

**Francis Andrew Brewin, “He Who Would Valiant Be”:
The Makings of a Canadian Anglican
Christian Socialist**

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Francis Andrew Brewin (1907-1983) was a formative figure in the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) and later in the New Democratic Party. He helped to shape a party that shaped Canada.

FAB, as I shall refer to him, was a lifelong “practising” Anglican. He represented a significant Anglican contribution to the Canadian polity. His religious sensibilities led to his decision to join the CCF in 1935 and determined the nature of his participation. This paper focuses on FAB’s decision to join the CCF, and examines the cultures that interacted to produce that decision. It will be argued that his religion and his politics were completely integrated. In his context it made sense for FAB to become a democratic socialist of the Canadian variety.

The paper’s methodology is influenced by the approach of Clifford Geertz, as described by Aletta Biersack.² The decision by FAB to join and to become active in the CCF is best understood as a cultural event, the convergence of cultures that gave FAB his world-view and informed his actions. I will, therefore, look at each of the main sources of FAB’s cultural perspective. In revisiting the way in which one Christian of a particular tradition responded to the problems of his day, one might glimpse how we might respond to the almost overwhelming social, economic and environmental challenges of our own day.

Family

FAB's family background was very English and very Canadian. By the time this story begins, the family on both sides was decidedly upper-middle class. A family researcher³ has traced FAB's direct lineage back to an Anthony Brewin, born in 1583 in a county town just outside Leicester, England. The Brewins of the time have been described as "peasant aristocrats."⁴ In the late-eighteenth century FAB's great-great grandfather moved to London and developed a successful tanning business. FAB's grandfather, Arthur Brewin, started a London stock brokerage firm, Christie and Brewin, in 1865. The firm prospered, and continued to be a presence in the life of the city to this day.

This prosperity enabled Arthur to send his son, Francis Henry Brewin (1873-1961, FHB), to Winchester and later to Magdalen College, Oxford. FHB emerged from this education as a cleric of Broad Church sensibilities, strong in the English choral tradition and capable of ministering to rich and to poor. He was witty, cheerful and charming. Before entering theological seminary, FHB spent a period at Oxford House, Bethnal Green, in London's East End slums, as part of the settlement house movement. FHB was ordained deacon in 1897 and priested in 1898. Moving from London for health reasons, he became curate at Hove Parish Church on England's south coast, where FAB was born, and in 1905 became Vicar at the middle-class parish of Christ Church in nearby Brighton.

FHB did not exhibit particular political views or partisan persuasions. However, his own formative period in England was a time of intense debate within the Anglican Church.⁵ FHB absorbed the theological ideas of the Christian Social Union, but there is no evidence that he was active in the organization of the movement or caught up in the sectarian passion of the debates about Christian socialism.

It is acknowledged that the values and culture of FHB's mother and the women of the family played a crucial role in the formation of FHB and, through him, of FAB. Of the details there is unfortunately no record.

FAB's Canadian roots were through his mother, Amea Fenety Blair (1874-1944, AFB). AFB's background was Scottish Canadian from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The available record of her family history is that of her father, Andrew George Blair. Blair had most notably been Premier of New Brunswick in the 1880s and 1890s and was a senior

member in the cabinet of Sir Wilfred Laurier from 1896 to 1903. Her mother, Annie Blair, was said to be skilled as a hostess to the point that her household was one of the centres of Ottawa society at the turn of the century. As Minister of Railways and Canals, Blair supported public ownership and the regulation of the railways. These positions cost him his political career. He resigned in 1903 over Laurier's insistence on favouring private rather than public ownership of the second transcontinental line then under consideration. At the time, Blair said his colleagues were "wild, visionary, unbusiness-like."⁶

Blair managed to invest wisely and at his death in 1907 left his family in a comfortable financial condition, likely seeding FAB's English education and the family cottage at Stoney Lake, Ontario, both of which were formative for FAB.

The Early Years (1907-1919)

FAB was born in 1907 in Brighton, England. When he was four, the family moved to Canada, FHB taking up the incumbency at St. Paul's in Woodstock, Ontario. Woodstock was a county town of insular conservative perspective. It was likely with much relief that FHB accepted the position of Rector at St. Bartholomew's in Ottawa in 1917, a parish more to the Brewins' taste. The church was next to Rideau Hall and was attended by the Governors-General and their families.

The Duke of Devonshire was the Governor-General at Rideau Hall through most of FHB's five years there (1917-1922). The Duke and the Duchess of Devonshire seemed to form some level of friendship with "Brewin," with whom the Duke later corresponded on at least one occasion and whose son, FAB, he invited to spend school holidays at the Devonshire country estate, Chatsworth. In Ottawa, FAB attended Ashbury College, a private school founded by an Anglican cleric.

School

In late 1918 or January 1919, FAB at age eleven was sent back to England by trans-atlantic liner to attend Radley College, with a preparatory year at Twickenham, "the Wick," in Hove. He was in England at school until 1925, except for a few visits home. There is no direct evidence of the motives of FAB's parents in sending him to school in England. One is left

to assume that they felt that Radley offered the best possible education for their son. To afford him that education was their duty. His four other siblings, three sisters and a younger brother, went to Canadian private schools.

Located near Oxford, close to Abington on the Thames River, Radley was founded in 1874 “to reform and civilize schooling, placing religious observance and Christian values at the centre of the community.”⁷ A high percentage of the boys were sons of Anglican clergy. Inspectors of the Oxford and Cambridge Examination Board concluded in 1925 that “a boy who will work will get excellent teaching at Radley . . .”⁸

FAB seems to have emerged unscathed, but not unmarked by the English school experience. In fact, by 1925 he demonstrated all of the characteristics the founders of Radley dreamed of: gentlemanly, “love-able,” enthusiastic about physical activity, academically disciplined and self-confident, imbued with “Christian morals,” including those of the desirability of public service. An English friend of FHB, himself an English public school educator, L.R. Thring reported to FHB towards the end of FAB’s time at Radley: “he has a great power of sticking to a thing and seeing it through, and all the more in the face of opposition.”⁹ It was this personality characteristic, likely developed at Radley, which was so important to FAB’s approach to politics in Canada, once he got his political bearings.

There was little evidence during this period of a passionate interest in politics or the debates within the Church. He seems to have been an accepting Christian, comfortable in his place within the Anglican Church.

FAB left England in August 1925. He was within a few weeks of reaching eighteen years of age. He had experienced perhaps the best education England had to offer the sons of its upper middle-class. He was steeped in the Anglican tradition, his mind sharpened by Greek and Latin. He was socialized to think of himself as destined for leadership of some kind for the good of society.

Toronto

It was to Toronto, not Ottawa, that FAB returned in 1925. In 1922, FHB had accepted an appointment as Rectory at the Church of St. Simon-the Apostle in Toronto, where he was to serve for nineteen years. FAB completed his legal training at Osgoode Hall, was called to the bar in 1930 and by 1935 was one of Toronto's up-and-coming young litigation lawyers, junior to a leading insurance company counsel of the day, James McRuer, later Chief Justice of Ontario.

During the 1920s Toronto, indeed Canada as a whole, was experiencing a period of relative prosperity and stability.¹⁰ Canada's resource industries, especially pulp and paper and mining, boomed. Manufacturing continued to grow. Agricultural prices were sound and the sector was strong – a crucial part of Canada's economy in this decade.

Culturally, Canada was still predominantly rural, especially if one includes small towns and cities that were centered on serving the agricultural community. Toronto was well-placed, however, to benefit from the general prosperity. The city grew as a commercial, industrial and transportation centre, an expanding city of small working-class houses with a few well-to-do neighbourhoods. There was a persistent core that lived in substandard conditions and blue-collar workers had difficulty supporting a family of five, even during the 1920s.

The city was overwhelmingly British in origin. The city was 31% Anglican, the largest denomination, compared to 16% nationally. Politically, the Orange Order was a powerful institution in the city. Its militant Protestantism and its Ulster Loyalism formed a strong element in the political culture in inter-war Toronto, though there were some signs that this was changing. By 1925-1926 the immediate post-war tendency to vote for new parties or movements, such as the Progressives, the United Farmers and Labour, had faded and the old Liberal-Conservative hegemony was reasserting itself nationally. In Toronto, the Conservatives won every seat federally and provincially between 1921 and 1930 except for one provincially and two federally.

Reality hit Toronto hard in the Great Depression of the 1930s. By January 1933, 30% of adult Torontonians were unemployed. In Cabbagetown, the north part of which was within the parish boundaries of St. Simon's, unemployment hit 65%. The social consequences were devastating. "During the 1930s, Cabbagetown was seriously overcrowded with at

least two families living in many houses. Almost half had no central heating, dependent entirely on stoves. One in ten houses had only outside toilets and a quarter had no bathtubs.”¹¹ Evictions were common. Families were usually supported by women cleaning or working in textile sweatshops. The men scrambled for snow clearing or occasional bits of casual work. Hugh Garner captured the mood: “behind the front windows . . . lies drama, pathetic or shocking. There are the quarrels of worn-out parents with the idle and blasé sons and daughters, who unable to find work, must need lie about the house all day sunk in cynical boredom.”¹² The Depression drove Cabbagetown further into a narrow, passive state of political pessimism.

The Parish

The parish was formed in the 1880s when the expanding population in the Cabbagetown area “indicated the need for a new Church of England parish in addition to St. Paul’s and St. Peter’s” which then served the north part of Cabbagetown.¹³ The entrance was purposely placed on Howard St. and away from Bloor St. to demonstrate its intention to focus south toward Cabbagetown. However, the parish also included south Rosedale, by the early 1920s and beyond, one of the wealthiest sections of Toronto. It was a parish therefore that experienced the extremes of wealth and poverty within the local church family. It was FAB’s experience as an active layperson at St. Simon’s that was the catalyst for his decision to join the CCF in 1935.

In 1923, a year into FHB’s incumbency, a social worker was added to the staff of the church. “During the Depression, many families were saved from despair by timely help given through the Church.”¹⁴ Women and children were sent to summer camp, for example. In a 1930s article in the *Canadian Churchman*, the Rector described the activities: a boys’ club, a nursery school, a men’s club and community recreation. The men’s club arose from the fact that “the parish was full of men whose lives through continued unemployment had become dulled and purposeless.” FHB concluded: “there is a growing realization by the men that their activities and views on various problems are not without importance to the church and the community and for some of them at least it can truthfully be said that life has become a difficult thing.” Unemployed carpenters, painters and labourers built and maintained facilities for the nursery school. “Little

children who were compelled to exist day in and day out in bad housing conditions, overcrowded rooms, often in a strained emotional atmosphere with no place to play except in the street, now spend happy mornings in the Nursery School,” FHB reported.

In his twenties, FAB was involved in many of these activities. He had a keen interest in the men’s club. In 1935, he wrote an article in the *Churchman* on the “Nature and Programme of a Men’s Club,” which began by noting that the church in England was grappling with the issues in ways that “we have hardly touched in Canada.”¹⁵ One such initiative was the Industrial Christian Fellowship (ICF), which was closely linked to the Christian Social Union. FAB noted that ICF established recreational centres for the unemployed and held meetings in factories and prisons. “It also attempts to arouse the social conscience of the church by promotion of study groups. It descends to the haunts of human misery to engage in direct conflict with communism and materialism and the despair which is the product of modern industrial conditions.” Unemployed families needed to be welcomed with Christian fellowship into the Men’s Clubs and offered positions of leadership in the church even if they could not give financial assistance to the church. There were abuses in the community which could be studied carefully with findings reported to the “proper authorities.” Such clubs, he concluded, could become “true centres of practical Christianity.”

The Diocese

The approach at St. Simon’s was not inconsistent with that of the Diocese of Toronto during this period. Even before the war, the Diocese was beginning formally to take note of the need for “social reform.” An account by Alan L. Hayes describes the extent to which the Diocese was caught up in the need to engage directly with society and in the call for a restructuring of society.¹⁶

A Synod committee in 1915, Hayes reports, was arguing that the “Christianising of the social order and a more equal distribution of the proceeds of industry” was the task to which the church was called. The Synod in 1918 was told that the “attempt to run society on the profit motive failed.”¹⁷ The *Canadian Churchman* explained that individual philanthropy was insufficient to solve social problems. Social politics were needed to remove the causes of social evil. To the Litany was added: “To

free our commercial, industrial and political life from the un-Christian ideals which so largely dominated it: we beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.”

The Diocesan Council for Social Service led efforts to review social and political issues and to prepare programs and positions in response. In 1931, Synod adopted a resolution that emphasized “the vital need for such a change in the spirit and working of much of social, economic and industrial life, alike in production and distribution, as will bring it into greater conformity with the Mind and Teaching of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”¹⁸ On 23 May 1935, Archbishop Derwyn Owen, Primate and Bishop of Toronto, issued a Lenten pastoral letter in which he said that people “are caught in the grip of a system which disregards any motive or result except gain, whether for the corporation or the individual . . . Economic justice is one of the foundations of righteousness on which the Kingdom of God must be built.”¹⁹

FAB served on the Diocesan Council for Social Service from 1934 and presented a motion on housing to the 1935 Synod on behalf of the Council. The statement was described by the *Canadian Churchman* as “perhaps the most outstanding pronouncement at Synod.”²⁰ FAB’s part was noticed and was said to show “the crusading spirit of the younger generation in church affairs.”

Anglican Christian Socialism

As FAB confronted the Depression, he did so through a theological lens formed and shaped by the great thinkers and writers in the Anglican tradition, notably Richard Hooker, Frederick Maurice and William Temple. The modern Anglican Church was born in the sixteenth century. Richard Hooker at the end of the century gave a comprehensive theological expression to post-Reformation Anglicanism and established the basis of modern Anglican social theology.²¹ Hooker understood the church as the religious expression of the state, organically integrated with the state, in the “Commonwealth,” the social organization created and blessed by God. Every human was interdependent, living together in a society in which the faithful participated as part of the larger unity. Hooker saw the church as the Body of Christ, the community of believers, members of Christ. Through its organic relationship with the nation, the church effected the sanctification of the nation. It was the duty of each believer to

participate in God's work of redemption of the nation as a whole, in that we are at one and the same time members of the nation and of the family of God. In addition, Hooker argued for a corporate or collective understanding of sin and salvation and for human responsibility in the work of salvation. God provided the opportunity through Christ; it was up to humanity to respond and to reject the temptation to do evil. The incarnation became the central tenet of the Anglican Church.

With the Industrial Revolution and other social changes that occurred in England during the nineteenth century, Anglican social theology needed new energy. The church had slid into a pietistic, individualistic and often sentimental religion. The collective or social redemptive power of the Gospel, or of the church's relationship to the state, given the conditions of the mid-nineteenth century, was being ignored. Frederick Denison Maurice filled this vacuum in a way that is still being experienced.²²

F.D. Maurice and his colleagues Charles Kingsley and J.M. Ludlow formed a group that was the first to style itself "Christian Socialists." But, while their practical efforts to change the social conditions of the time made little impact, Maurice's theological work has powerfully informed much of the Anglican tradition.

Maurice developed a theology of social hope as an antidote to the prevailing focus on the terrors of hell. The starting point of theology, for Maurice, was the love of God, experienced through the sacraments and through the world that God created. Christianity for Maurice was not simply about individual salvation but was fundamentally about social change. "Eternal Life" was about the quality of life here, in this world.²³ The Kingdom of God is already established. We are called to work for its full recognition and to build society in keeping with its revealed characteristics. The world of the Industrial Revolution must be subjected to Christian criticism. To Maurice, Christianity and socialism meant cooperation, and cooperation must be the organizing principle of society. As Robert Preston noted, Maurice was "entirely opposed" to "possessive individualism," the free market and laissez-faire liberalism as the basis for economic order.²⁴

The full impact of Maurice's influence within the Anglican communion was not felt until the twentieth century when the Anglican church experienced the leadership of William Temple. The first seedlings of Maurice's influence were expressed through groups within the Church

of England such as the Guild of St. Matthew in 1877 and the Christian Social Union in 1889.²⁵ The CSU was the more mainstream of the two groups, and probably more successful in influencing official church positions. It is perhaps not surprising that it appealed to the educated upper middle-class leadership of the church in England and in Canada, including undoubtedly FHB and eventually FAB.

More than any other single individual, William Temple represented and informed the Anglican communion during the twentieth century. Temple was Archbishop of York in 1928, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1942 and died prematurely in 1944. During his prolific career, Temple enunciated and expressed a comprehensive twentieth-century Anglican theology, including a political social theology. A skillful author, Temple made his theology accessible to interested and informed lay people such as FAB.

As with Maurice, Temple's social theology flowed from his acceptance of a sacramental, incarnational focus. His was also a theology of hope, tempered particularly in his later years, coinciding as they did with the rise of fascism and Stalinism, with a recognition of the power of evil. In this he was clearly much-influenced theologically by Reinhold Niebuhr.

In keeping with progressive Anglican thinking in his time, Temple argued for the need to restructure society to bring it into conformity with Christian principles. These he identified as freedom, sacrifice, service and equality. He saw Jesus' gospel as radical, calling out individuals and society to change in fundamental ways. Yet in practice Temple argued for the need to compromise, to work for concrete and specific change. The imperfection of humanity also spoke to the need for tolerance and freedom. No human being or institution was perfect, and yet all were loved by God.

Temple's 1942 book, *Christianity and the Social Order*,²⁶ was a major force in shaping post-war Britain and beyond. Within the church, including the Anglican church in Canada, Temple's 1941 Malvern conference of progressive church people defined the social theology and broad political program of his generation. It was this theology applied to the social conditions that FAB confronted in Toronto in the 1930s, especially within the parish boundaries of St. Simon's, that led FAB to be receptive to the new political movement that had entered Canadian politics at the time.

Peggy Biggar

On 8 June 1935, FAB married Peggy Biggar (MIB) in a ceremony at St. Simon's where they had met ten years earlier. MIB strongly and enthusiastically encouraged FAB's commitment to socialist politics. George Biggar, MIB's father, was for part of his career financial editor of the *Toronto Globe*, the newspaper founded by John A. McDonald's Liberal rival George Brown. The family was later described as "solid, settled, secure, self-confident and serene."²⁷ A Christian social conscience formed part of MIB's inheritance. "Benevolent institutions and beneficent acts are the natural and necessary and immediate outcome of the teachings of Jesus," family mentor Sir Oliver Mowat once said. George Biggar expressed to MIB and FAB a real interest in J.S. Woodsworth. MIB said that it was her father who encouraged them to explore the CCF.

The CCF

FAB could not have joined the CCF, of course, if there had not been a CCF to join, or if it had not had a particular character.²⁸ The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation was founded in 1933. At the time Canada was dominated by the two traditional nineteenth-century parties, the Liberals and Conservatives, though there had been an early move to break their stranglehold in the years immediately following World War I. The Depression created the energy to try again.

The CCF was ambitious. It sought political power, to be the government of Canada, and sought thereby to "replace the present capitalist system" with a new social order, "in which genuine democratic self-government, based upon economic equality will be possible." The party was pledged by the Regina Manifesto to expand freedom and to support the cultural rights of racial or religious minorities. "What we seek is a proper collective organization of our economic resources such as will make a much greater degree of leisure and a much richer individual life for every citizen." The party adopted a comprehensive program to offer the Canadian people; this program included "socialization of finance" and "socialized health services."²⁹

The tone of the new party mattered more than the Regina Manifesto to potential converts. This was captured by Walter Young writing of the early days of the CCF:

Members of the CCF came to see their philosophy as a panacea for the ills of society – moral, political and economic. Because of this the socialism of the CCF inspired service and sacrifice; it was a faith worth crusading for since it offered everything that was good and opposed all that was bad. It was more Christian than the socialism of the British Labour Party which, understandably, after the collapse of the second Labour administration, placed more emphasis on the class struggle and the ultimate establishment of a classless society . . .³⁰

The earlier leaders of the CCF, the former Methodist minister J.S. Woodsworth, M.J. Coldwell, David Lewis and Frank Scott sought to build a party that reflected the strong Social Gospel orientation of many of its leaders and activists. The central role played by Coldwell, Scott and Lewis, who had all been exposed to Anglican Christian socialism, would have contributed quite specifically to the attractions of the party for FAB.

The Road to Damascus

In 1935, FAB joined the CCF. An article that he published in the *Canadian Churchman* in 1935 reveals the development of his thinking.³¹ The article, “The Church and the Coming Struggle for Power,” built on his effort, referred to above, through St. Simon’s and the Diocesan Council for Social Service, to get the Synod to adopt the resolution on housing. FAB suggested to his Anglican audience that “all thinking persons in all countries are questioning the bases of the political structure of society in Canada as in other parts of the world.”

Through his work as an active lay person at St. Simon’s FAB came to know parishioners who lived south of the church as real people. When asked why FAB was a socialist, Archbishop Ted Scott said it was because of St. Simon’s. “At St. Simon’s, Andrew became aware of the ghettoizing of society. People were locked into their situations, especially the young people, for reasons over which they had no control. It was through this experience that he became convinced of the need for societal, structural change.”³² Archbishop Scott also observed, not only that the St. Simon’s experience was decisive, but that FAB had “by far the best Biblical knowledge” of any layperson he knew. FAB would frequently draw on this knowledge to shape his thinking and/or to make a point. Scott observed that FAB had read a “good deal” of Temple and Charles Kingsley.³³ In an

interview with FAB's daughter Margaret Wilbur, James McRuer, the prominent Toronto litigator for whom FAB first worked, said that it was FAB's contact with the "underprivileged" through St. Simon's that turned him into a CCFer.³⁴

FAB's own explanation for his political direction, according to Terry Morley, was that he joined the party "as a response to what he felt was a Christian imperative."³⁵ In a speech around 1958 or so, recalling the CCF in the 1930s, he explained:

I came into the CCF as a very young lawyer via the L.S.R. (League for Social Reconstruction) which in addition to producing "Social Planning for Canada," operated as a half-way house for "middle-class intellectuals" to join the movement . . . I had been intellectually converted to socialism by Bernard Shaw's *Intelligent Women's Guide* and spiritually converted by discovering that what Mr. Woodsworth and Mr. Coldwell stood for was much closer than any other brand of politics to the Christian traditions in which I had been brought up.³⁶

FAB attributed his "intellectual conversion" to George Bernard Shaw. Shaw was, of course, not a Christian. Though somewhat cynical about Christian socialists, Shaw did work with them. Barbara Louise Parks notes that he was in alliance with Christian socialists on platforms and in offices.³⁷ Shaw said of his characterization of the enthusiastic Christian socialist parson in *Candida* that it was "child's play" to him, "as I was hand in glove with all the leading Christian Socialist parsons of the day."³⁸

The socialism that emerges from the *Intelligent Woman's Guide* was comprehensive, humane, non-Marxist in formula but Marxist in its passion for working people and the poor, scathing about privilege and class, compelling in its call for social justice and with detailed proposals for nationalization or social ownership – in fact, Shaw's position was generally consistent with that of the Regina Manifesto.

The bleak electoral prospects of the CCF would not have stood as a deterrent, especially in 1935. The British experience of the rise of the Labour Party would have persuaded a receptive FAB that joining the CCF was not a truly quixotic venture. It was the sense of the times that, regardless of the 1935 election result, the continental plate of politics around the world was changing. To FAB, it was just a matter of time before all "thinking persons" saw what he saw.

FAB became involved in a Canadian socialist political party because of, not in spite of his Anglican Christianity. To state the theses more broadly, FAB's politics reflected a convergence of his own very English, upper-middle class background, a developed sense of public service, his Anglicanism, the attitudes of his immediate family, the conditions in Toronto in the 1930s, the specific experience of St. Simon's and a particular political moment in Canadian history which included the formation of CCF in 1933.

An Anglican in Politics

For FAB, participation in the CCF did not mean a break with the Anglican tradition or with Christianity as it did for some. Far from reducing or ending FAB's church connections or weakening his religious commitment or practice, throughout his life FAB's CCF involvement and lay participation in the church were intertwined and extended.

He continued his legal career in much the same fashion as before, except that as the years went on the nature of his clientele shifted to some extent. More often than not he acted for those who really needed his skills: the Japanese Canadians, immigrants having difficulty with the government, trade unions, those on whom other lawyers had given up.

FAB not only joined the CCF, he threw himself into it. By July 1935 he was contributing articles to the Ontario CCF newspaper, the *New Commonwealth*. In a 27 July 1935 article on housing he argued that, "until the Canadian people put into power the party which has the imagination and understanding of the problems of the people to put houses for working people before armaments, health and decency before tunnels and barracks, and humanity before profits, we can expect neither this nor any other fundamental problem of the country to be solved." By 1937, he was a member of the Ontario CCF Provincial Council and continuously served the party in one position or another until his retirement from Parliament forty-two years later. He became a confidant of the Ontario CCF leader E.B. "Ted" Jolliffe, a fellow Toronto lawyer and Rhodes Scholar son of a Methodist missionary. When Jolliffe retired from the leadership in 1953, drained politically, emotionally and financially by two near misses in 1943 and 1948 and two devastating defeats in 1945 and 1951, FAB decided to seek the leadership himself. By now he was well-established as a lawyer in Toronto. He was seen as the candidate of the status quo and ran third.

In 1962, FAB was elected a Member of Parliament for Greenwood in Toronto's East End. He held the seat, or its redistributed variant, for five subsequent elections, retiring from Parliament in 1979 after an impressive and influential career as an MP.

He was a long-time member of the National Council of the CCF and for a time National Treasurer. FAB also served as a CCF representative on the National Committee for the New Party, the group that coordinated the transition from the CCF to the New Democratic Party in 1961. Walter Young identified FAB as a member of the "ruling elite" in the CCF based on his years of service on the executive or as an officer between 1937 and 1961.³⁹

Despite his prominent role in the CCF from the 1940s on, then a questionable activity in the conservative echelons of the Anglican Church in Canada,⁴⁰ FAB was still called on to contribute time and energy to the church in various capacities, including serving as a Canadian lay delegate to the World Council of Churches Assemblies at Evanston in 1954 and at New Dehli in 1961.

Throughout his life, FAB faithfully observed the core of Anglican spiritual practice, regular attendance at corporate worship and participation in the Eucharist. He made use of daily devotional readings and had spiritual guides in his library. As has been indicated, he was a voracious reader of theological tomes. All his books are marked and underlined, suggesting significant interaction between the reader and author.

At the 1953 Ontario CCF leadership convention, in his nominating speech to the delegates, FAB explained his involvement in the CCF and his underlying approach to politics by quoting the Magnificat, Luke's song of Mary: "He has put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away" (Luke 1:52, 53). Through FAB, Anglican sensibilities played into the CCF and through him and others into the Canadian body politic. At FAB's death, columnist and former M.P. Doug Fisher observed: "One could see Brewin's active lay work in the Anglican Church in his socialism. It was optimistic and idealistic. It meant pitching into issues and situations of injustice and inhumanity."⁴¹ Fisher wrote that FAB was more influential in shaping the character of the NDP than any other of his contemporaries.

FAB expressed the view that society was more than a collection of individuals. The community was seen as an entity of which all individual

citizens are members, akin to Hooker's understanding of the Commonwealth. The CCF wanted to make the state "the executive of the people, responsive to their needs and responsible through democratic machinery to their will," he said later. He was of the stream within the party that emphasized the goal of equality, as against those who focused on the socialist model of public ownership as the central tenet. FAB drew that value from his religious experience and understanding.

To FAB, democratic socialism had a redemptive quality about it. He spoke on a number of occasions about the aim of changing the social order to achieve equality, to end unemployment, to build a better life. He saw the importance of the little steps that actually improved the lives of real people. Ted Scott explained that FAB believed in a "mixed economy" and accordingly could talk to the business community as well as working people. Scott added that FAB "saw the need for health and social programs, such as housing south of Bloor St."⁴²

FAB was a strong advocate within the party for a Bill of Rights entrenched in the constitution. He was an eloquent spokesperson for the placement of a high value on freedom and tolerance, and for the rule of law. In this, he was rooted in Hooker's early exposition of Anglican theology as a set of laws.

FAB also contributed what might be described as an Anglican style to the party. He was an enthusiast for reason, and worked hard to develop logical and defensible party policies. In the above quoted 1935 *Canadian Churchman* article, he spoke of "thinking people" as those to whom heed must be paid. To that extent he brought an Anglican instinct for hierarchy into discussions of CCF and NDP strategy.

FAB wanted to change the power structure in the country as part of the new social order to which he was committed. In the meantime, one had to work with the reality. He was also Anglican-like in the fact that he was comfortable within the dominant culture. He proceeded on the basis that even the establishment was open to reason and to redemption.

There was also the Anglican understanding of the need to be broadly inclusive. His first role in the party was as ambassador to the middle-class and professionals. He told Terry Morley that in the early 1940s he and Jolliffe led a group in the party "that wished to heed the wider community."⁴³ He also instinctively understood that within the bosom the party various points of view could happily contend.

Conclusion

The paper has sought to examine the cultural categories that shaped a cultural event, the decision by FAB to join the CCF in the 1930s and to become active in it. FAB did not give up everything. He knew those in power and was comfortable with them. He challenged the system, seldom individuals. And he challenged the system by pressing for specific manageable changes. He was a radical in how he saw society and in his personal commitment to affect change. He was a conservative in many of his values and in his respect for the tradition in which he was born. In this stance, Francis Andrew Brewin was a true servant of his church. Through him, his church served the country.

Endnotes

1. The paper was first presented in fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Theological Studies degree from the Vancouver School of Theology and was supervised by Dr. William Crockett and Dr. Brian Fraser. The title is taken from the hymn attributed to John Bunyan and others.
2. Aletta Biersack, "Local Knowledge, Local History," in *The New Cultural History*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), chapter 3.
3. David Brewin of London, England. A copy of the research is in the possession of the writer. Unless otherwise indicated, the material on the Brewin family is found in this research.
4. Dr. Thurstan Brewin of Oxford, England, FAB's cousin and David Brewin's father, refers to a book by W.G. Hoskins, professor of History at Leicester University, *The Midland Peasant* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1957) for this proposition.
5. This is described in detail in Peter d'Alroy Jones, *The Christian Socialist Revival, 1877-1914: Religion, Class and Social Conscience in late-Victorian England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968).
6. Andrew George Blair to FHB, Francis Andrew Brewin Papers, National Archives of Canada (NAC). Unless otherwise noted, specific references to FAB are taken from this collection.

7. Christopher Hibbert, *No Ordinary Place: Radley College and the Public School System* (London: John Murray, 1997), 349. The book is a good source on the public school system in general, and, of course, a valuable reference work for this paper. Unless otherwise noted, the general references about Radley are from Hibbert. Specific references to FAB are from his papers in the National Archives of Canada.
8. Hibbert, *No Ordinary Place*, 182.
9. L.R. Thring to FHB, April 1925, FAB Papers, NAC.
10. Information for this section is taken from: George H. Rust-D'Eye, *Cabbagetown Remembered* (Erin: Boston Mills Press, 1984); James Lemon, *Toronto Since 1918* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1985); and John Herd Thompson with Allen Seager, *Canada, 1922-39: Decades of Discord* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1985).
11. Lemon, *Toronto Since 1918*, 35.
12. Quoted in Lemon, *Toronto Since 1918*, 59.
13. Rust-D'Eye, *Cabbagetown Remembered*, 71.
14. History of St. Simon's, Diocese of Toronto Archives.
15. *Canadian Churchman*, 5 April 1935.
16. Alan Hayes, *By Grace Co-Workers: Building the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, 1780-1989* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1989), chapter 2.
17. Hayes, *By Grace Co-Workers*, 72.
18. Hayes, *By Grace Co-Workers*, 81
19. Hayes, *By Grace Co-Workers*, 77.
20. *Canadian Churchman*, 23 May 1935.
21. This section is based primarily on A.T. Davies, *The Political Ideas of Richard Hooker* (London: S.P.C.K., 1948).
22. The writer found the treatment of Maurice helpful in: Jones, *The Christian Socialist Revival, 1877-1914*; D.R.G. Owen, *Social Thought and Anglican Theology* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1980); and Ronald Preston, *Church and Society in the Late-Twentieth Century* (London: SCM Press, 1983).
23. Preston, *Church and Society in the Late-Twentieth Century*, 13.

24. Preston, *Church and Society in the Late-Twentieth Century*, 19.
25. In particular see Jones, *The Christian Socialist Revival, 1877-1914*; and the summary in Stephen F. Hopkins, "The Anglican Fellowship for Social Action" (M.A. Thesis, University of St. Michael's College, Toronto, 1982).
26. William Temple, *Christianity and the Social Order*, with introduction by Robert Preston (London: SCM Press, 1942).
27. A. Margaret Evens, *Sir Oliver Mowat* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 338.
28. The main sources for this section were Walter Young, *The Anatomy of a Party: The National CCF* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969); and John Terence Morley, *Secular Socialists: The CCF/NDP in Ontario* (Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1984). Also Gerald L. Caplan, *The Dilemma of Canadian Socialism: The CCF in Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964) was helpful.
29. "The Regina Manifesto," in Young, *The Anatomy of a Party: The National CCF*, Appendix A, 304.
30. Young, *The Anatomy of a Party: The National CCF*, 54.
31. *Canadian Churchman*, 6 December 1935.
32. Ted Scott interview, 7 February 1999.
33. Ted Scott interview, 7 February 1999.
34. James McRuer interview by Margaret Wilbur, tape in possession of writer.
35. Morley, *Secular Socialists: The CCF/NDP in Ontario*, 126.
36. Notes in FAB Papers, National Archives of Canada.
37. Barbara Louise Parks, "George Bernard Shaw, Victorian, Modern and Post-Modern Prophet" (M.A. Thesis, California State University at Los Angeles, 1988), 40.
38. Parks, "George Bernard Shaw," 44.
39. Young, *The Anatomy of a Party: The National CCF*, 168.
40. Ted Scott interview, 7 February 1999.
41. Column in the *Toronto Sun*, 30 September 1983, 11.
42. Ted Scott interview, 7 February 1999.

43. Morley, *Secular Socialists: The CCF/NDP in Ontario*, 165.