the example of Britain should be followed, where there were drug treatment centres and incurable addicts were enabled to live normal lives by having minimal doses of drugs made available to them by legal means under doctor’s care. On one occasion Attorney-General Wismer said that the Winch scheme “would run into millions”. “Your’re already spending those millions through prostitution, theft and jail care”, Winch retorted.” (143)

→ Winch conducted research and sought solutions from abroad during a time when science had made many advances and there was a strong movement underway.

“The controversy on punishment and total withdrawal versus medical cure was destined to rage on for years.” (144)

→ Again ‘biological’

“Ernest was hammering away at the idea that alcoholism was a sickness.” (145)

→ Again, biological

“In defence of his beloved mental hospitals, he said,

“Too many alcoholics are using provincial institutions at Essondale as a sobering-up place.”

and he brought indisputable figures to show that admissions for alcoholism were going up by leaps and bounds.”

“While I recognize that we have to modernize our treatment of alcoholics, the other patients at Essondale bitterly resent it when alcoholics are admitted and given preferential treatment”.

He wanted a treatment “Farm” suitably staffed to rehabilitate alcoholic offenders. Not only were the mental hospitals, but general hospitals and jails put to expense to look after such people.” (145)

→ Farm treatment an interesting approach – educational program.

## Chapter 15: Housing for Senior Citizens (pp. 187-198)

Personal Notes:

- Reference to New Vista
- Winch had a passion for seniors and housing

“They had been housed in the New Vista homes for Senior Citizens –a dream which Ernest Winch had made into reality. There still remained thousands who were not as lucky.” (187)

→ Winch’s pet project

“He emphasized constantly that older people had a wisdom and a creative potential which was necessary to society, and that they should have the economic security which would enable them to make their useful contributions to the community.” (187)

→ Seniors have an important role in society

“Ernest Winch often used to say that in childhood food was the most essential thing, but in old age it was shelter. For many years he importuned the government at every session of the Legislature to plan and build housing developments for old people, but without success.” (189)

→ Winch was very passionate about housing

“He got so desperate about it during the war, when housing became an acute problem for young and old ...” (189)

“As always, when he started something, he made a thoroughgoing preliminary study. He wrote to other countries about their housing projects and he consulted with Ottawa and Victoria. The New Vista Home for women convalescing from mental illness had been sold to the government and a modest sum of money was available for the project which was incorporated under the Societies Act as a non-profit body “To establish, maintain or support residential accommodation for old age pensioners or persons of similarly low income”. The was the beginning in 1948 of the famous New Vista Housing for Senior Citizens.” (190)

→ I find it interesting that the New Vista Home for women seems to dropped out of thin air, in which the seniors’ home took over.

“A cardinal principle on which Ernest insisted for all his housing projects was that the people living in them should be free of bureaucratic supervisions, free to think and to live as they liked, restricted only by reasonable demands of the community group. He had a horror of rigid institutional rules and of the interference into people’s private lives by nosy, domineering individuals of whom he had seen too much in the days of depression. The tenants who lived in Father Winch’s homes were to have the right to run their own social activities without being told how to do it by people who thought they had superior knowledge. This, he knew only too well, was the danger in all social services and reforms, that people would be directed kindly, but firmly into courses which were supposed to be good for them, by alleged “experts”. It was a hazard to which elderly folk are especially vulnerable.” (194)

→ Values held by Winch, freedom to think and live seem to contradict the notion held about a “mental illness” that can be cured.

“In regard to politics, the man who was a fierce defender of one political ideology believed that there should be strict avoidance of any kind of political propaganda. In his wisdom he established a Board on which many branches of community service and interests were represented, regardless of political adherence. This was a canny move, for it ensured the widespread support which the Society needed for its maintenance and operation.” (194)

→ More values held by Winch. Was it a political move to promote ‘mental illness’ as something that needed to be cured? If he went against the scientific community would he have gained the support that he needed, when trying to represent the interest of everyone regardless of ideology? Is it a matter of picking ones battles?

“As one project followed another, they attracted attention all over the North American Continent. In 1952 a 300-page Report on the New York Joint Legislative Committee on “Problems of the Aging” contained photographs and an article on the New Vista ventures....Correspondence requesting information poured in from all quarters. He took part in a panel held at the University of Washington in Seattle on the subject “Community services designed to meet the problems of the aged”, the only Canadian with a distinguished group of Americans.” (195)

→ May or may not be a potential resource of the end and the new ‘New Vista’ ventures

“Of all his manifold schemes for the betterment of human life, Ernest was proudest of his homes for senior citizens.” (197)

## **Chapter 16: The Old Socialist and the Social Reformer (pp. 199-21)**

### Personal Notes:

--This chapter is not related to New Vista

--A couple of neat quotes pertaining to possible influences surrounding Winch's perspective; his action orientation and his working within a capitalistic system

“As Secretary of the Socialist Party in 1932, he had said:

“Capitalism cannot be reformed out of existence, neither can its effects be modified in such a way as to benefit, to any great extent the condition of the producing class upon whose exploitation the system is based. Reform Capitalism all you can it will still be Capitalism and therefore exploitation of the working class. Abolish exploitation and capitalism ceases to exist”. (199)

“After a few years in the Legislature and a close examination of some of the foulest corners of the capitalist edifice, it was to be expected that Winch the rebel should become Winch the reformer. It was no more than a change of emphasis. Ernest was never a theoretician. He was a man of action, a manager and organizer. He loved bustling round with his mop and broom, cleaning out the dirty cupboards and while doing so, using his choicest invective on the free enterprise sloven responsible for the filth and neglect. When there was a certain amount of criticism from his old socialist comrades that he was becoming too much a gradualist, losing his socialism in his efforts to reform capitalism, he would say that it was stupid and inconsistent to sit with folded hands and to do nothing to alleviate the sufferings caused by capitalism, because socialists were out to liquidate capitalism itself. While we were waiting for socialism, he reminded his critics, old people were dying in slums, the unemployed were starving, alcoholics were drinking themselves to death and drug addicts were coming to an even more frightful end. “(200)

- ➔ I find it interesting that Ernest was not a theory man! I think that I understand this notion because I used to hold that perspective, until I have come to learn that it is important to understand the theory behind the action. Ideas that we have come from a perspective which can be rooted in ideas that we couldn't imagine them to be. In the case of Winch, he promoted mental illness as needing to be cured. Was he aware of the theory behind that notion and the reasons why that theory came about? And also whether or not there was any truth to that claim?
- ➔ I also find this statement of him not being a theoretician hard to believe because he was very passionate about reforming capitalism which I imagine took a great deal of thought about ideologies and their consequences. But it is possible to be so consumed with one thought that one forgets another.

“On the other hand, when he spoke and acted on the multitude of reforms which he wanted governments to undertake, his words and deeds were precise and specific. He knew exactly what should be done to change the existing jails, hospitals and similar institutions into instruments of human regeneration, mental and physical, to eradicate injustices, to care for old and young. Some of us wondered how he visualized that his vast welfare programs which would entail enormous public expenditures could be implemented without a complete transformation of the economy which would turn the privately owned sectors of resources and industrial plants over to social control and ownership. This problem became very pointed of CFF platform-builders when dominion provincial tax agreements brought painful limitations on provincial powers. Of course Ernest Winch was not the only democratic socialist and the CFF not the only parliamentary party of socialism to be plagued by these contradictions. They were inevitable when the welfare state had to be fashioned—as speedily as possible, under the wing of a capitalist economy. Whether socialist and labour parties functioned in government

or in opposition, the question of how far their programs could go in changing the old patterns by challenging the strongholds of private enterprise was always a fruitful source of controversy. After the first flush of revolutionary socialism during the depression of the thirties had passed off, the CFF Councils and Conventions tended to be reluctant to make sweeping moves towards socialization. Ernest Winch supported this majority stand , although he would stand up like a lion to defend his beloved socialist watchwords.” (205,206)

- ➔ It is interesting to think about this not only in Winch’s context but what about today? Is it possible to have the kinds of reform some forward moving thinkers might promote under our capitalist system? Should humanitarian visions change to accommodate capitalism in order to help some people or does one stand strong against the system and possibly not help anyone?