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"Out of the Wastage of All Other Nations"

"Enemy Aliens" and the "Canadianization" of Felix Paul Greve

MIDWAY THROUGH Felix Paul Greve's first Canadian novel, *Settlers of the Marsh*, the protagonist, Niels Lindstedt, proposes to Ellen Amundsen and is rejected. The rejection devastates Niels. Months later, still seeking to recover his mental and emotion balance, he develops a new plan.

> A new dream arose: a longing to leave and to go to the very margin of civilisation, there to clear a new place; and when it was cleared and people began to settle about it, to move on once more, again to the very edge of pioneerdom, and to start it all over anew... That way his enormous strength would still have a meaning. Woman would have no place in his life. He looked upon himself as belonging to a special race—a race not comprised in any limited nation, but one that cross-sectioned all nations: a race doomed to everlasting extinction and yet recruited out of the wastage of all other nations... (119)

Kristjana Gunnars, in her Afterword to the New Canadian Library edition of *Settlers*, describes this last sentence as "perhaps the strangest statement in the whole book": "The immigrant as 'wastage' from other nations," she declares, "is a low view indeed, and says a great deal about Niels's view of himself and his fellow settlers" (273). In *Scandalous Bodies: Diasporic Literature in English-Canada*, Smaro Kamboureli makes that statement the focus of her detailed and insightful analysis of the novel. I want to take up Kamboureli's

analysis of the figure of the immigrant as "wastage" not to call it into question but to recontextualize and refocus it. Whereas Kamboureli analyses what she terms Niels's—and Greve's—"libidinal realism," I intend to focus on the historical circumstances in which Felix Paul Greve settled in Canada and resumed his life as a writer. When Greve settled in Manitoba, Canada's relation with its non-English immigrants was badly strained and would soon be in crisis. In the early years of his teaching and writing life in Canada, Greve saw himself as caught between these non-English immigrants—epitomized in the 1920s by the "non-preferred," central Europeans—and the dominant British society in Canada, removed from both groups and yet mediating between them. This role shaped both FPG's persona as a writer in Canada, and his best-known Canadian texts, *Settlers of the Marsh* and *A Search for America*. Although Greve saw himself as caught between these groups, his early writing was itself mediated, in part, by provincial and federal government policies designed to "Canadianize" its non-English-speaking immigrants. Greve enjoyed considerable success in his role as mediator between the English and the non-English, the "preferred" and the "non-preferred"; indeed, in the late 1920s, FPG himself was taken up as a figure of the "new Canadian," that is, of the "preferred" European immigrant "assimilated" to "British civilization." Greve used his newfound status not only to advance his own career but to argue on behalf of immigrants from the non-preferred nations of central Europe.

With much of Kamboureli's analysis of *Settlers of the Marsh*, I am in agreement. She questions "the value attributed to realism in ethnic literature" and points out that it "relies on a supposed unity between literary representation and social reality" (66). Like Kamboureli, I question that unity. The canonization of *Settlers of the Marsh* suggests, as she argues, that the novel corresponds more to "hegemonic dispositions of the day" than to social reality. The novel employs what Kamboureli terms "the mode of selective realism"; that is, it "refrains from representing those immigrants whose experiences were predicated on the socioeconomic and symbolic values attached to 'wastage'" (51). The immigrants in *Settlers* are almost entirely northern European: what is more, the members of the dominant society, who Greve elsewhere refers to as "Old Canadians," are themselves almost never represented. Of these absences, Kamboureli writes:

> So when the narrator puts the sign of 'wastage' under erasure, he produces a story representing the positivism of the dominant society while reflecting the complicity of the author 'outside' the text. The novel's realism, then, attempts to rise above some of the historical specificities of its period. Adopting as he does a selective approach, the narrator tells Niels's story from the point of view of the dominant humanistic ideology. He therefore invokes a spectral history that unwrites the pervasiveness of 'wastage.' From this perspective, the single inscription of 'wastage' in the narrative can only appear to be a reference to a putative reality. (52)

As Kamboureli also points out, because Niels is inarticulate much of the time, he effectively shares the role of protagonist with the narrator: "the more naive [and inarticulate] the novelistic character is, the more sagacious and dazzling the author inside the text can appear to be. Seen in this light," she argues, "Niels occupies a position that often becomes the meeting ground of Grove and the narrator" (46).[1]

For Kamboureli, the reference to the immigrant as wastage in the passage already cited is "the single most important sign invoking the critical consciousness of the author 'outside' the text": "the figure of 'wastage' brings into the novel the social paradigms about ethnicity circulating in Greve's time, paradigms that are not always compatible with Niels's character" (47). Kamboureli's primary referent for these "social paradigms" is J.S. Woodsworth's 1909 study of immigration, *Strangers Within Our Gates*. There is no denying the importance either of Woodsworth himself or of his 1909 study; however, by 1919, when Felix Paul Greve resumed his career as a writer, at least two events had significantly altered the debate over immigration. The first event was the outbreak of World War I. In *In Search of Myself* Greve claims that he arrived in Canada in the 1890s and, thus, that he participated in the first great wave of immigration to western Canada. Between 1891 and 1921 the population of Canada grew by almost four million people, increasing from 4,833,000 to 8,788,000. In the prairie provinces alone, the population grew from 219,000 in 1891 to just under two million in 1921 (Friesen 512). Most of that immigration occurred prior to 1914 and the many of the new immigrants to western Canada were from countries against

which, in 1914, Canada went to war. If, as the available evidence suggests, Greve in fact settled in Manitoba in December of 1912, then he experienced not the opening of the west but its closure when Britain declared war on Germany in 1914 and immigrants from countries with whom Britain and its colonies were suddenly at war found themselves designated "enemy aliens," that is, "*unnaturalized* immigrants from countries with which Canada was at war" (Martynowych 323). Those immigrants were gradually stripped of their rights and, in some cases, interned. The impact of the Russian Revolution was no less important. The success of the Bolsheviks in Russia in the fall of 1917 heightened the British colony's fears about its immigrants from central Europe, fears intensified by the events leading up to, and culminating in, the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919. If world war created the category of "enemy alien," the Russian Revolution gave rise to the concept of "socialist revolutionaries." In 1919 fear of "enemy aliens" and "bolsheviks" prompted the dominion government to revise both the Criminal Code and the Immigration Act significantly, to develop, for the first time, a national police force, and to engage in domestic intelligence gathering and counter-subversion activities in Canada. That fear led, in short, to the emergence in Canada of the surveillance state (Kealey). Section 41 of the Immigration Act, passed into law in June 1919, stated that "'any person other than a Canadian citizen [who] advocates...the overthrow by force...of constituted law and authority' could be deported from the country" (Avery 92). In *"Dangerous Foreigners": European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896–1932*, Donald Avery writes:

> This sweeping provision reinforced Section 38 of the Act which gave the governor general in council authority 'to prohibit or limit...for a stated period or permanently the landing of immigrants belonging to any nationality or race deemed unsuitable.' It was this section which had been invoked consistently to exclude either U.S. or West Indian Blacks from the country. In 1919 Section 38 was also used to exclude various European immigrants. By Order-in-Council PC 1203, Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, and Turks were excluded because of their wartime associations; by Order-in-Council PC 1204 Doukhobors, Mennonites, and Hutterites were excluded because of 'their customs, habits, modes of living and methods of holding property.' (92)

In the years immediately following World War I, as Avery notes, political and cultural acceptability displaced economic considerations as the primary criteria in the formulation of federal policies on immigration (90). Although midway through the decade Canada began once again to accept immigrants from Germany and its wartime allies, the political and cultural acceptability of immigrants remained high on the political agenda and was the subject of considerable debate.

In the early 1920s, then, Canada was preoccupied with the problem of "enemy aliens" and "socialist revolutionaries" in its midst and was intent on reasserting the Anglo-Saxon character of the colony. While the focus was on "enemy aliens" and "Bolsheviks," *all* non-British immigrants were suspect and fell into the category of "wastage." Following World War I, Canada virtually halted immigration from Asia and, "by determining after 1923 that only citizens of predominantly white Commonwealth countries could be deemed British subjects," the colony "effectively excluded blacks" (McLaren 58). Such people, it was assumed, could not be assimilated into the Anglo-Saxon character of the colony. Those who were not screened out and deported needed to be "assimilated" or "Canadianized." According to the business and intellectual elite, that was the immediate problem. The answer, many argued, was education. In *A Study in Canadian Immigration*, published by Ryerson Press in 1920, W.G. Smith writes,

> What is needed is a new crusade of young Canadians in whom the fires of patriotism burn, who will man the outposts of Canadian nationality. In times of war a half-million of our best were enlisted in a gigantic struggle of destruction. In times of peace can there not be a brigade or two of equally ardent spirits who will engage in the work of construction? The final completion of the immigration task is a great wave of education carried on by patriots who will prepare the highway of the future. (397)

What Smith proposes is, in effect, a cultural war on "new Canadians." Following World War I studies such as J.T.M. Anderson's *The Education of the New-Canadian*, published by J.M. Dent & Sons in 1918, and Smith's *A Study in Canadian Immigration* (1920) displaced Woodsworth's *Strangers Within Our Gates* as touchstones on immigration. In *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885–1945* Angus McLaren writes:

> Opposition to immigration in the late nineteenth century had been raised by nativists, nationalists, and labour leaders opposed primarily to the quantity of incoming foreigners; the opposition of the interwar period was increasingly led by professional groups—doctors, social workers, and psychiatrists—employing eugenic arguments to attack the quality of the new arrivals. (66)

Anderson, the author of *The Education of the New-Canadian*, was an inspector of schools in Saskatchewan; Smith, who wrote *A Study in Canadian Immigration*, was an associate professor of psychology at the University of Toronto. Smith's study was in fact commissioned by the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene. As McLaren points out, "The Committee provided anti-immigrationists with added ammunition by asserting that its surveys proved that there was a direct correlation between immigration and insanity, criminality, and unemployment" (59). This is the immigrant as wastage indeed.

It was within this historical context that Felix Paul Greve settled in Canada and resumed his career as a writer. Although Greve immigrated to Canada too late to participate in the pioneering of the west, he arrived in the right place, at the right time to experience the repressive measures taken against immigrant "aliens" and to witness the imposition of the War Measures Act, the suppression of the Winnipeg General Strike, and the emergence of a middle-class Anglo-Canadian nationalism focussed on citizenship and bent upon the "assimilation" of "New Canadians"; what is more, as a foreign teacher working in the immigrant communities of Manitoba, he in fact found himself in the front lines of battle. Greve, who became a naturalized Canadian only in December 1921, identified with those "New Canadians," whose children he and his wife taught, and must have felt himself at risk. As early as the fall of 1915, weeks after the birth of the Greves' first child, Phyllis May, when anger against "enemy aliens" was mounting in Manitoba and, with that anger, political pressure to abolish the teaching of "enemy alien" languages in public schools, Greve told his wife, Catherine, that "'something might come up' at any time and he might have to 'pick up and leave'" (Makow 116).[2] Greve, it must be remembered, was not only a German national but an "enemy alien" with a criminal record; what is more, although he claimed to be Swedish, he was teaching German and English in one of Manitoba's bilingual German-English public schools and people in the community there "took it for granted that [he] was German" (Stobie, *Frederick* 35). When he began his writing career in Canada in 1919, the colony was tightening its restrictions on immigration and broadening its power to arrest and deport foreigners. Although Greve lived in Manitoba, which in the aftermath of the Winnipeg General Strike was undoubtedly the province of most concern when it came to "enemy aliens" and "socialist revolutionaries"; and although he found himself in the front lines of the battle over the assimilation of immigrants, there is no reference in his Canadian fiction either to the momentous events of the war years or to the retrenchment at war's end. There is also no reference to these events in the published Grove letters though, interestingly, the largest single gap in Desmond Pacey's *The Letters of Frederick Philip Grove* is for the eleven-year period from July 1914 to August 1925.[3] Similarly, there is no reference to any of these events, including the Winnipeg General Strike, in Greve's fictional autobiography, *In Search of Myself*. In short, it is not only in *Settlers of the Marsh* that Greve "produces a story representing the positivism of the dominant society while reflecting the complicity of the author 'outside' the text" (Kamboureli 52): the entire Canadian record is marked by the "selective" approach apparent in *Settlers*. Perhaps not surprisingly, the published criticism on Greve's writing has proved not less selective.

The most detailed and authoritative account of Greve's life in Manitoba is provided by Margaret Stobie in her 1973 monograph on the novelist; it is grounded not only in her study of the extant Greve papers but in the interviews she conducted with residents of the many communities in which Greve and his wife lived between 1913 and 1929, in her examination of school records, and in her perusal of the community newspapers.[4] (Many of the people she interviewed were former pupils of either Greve or his wife.) Although Stobie points out that Greve's first two teaching assignments

were in German-English bilingual schools in the Mennonite communities of Haskett and Winkler south of Winnipeg, she makes no mention either of the controversy surrounding the bilingual schools or of the stormy events leading up to their closure in 1916—including the closure of the French schools—and to the suppression of "enemy alien" language instruction in the province. Greve had been granted an interim teaching permit following an interview with Robert Fletcher, Deputy Minister of Education, in Winnipeg. Concerning that interview Stobie writes:

> ...Grove must have been a welcome sight to the deputy minister. Here was a mature man, obviously intelligent, with evident teaching experience, and he spoke both German and English, even though his English had a marked European sound. At the time, Manitoba had an ambitious and idealistic bilingual school system, developing out of the French-English background of the province, but extending to bilingual schools for the settlement of Polish, Ruthenian, Swedish, Austrian, Icelandic, and German newcomers, to try to help them in the transition to their adopted country. Staffing the bilingual schools was a constant problem. (25)

Greve was granted an interim teaching permit in December 1912 and taught at Haskett from January to June 1913. After attending the ten-week normal school for German-English bilingual teachers in the summer of 1913 and writing provincial exams, he was granted professional standing and appointed principal of Winkler Intermediate School in August (Stobie, "Grove's Letters" 67). He thus entered the bilingual school system as it was approaching the limit of its expansion. The ethnic tensions fanned by World War I called Manitoba's bilingual school system into question and eventually led to its abolition.

Opposition to the province's bilingual school system had developed, however, long before the outbreak of war. The bilingual school system had its origin in Section 10 of the Manitoba Public Schools Act (1897). According to Section 10, "Where ten of the pupils in any school speak the French language (*or any language other than English*) as their native language, the teaching of such pupils shall be in French (*or such other language*), and English upon the bilingual system" (emphasis added). That provision was one of the terms of the Laurier-Greenway Agreement drafted to resolve the Manitoba School Question. Marilyn Barber offers the following account of the controversy:

> In the 1890s the English-speaking majority, becoming more dominant in the province and encouraged by Ontario, demanded that the existing system of Protestant and Roman Catholic schooling be replaced by a uniform national school system with no special rights for Roman Catholics and with English as the language of instruction. The Roman Catholic minority predominantly French-speaking, led by Archbishop Taché and his successor Archbishop Langevin and supported by Quebec, fought to retain the separate official status of the Roman Catholic schools. The resulting compromise in 1897, known as the Laurier-Greenway Agreement, satisfied neither group. In response to the will of the majority, a uniform nondenominational system was imposed. However, the minority won on the language issue as a bilingual system of education was made mandatory if requested by the parents of ten pupils in a school who spoke French *or any language other than English*. (287; emphasis added)

Immigrants who arrived in western Canada at the turn of the century, particularly those who immigrated under the bloc settlement program, believed they could retain their language, religion and customs: some, like the Mennonites, had made retention of their language, religion and customs a condition of their immigration; others, like the Ukrainians, had that belief reinforced not just by "the reservation of bloc settlement areas for ethnic groups" but by the subsequent development of the bilingual school system, and by the establishment of normal schools for Ukrainian-speaking teachers, as they and other groups exercised their rights under section 10 of the Manitoba School Act (Jaenen 517).[5]

In developing the bilingual school system, however, the ethnic minorities and the provincial government were working at cross purposes. While the ethnic communities regarded bilingual schools as a means of retaining their language, religion and culture, the provincial government and the English majority saw those schools simply "as a transitional stage leading to unilingual English education" (Barber, "Canadianization" 287), that is,

as a stage in the assimilation of the immigrants. In the early decades of the twentieth century, government at all levels in Canada was intent on the assimilation of non-English immigrants. They focussed the work of assimilation not on the immigrants themselves but on their children; the primary setting for that work was the public school; and its medium was instruction in English language and culture. The following statement by a Manitoba school inspector, written in 1906, reflects the English-Canadian view:

> The great work of the public school in Canada is the formation and development of a high type of national life. This is particularly true in Western Canada, with its heterogeneous population. Here are to be found people of all countries, from the keen, clever American, with highly developed national ideals, equal to but perhaps somewhat antagonistic to our own, to the ignorant peasantry of central and Eastern Europe and Asia. These incongruous elements have to be assimilated, have to be welded into one harmonious whole if Canada is to attain the position that we, who belong here by right of birth and blood, claim for her. The chief instrument in this process of assimilation is the public school. (Maguire 31)

The most visible sign of English-Canadian values was the British flag which, in 1907, the provincial government decreed must be flown outside all schools, including the bilingual schools in ethnic communities. Bilingual schools were a concern both for ethnic minorities and for the English majority: the ethnic minorities worried that a public school education in English, even an education within the bilingual school program, would irretrievably damage their children's relation to their native language and culture; the English majority feared that the ethnic communities would use the bilingual schools to inculcate in the children their own language and culture. Mennonites who opposed the organization of public schools within their settlements did so because it contravened the guarantees they had been given by the federal government when they immigrated and because it threatened to undermine their community's values. The balance between the conflicting interests of the ethnic communities and the English majority was always precarious; the peace, always uneasy; and the pressure to assimilate, unremitting. Thus, in 1909, the year in which Greve faked his own suicide and crossed the Atlantic, "the Liberal *Manitoba Free Press*...commenced an extraordinary editorial campaign demanding that the provincial government institute unilingual English-language instruction for all Manitoba children" (Friesen 346). Four years later, in the first week of January 1913, when Greve took up his teaching position in the German-English school at Haskett, J.W. Dafoe, the editor of the *Manitoba Free Press*, began a series of fifty-four articles on "The Bilingual Schools of Manitoba" in which he attacked "the critical lack of schools in immigrant districts, the low standards of education, and especially of the teaching of English, in the schools which did exist" (Barber, "Canadianization" 291).[6]

When Greve began teaching in the German-English school in Haskett in January 1913, he found himself in the middle of a struggle over bilingual education. The position he took up in Winkler in the fall of 1913 was not just as teacher but as principal with all the additional responsibilities and social prestige that involved; what is more, Winkler Intermediate School, his first assignment as a teacher with full professional standing, was scheduled to host the Annual Conference of German-English Bilingual Teachers in Southern Manitoba that fall and Greve wanted to make a good impression (Stobie, "Grove's Letters" 69). Here was a recent immigrant seeking to adjust to a new country, a new culture, a new community and a new job. As his letters to I.J. Warkentin indicate, Greve was under considerable stress.[7] To these pressures must be added the additional problem created when on August 4, 1914 Canada entered World War I and German-Canadians were classified as "enemy aliens." Canada's entry into the war came two days after Greve married Catherine Wiens in the Anglican Church in Swift Current and just weeks before he was to commence his second year as principal. Although the full impact of the war was not felt until lists of missing, dead and wounded began to appear in Canadian newspapers, the government of Robert Laird Borden was forced to address the issue of "enemy aliens," particularly of German and Austro-Hungarian army reservists, immediately. After some confusion, "the Militia Department was directed, on 7 August, to arrest all German officers and reservists and to keep their Austrian counterparts under surveillance. Next day, the government assured German nationals that they would not be interfered with provided that they did not try to aid the enemy" (Martynowych 324). "On 15 August," Orest Martynowych writes:

the Borden government announced its comprehensive policy toward enemy aliens: any subject of an enemy country whose departure from Canada might be helpful to the enemy, or anyone engaged in espionage, transmitting information to the enemy, or helping others to escape, would be subject to internment. All, however, who continued to pursue their "ordinary avocations" *and signed a "parole" to report to the police at regular intervals* and to observe the law would remain free. *Parolees who failed to report or who changed their place of residence or work without police approval would be interned* (PC 2150). A proclamation on 2 September reassured enemy aliens that they could continue to hold property and conduct business provided that they did not aid the enemy. Another, next day, commanded them to hand in their firearms, ammunition and explosives to the nearest justice of the peace or police officer (PC 2283). (324; emphasis added)

The War Measures Act, unanimously passed by Parliament on August 18, "enabled the federal cabinet to meet the wartime emergency through orders-in-council" (323). In the opening months of the war, the constraints on "enemy aliens" seemed to change almost daily and the continual stream of orders-in-council cannot have reassured members of any ethnic community. According to Donald Avery, "By [the] end of the war over 80,000 enemy aliens had been registered, though only 8,579 of these were actually interned. This number included: 2,009 Germans, 5,954 Austro-Hungarians, 205 Turks, 99 Bulgarians, and 312 classified as miscellaneous" (66).

Within months of the outbreak of World War I, the German immigrant went from being characterized as "only slightly less desirable than Englishmen" to "absolutely impossible to assimilate as a Canadian citizen" (Thompson 74, 76).[8] As John Herd Thompson notes, "the wartime reaction to the German immigrant" was a "spectacular reversal of judgment" (74). How did German-Canadians respond to these developments? They responded, Thompson suggests, by "informally 'chang[ing]' their nationality":

> Frederick Philip Grove, then principal of a Manitoba school, became a Swede, one of the most popular alternative identities. Thousands of others verbally crossed the Baltic to join him or became Norwegian or Dutch, the other possible countries of refuge. The census reports of 1911 and 1921 provide some interesting figures to demonstrate this. In 1911, 18,696 residents of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta gave their place of birth as Germany. In 1921, with little in or out migration, the figure had declined to 13,242. The 1911 figure for those born in Sweden, Norway, and Holland is 33,826. In 1921, again with little migration, it is 38,925. The difference between this increase and the German decrease is only 355. Since the statistic refers to *place of birth*, natural increase does not change these figures. Towns with German names responded as well. The most famous Canadian changeover was Berlin, Ontario, which became Kitchener, but Dusseldorf and Carlstadt, Alberta, also were rechristened, as Freedom and Alderson. (76–77)

Greve's claim to Swedish nationality, like his change of name, in fact predates the outbreak of war. Writing to Isaac J. Warkentin—his predecessor as principal at Winkler who was then studying at Leipzig University—on February 10, 1914, six months prior to the war, Greve declares that his father was a Swede, his mother, a "Scotchwoman," and that he "was raised in Germany" (Pacey, *Letters* 11).[9] Even before the Canadian public reversed its opinion regarding Germans, then, Greve felt compelled to conceal his identity. After all, he had faked his own suicide and left behind him in Germany not only his seemingly insurmountable debts but his criminal conviction for fraud; moreover, he had abandoned his first wife, Else Plötz, in the United States. Presumably he entered the German-English bilingual school system in Manitoba with the account of his nationality and upbringing he gave to Warkentin pretty much in place. Presumably, too, as resentment against German-Canadians grew, and as the campaign against the teaching of "enemy alien" languages gained strength, Greve felt compelled to distance himself as far as he could from all things German. Public opinion prompted Andreas Weidenhammer, the Canadian-born inspector for the German-English schools in the district where Greve taught, to change his name to Andrew Willows. As J.J. Healy points out about Weidenhammer's change of name, "The anti-German hysteria of World War I, which changed Berlin to Kitchener, forced a man of German origin, born in Canada, to change his name in his sixties" (89).

In May 1915 the growing "Parliament Building Scandal" forced the resignation of the provincial Conservative government and in the August election the Liberal party, lead by T.C. Norris, gained power. With the new government intent on investigating the bilingual schools, Dafoe renewed his calls in the *Manitoba Free Press* for their abolition. A bill to repeal the bilingual clause of the Public Schools Act was passed in March. In the previous fall Greve and his wife had moved to Virden "whose townspeople," Stobie remarks, "were chiefly from Ontario and the British Isles" (*Frederick* 42). According to Stobie, in the seven years following his two-year tenure in Winkler, Greve

> taught in six different schools, and in one of them for two separate stints. Within one nine-month period he taught in three different schools, a record that he later attributed to the aimless elder son of "The Weatherhead Fortunes." (42)

Greve, however, was not aimless. Stobie attributes the yearly change of schools to Greve's inability to get along with other people but the explanation may not be that simple. During the period in question, that is, from 1915 to 1922, the animosity toward enemy aliens was at its height. While Greve claimed to be Swedish, *all* foreigners were suspect and he had much to fear: he could not prove his nationality—proof was increasingly a requirement—and he was not a naturalized Canadian. (He did not receive his naturalization papers until December 1921.) Getting along with other people may not have been one of Greve's strengths but relating to others during this period could not have been easy. Is it possible that Greve's departure from Winkler was prompted by his desire to move out of the German-English bilingual school system because of the tensions exacerbated, if not created, by the war, because of the scrutiny the bilingual schools—particularly the German-English schools—were undergoing, and because of his own need to stay out of trouble? Is it entirely coincidental that he moved from the German community of Winkler to a town consisting of people "chiefly from Ontario and the British Isles"? Is it possible, too, that he moved regularly, in part, to lessen the chance that his identity might be challenged? Interestingly, he stopped moving after 1922, when he had received his own naturalization papers and when the resentment against enemy aliens had, in any case, begun to abate.

FIGURE 18: Great War Veterans Association Parade, Winnipeg 4 June 1919. Archives of Manitoba. N12295

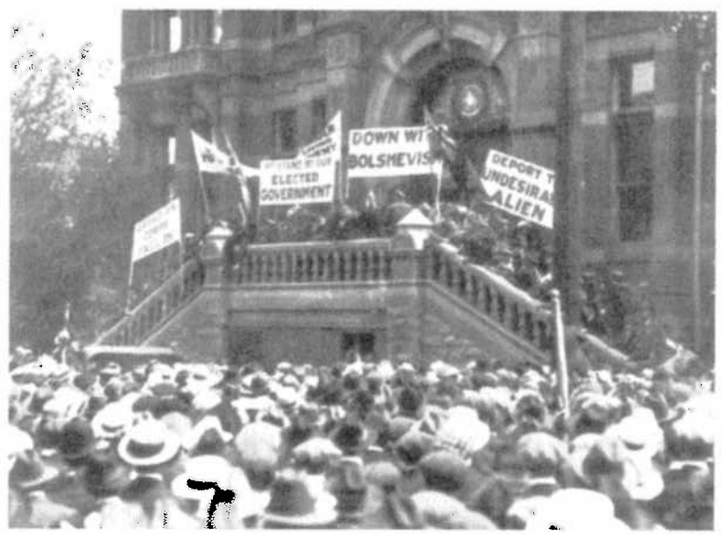

FIGURE 19: Great War Veterans Association demonstration at City Hall, Winnipeg 4 June 1919. Archives of Manitoba. N12296

I do not have the space here either to detail all the events relevant to the treatment of "enemy aliens"—and aliens generally—during and immediately following World War I or to relate them to events in Greve's life as a teacher and writer in Manitoba. Four events, however, merit brief comment. The first was the founding of the Great War Veterans' Association in Winnipeg in April 1917. That returning soldiers were a potent force stirring hostility against enemy aliens—indeed, against aliens generally—has never been seriously questioned. This was particularly true in western Canada (figure 18). As Desmond Morton and Glenn Wright note, "The simmering pre-war hostility to immigrants" in western Canada "was given respectability by the war" (71). At its founding convention in Winnipeg, delegates voted "to conscript all aliens, *friendly and hostile*, 'for any service the government deems fit'" (71; emphasis added) and veterans' groups "thereafter regularly petitioned the government to disfranchise 'enemy aliens,' to conscript 'allied aliens' for military service and 'enemy aliens' for labour on soldiers' pay ($1.10 per day) and to suppress all 'enemy alien' newspapers" (Martynowych 421–22). The second event involved the federal government's response to these developments. In September 1917 Borden's Conservative government, which could no longer postpone the need for a federal election, passed the Wartime Elections Act. As Martynowych points out,

> the Wartimes Election act enfranchised all mothers, wives, widows, sisters and daughters of servicemen and disfranchised all Mennonites, Doukhobors, German-speaking immigrants born in Russia, conscientious objectors, and individuals convicted under the Military Service Act or who had applied for exemption. Also disfranchised were immigrants from enemy countries naturalized after 31 March 1902 (unless they had sons, grandsons or brothers on active duty). (423–24)

The purpose of the act was to secure a Conservative victory at the polls or to force the Liberal party into a Union government; nevertheless, Thompson rightly argues, it was passed "because the Borden government had received considerable assurance of its popularity as well as its possible necessity" (80). At the same time, Martynowych notes, the passage of the Wartime Elections Act "appeared to sanction anti-alien prejudice and emboldened nativists and advocates of compuls[ory military service] to press for even more drastic measures, and especially for the conscription of alien labour" (425).

The third event was the Russian Revolution, particularly the Bolshevik seizure of power in October 1917. In the months following that event, Canada's fledging security agencies began hunting for Bolshevik revolutionaries as well as for agents of the German government. In the small prairie towns, the effect was not to shift the focus away from usual enemy aliens but to make *all* aliens increasingly suspect. In September 1918 a government report linked labour radicalism to Bolshevik conspiracy and "recommended the suppression of radical organizations and foreign-language publications, the extension of search and surveillance operations, and the establishment of a public safety branch to co-ordinate security operations" (Martynowych 436). In the fall of 1918 a flurry of orders-in-council proclaimed a new series of repressive measures directed at "enemy aliens," including bans on "all publications in twelve 'enemy' languages, including Ukrainian, German, Russian and Finnish (PC 2381)," bans on strikes and lockouts (PC 2525) and restrictions on the right of assembly (Martynowych 437). The return of unemployed soldier's at war's end only heightened the tension and led to widespread violence directed against not just "enemy aliens" but "aliens" generally. Many veterans called for the immediate deportation of all enemy aliens and the confiscation of their property. This is the background for the Winnipeg General Strike (figure 19). The fourth event involves the changes made by the federal government to the Immigration Act and to the Naturalization Act in the immediate aftermath of the strike. In the midst of the strike, J.W. Dafoe had argued in the *Free Press* that order could be restored if authorities were "to clear the aliens out of the community and to ship them back to their happy homes in Europe which vomited them forth a decade ago" (Bercuson 127). That sentiment was shared by a great many veterans and the federal government's revision of its immigration and naturalization policy seemed to sanction those views. Changes to the Immigration Act made it possible to deport anyone other than a Canadian citizen for advocating "the overthrow by force...of constituted law and authority"; changes to the Naturalization Act enabled authorities to strip alien radicals of their naturalization and deport them from the country (Avery 92; Martynowych 441). At the same time, the

government invoked an extant section of the Immigration Act—section 38, designed "to prohibit or limit...for a stated period or permanently the landing of immigrants belonging to any nationality or race deemed unsuitable"—to prevent Germans, Austrians (including Ukrainians), Hungarians, Bulgarians and Turks from entering Canada because of their "wartime associations" (Avery 92; Martynowych 441). This measure remained in force until 1923.

Are these historical events relevant to an understanding of Greve's Canadian writing? Do they enter into that writing in any form? These events are not only relevant but central to an understanding of Greve's Canadian writing. In support of that argument, I offer three kinds of evidence. No one piece of evidence alone is convincing but the three together are, I believe, persuasive. The first is from Greve's "autobiographical" writing. Although Greve lived more than half of his Canadian years in Ontario and wrote his later novels out of his Ontario experience, in *In Search of Myself* and elsewhere he consistently represents himself as a *prairie writer*, that is, as a Manitoban, and as a *novelist*. In other words, Greve makes his years on the prairie, specifically his years teaching in the small immigrant communities of Manitoba, the crucible of his writing life in Canada. In his autobiographical writing Greve consistently represented himself as a prairie writer and a pioneer and this is how he has been represented by critics. In 1945 Ryerson Press published Desmond Pacey's study *Frederick Philip Grove*, the first monograph on the novelist. At the outset of that study Pacey advanced the representation of the novelist that would remain in force for decades to come. Pacey writes:

> The settlers who pioneered the prairies of Western Canada in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were of diverse racial and national origins. It is fitting that the writer who recorded in the form of fiction the effort and achievement of these people was himself an immigrant of mixed racial strains and of extremely cosmopolitan background. (1)

Pacey identifies Greve not only as a western Canadian novelist but as an immigrant who participated in the settlement of the west, who, like the western pioneers, was himself of "mixed blood," and who faithfully depicted

that era in his fiction. As part of the research for his monograph, Desmond Pacey read a typescript of *In Search of Myself*. If one can trace the biographical details in Pacey's monograph to the autobiography, so, too, can one see behind Pacey's representation of the novelist as an immigrant among the western pioneers Greve's argument in *In Search of Myself* that his life experiences had uniquely fitted him to be a spokesman for the race of pioneers who settled western Canada. Behind the critical representation of Greve as a prairie novelist, in short, lies his own representation of himself as a westerner and as a novelist.

That self-representation can be traced to the 1920s and leads me to the second piece of evidence. I am *not* arguing that Greve resumed his career in Canada to become a spokesman on behalf of European immigrants. I am suggesting, however, that having returned to writing, he seized on immigration and settlement as his subject. In the burst of creativity that came with his return to writing in 1919, Greve in effect worked on several books at once (Makow 120). In addition to the collection of sketches that became *Over Prairie Trails* and led to *The Turn of the Year*, he rapidly planned two other works: one evolved into *Settlers of the Marsh*; the other, into *A Search for America*. In its early stages, *Settlers* was a "Three Book Series entitled LATTER-DAY PIONEERS." As Margaret Stobie points out, an early outline includes a "list of characters in four groups according to their nationality: five English, five Scandinavians, five German (but one is crossed out), and five Slav" (*Frederick* 77). Interestingly, it is this book, his first novel, that Greve reportedly began writing in German (Makow 120). *A Search for America*, in its earliest stages, was variously titled *The Immigrant* or *The Emigrant* and dealt both with the plight of the immigrant and the newcomer's disillusionment with the New World (Stobie, *Frederick* 59–60).

Greve began both books at the height of the colony's panic over its "enemy aliens" and in the midst of tightening restrictions on immigration; by the time they appeared in print, however, circumstances had changed considerably. In the years immediately following World War I, returning soldiers flooded the labour market and, to make matters worse, the colony's economy went into recession; consequently, the demand for immigrant labour was low. By 1925, the year in which *Settlers of the Marsh* was published, the economy had strengthened considerably and the demand for workers was strong. The CPR and the CNR joined forces to persuade the federal

government to loosen restrictions on immigration. The result was the Railways Agreement, which effectively gave the two railways a free hand to bring "non-preferred" immigrants into the country. By the time Greve published *A Search for America*, the debate over immigration and the need to assimilate these "non-preferred immigrants" to Anglo-Canadian culture had heated up yet again and forced the Liberal government of Mackenzie King "to have the subject of immigration policy examined by the Select Committee on Agriculture and Colonization" (Avery 110). The books Greve conceived at one moment in the colony's panic over immigrants were taken up in another. It is here that the story gets very interesting and that I must move to my third and final piece of evidence. H.C. Miller, the president of Graphic Press, the Ottawa-based, nationalist publisher, worked hard to convince Greve that *A Search for America* should be released in Canada under Graphic's imprint. Did he do so because he recognized the topicality of Greve's book to the debate over immigration? If he did not, Graham Spry, the National Secretary of the Association of Canadian Clubs, certainly did. Immediately after reading the book, Spry contacted Graphic and began organizing the first of three lecture tours Greve would complete under the auspices of the Association. Greve's first lecture tour in fact coincided with the Select Committee's hearings on immigration policy.

If Greve did not recognize the topicality of *A Search for America* when Spry first approached him with the idea of a lecture tour, he quickly caught on. Although Greve lectured on literary and other topics, he focussed in all three lecture tours on the issues of immigration, assimilation, and nationhood. The position he takes is controversial but, as Enoch Padolsky points out, Greve "shows not only a good grasp of the issues that needed to be addressed but also an awareness of the sensitivities of Canadians on the question" (36). The lecture he gave on his first tour, "Canadians Old and New," in the spring of 1928 was popular and appeared in *Maclean's* before Greve completed the tour. His lecture on assimilation was also published by *Maclean's* and versions of the address on nationhood appeared both in the Association of Canadian Club's journal, *The Canadian Nation*, and in Greve's own collection of essays, *It Needs to be Said*. Greve begins the essay on assimilation with the following statement:

> We are worried today over ethnic problems. By certain persons—or shall I call them interests?—a formidable-looking indictment has been drawn up against the immigrant. A great deal has been said about preferred and non-preferred nationalities. I wonder with how much justification. ("Assimilation" 177)

I do not have time here to detail Greve's position on these issues, other than to say that he opposed the concept of preferred and non-preferred nationalities; that he spoke against the concept of assimilation—the foreigners, he argued, had something to give as well as to receive—and that his vision of nationhood was one of cultural pluralism, though it must be remembered that he, like most intellectuals in Canada at the time, ruled out immigration from continents other than Europe and favoured continued restrictions on the immigration of Jewish peoples.

If Greve was critical of the colony's policies on immigration and assimilation, why did Canada's business class and its allies among Canada's middle-class progressives, in effect, give him a platform from which to criticize those policies? The answer, I think, is that Greve's appearance on the platform, regardless of what he said, was itself the message: here was a European immigrant who had been assimilated into Anglo-Canadian culture, who, through his very presence on the platform, demonstrated that foreign immigrants could be transformed into intelligent and loyal citizens of the nation, who could, moreover—in the words of one commentator—rise "from an obscure teaching post to a place of eminence among Canadian authors"(Mount Allison citation 3), who was indeed a distinguished English-Canadian author. On June 7, 1928 R.B. Bennett rose in the House of Commons to declare:

> These people [central Europeans] have made excellent settlers; they have kept the law; they have prospered and they are proud of Canada, but it cannot be that we must draw upon them to shape our civilization. We must still maintain that measure of British civilization which will enable us to assimilate these people to British institutions, rather than assimilate our civilization to theirs. That is the point.... We

> earnestly and sincerely believe that the civilization which we call the British civilization is the standard by which we must measure our own civilization; we desire to assimilate those whom we bring to this country to that civilization, that standard of living, that regard for morality and law and the institutions of the country and to the ordered and regulated development of the country. That is what we desire, rather than by the introduction of vast and overwhelming numbers of people from other countries to assimilate the British immigrants and the few Canadians who are left to some other civilization. (Palmer 119)

Greve, in short, seemed to be living proof that non-English immigrants could successfully be assimilated into British civilization and that the threats seemingly posed by foreign traditions and cultures could be contained.

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NOTES

1 This aspect of narration is often seen as a feature of naturalism. On narration in naturalist texts and on Greve's naturalism, see Gammel, *Sexualizing Power in Naturalism: Theodore Dreiser and Frederick Philip Grove* (1994).

2 The tendency of Grove criticism to date has been to interpret such statements as signs of his concealed identity as Greve. I am arguing here for a more complex reading that places Greve's need of concealment within the larger context of Canada's treatment of its "enemy aliens."

3 The subsequent discovery and publication of five letters Greve wrote to his wife between September and November of 1919—see Makow—only serves to underscore the relative paucity of published information regarding this period in FPG's life.

4 The most recent and authoritative account of Greve's life is provided by Klaus Martens in *F.P. Grove in Europe and Canada: Translated Lives* (2001). The primary focus of Marten's book, however, is on Grove's life in Europe and he does little there to rethink Stobie's account of the Manitoba years.

5 On Ukrainian bloc settlements, see Martynowych 70–75.

6 Barber gives the number of articles as sixty-four. Cf. Donnelly 72 and Martynowych 357.

7 Isaac J. Warkentin (1885–1971) was Greve's predecessor as principal of Winkler Intermediate School. A Mennonite born in Manitoba, he received his BA from Wesley College—now the University of Winnipeg—and served as principal in 1912–13. He resigned that position to study at Leipzig University. He was interned in the Ruhleben Prison Camp shortly after the outbreak of World War I. See Stobie, "Letters From the Mennonite Reserve" and the article by J.J. Healy.

8 This last statement is from the *Winnipeg Tribune*, March 26, 1920 and reflects the post-war concern with the political and cultural acceptability of immigrants rather than with more purely economic measures.

9 For an analysis of the letters see Stobie and Healy. Both authors focus particular attention on the long letter of February 10, 1914 in which Greve makes this statement.