ON MAY 8, 1919, the troops of the Minnesota 151st Field Artillery returned from Europe to march triumphantly down 6th Street in St. Paul. Across the river, however, the enemies of the Minneapolis Civic and Commerce Association (CCA) had survived the patriotic onslaught of the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety (CPS) during the war years and were combining their forces for a new assault on the industrial might of Minneapolis business. Although Socialist Mayor Thomas Van Lear and the “treasonable” Nonpartisan League’s candidate for governor, Charles A. Lindbergh, Sr., had both been defeated in the 1918 elections, the margins had been narrow and the “many-sided menace” of “socialism, IWWism, Bolshevism, (and) communism” were still organizing “with the intent of gaining political control of Minnesota and putting into effect a socialist program.” In reality the threat by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) had been severely damaged by wartime suppression, and the Socialist party, due largely to its own antiwar stand, had lost its prewar position “as the umbrella party for all radical, liberal and protest factions in Minneapolis.”

The suppression of labor and the Nonpartisan League (NPL) during the war, however, had created the seeds of a new alliance. On February 20, the Minneapolis Trades and Labor Assembly (TLA) established a political arm, the Municipal Nonpartisan League (MNPL). The CCA perceived this new threat as “a Socialist organization, being used chiefly to spread the doctrines of Townleyism in our city and to bring about a fusion of the labor organizations and the Non Partisan League for political purposes.” Although still in its infancy, the CCA recognized and predicted the future danger of the Farmer-Labor party. This alliance would only strengthen Minneapolis unions in their intensified postwar efforts to force closed-shop unionism on industry. There was only one answer for the already en-


William Millikan, whose earlier work on the Civic and Commerce Association appeared in the Spring, 1986, issue, is currently at work on a full-length study of the Citizen’s Alliance.

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trenched CCA; to "uphold the elements of law and order" in defense of the open shop.

During World War I the CCA, an employer's organization that represented over 5,000 businesses and public figures including such powerful giants as Northwestern National Bank and the Pillsbury and Dayton's companies, had harnessed the great upswelling of patriotism in the state to create the Commission of Public Safety by an act of the legislature on April 16, 1917. For the duration of the war this dictatorial group governed Minnesota. Through their influence on Governor J. A. A. Burnquist, CCA members were appointed to control the military units of the Home Guard and the intelligence agents of the state secret service. The CCA was able to use both of these groups to unveil and suppress unions and radical organizations throughout the state. In Minneapolis the CCA organized, financed, and armed the Civilian Auxiliary, a citizen army that patrolled the streets with bayoneted rifles and was instrumental in destroying union resistance during the street railway strike. When the secret service was disbanded in September, 1917, the CCA created a local unit of the American Protective League to continue surveillance and investigations of labor-oriented groups under the auspices of the United States Department of Justice.

While these organizations detected and suppressed opposition in the streets, the CCA lobbied strenuously for a status quo resolution that would enforce an industrial truce on Minneapolis workers. Although the resulting Order #30, issued by the CPS in April, 1918, would also control employers' activities, this was inconsequential because the CCA had already enforced the open shop on 95 percent of Minneapolis industry before the war. With the creation of these unconstitutional organizations the CCA had made the laws of the state and then enforced them with their own military power. When the war ended the Alliance was in total control of the industrial workplace in Minneapolis. Unfortunately for the CCA the end of World War I forced it to disband its governmental system for fighting unions and radicals. The business community's leaders would have to develop new methods for maintaining their particular brand of law and order.

The CCA, wanting to turn its attention and its image to civic improvement, openly endorsed the open shop and then turned the campaign over to its organizational offspring, the Minneapolis Citizen's Alliance (CA). The CA, whose constitutional purpose was "to uphold the principle of the Open Shop," would direct "its best efforts against that spirit of lawlessness and intimidation which universally governs the efforts of the unions." "The laws must and shall be obeyed and the rights of citizens preserved." To lead the campaign to enforce law and order the CA was extremely fortunate to have one of its founders, Otis P. Briggs, who was a national leader in the fight to suppress closed-shop unions. Briggs's fundamental strike policy, developed during his decade as commissioner and president of the National Founders' Association, was very simple: "cut off all negotiations and accept nothing but unconditional surrender." This policy frequently provoked violence and necessitated the development of an elaborate defense system. The primary weapon was the labor injunction. Under prevailing law employers could obtain restraining orders from sympathetic judges that stopped strikes, boycotts, and picketing in their tracks. The labor injunction, of course, was only effective if it was strictly enforced, by physical means if necessary. Control of local law enforcement agencies was essential. If that failed the establishment of a state constabulary became an absolute necessity. A secret service, which Briggs felt was "an indispensable requisite to good results," would inform and direct the constabu-


2 Here and below, see Minneapolis Civic and Commerce Association, Annual Reports, 1912-18; William Millikan, "Defenders of Business: The Minneapolis Civic and Commerce Association Versus Labor During W. W. I," Minnesota History 50 (Spring, 1986): 5-17, which details the early years of the CCA.
The policies that Briggs developed at the National Founders' Association would shape the character of the CA's struggle with labor until the onset of the Great Depression.

THE LEGAL BATTLE of the 1920s started innocuously in a small movie theater at 27 South Washington Avenue in downtown Minneapolis months before the United States entered World War I. John J. Campbell, owner of the Wonderland Theatre, decided to lay off his motion picture operators and save money by operating the machines himself. On February 25 Local 219 of the Motion Picture Machine Operators Union of Minneapolis began picketing the Wonderland. The picketing, which featured a banner carrying the words “This Theatre Unfair to Organized Labor” printed in large letters, would continue for three and a half years. The Trades and Labor Assembly immediately passed an “unfair” resolution putting the Wonderland on its “We Do Not Patronize List.” With the business of a member threatened by boycott, the CA moved in to support Campbell financially, both in the operation of his theater and in the legal battle that would continue for five years. Local 219’s picketing and the TLA boycott used as a weapon were a serious threat to the open shop and had to be eliminated.

In December, 1919, the Wonderland Theatre case was finally tried before Judge Winfield W. Bardwell in Hennepin County District Court. Although the long wait for the trial had allowed Local 219 and the TLA to continue their activities, the CA and its lawyer Nathan Chase must have approached the trial with extreme confidence. Judge Bardwell was a member of the CCA with a long association with the CA. Finding a friend of business on the bench was not a lucky coincidence. Even while the Wonderland case languished in the courts, CA attorney Chase and his partner Samuel J. Levy lobbied strenuously for the election of other pro-business judges. Chase raised money from Minneapolis lawyers while Levy solicited funds from the business community and ran Judge Edmund A. Montgomery’s

THE MODEST-LOOKING scene of the protracted legal battle of the 1920s as it appeared in a 1936 view by WPA photographer A. F. Raymond.
campaign. O. P. Briggs would leave nothing to chance."

Judge Bardwell did not disappoint the business community. On July 7, 1920, he issued a sweeping injunction banning all the activities that Local 219 and the TLA were using in their confrontation with Wonderland owner Campbell. The picketing of the theater and the "Unfair List" publications of the *Minneapolis Labor Review* had been banned. The judge overstepped federal precedent by prohibiting any aggressive or defensive activity by unions, including most strikes. Judge Bardwell had on his own volition interpreted Minnesota law to benefit the business community. Following the policy adopted at the 1917 American Federation of Labor convention, the TLA bitterly denounced his order and continued to publish its unfair notice. Chase quickly took his case back to court where Judge Bardwell found the TLA's leaders guilty of contempt. The *Labor Review* announced that the defendants would not pay fines "that would go into the bloody hands of the Minneapolis frameup gang which dubs itself the CA" and would serve their full sentences.

The *Labor Review's* public defiance of a court order immediately bolstered the CA campaign for law and order. The *Citizen's Alliance Bulletin* appealed to the insecurities of the community when it proclaimed that "the courts are the very foundation of our country. What will become of the Nation, the State, the City, our homes, if any individual or group of individuals is permitted to get away with the policy set up by leaders of the Minneapolis Trades & Labor Assembly." The decision of Judge Bardwell "stands as the law and must be obeyed." To try to undermine the financial support of the *Labor Review*, "which we've got to put out of business," CA president Briggs also took advantage of the "attempted intimidation of the court in the Campbell Theatre case by the act of from 1,500 to 2,500 radical sympathizers leaving their jobs and appearing in the courthouse." Briggs wrote local businesses an antilabor letter urging that all advertising dollars be withdrawn from the *Labor Review*. "Do you know that every dollar contributed to these papers is used to force the Closed Shop in opposition to the Open Shop?"

Unfortunately for Briggs, the *Labor Review* obtained a copy of the letter and publicly pointed out that while the CA had "gone into court and secured an injunction to prevent the workers from withdrawing their patronage from the unfair Wonderland theater and . . . circulate[d] a boycott letter against the Labor Review.""

After labor appealed Judge Bardwell's decision, the Wonderland Theatre case finally came before the Minnesota Supreme Court on October 11, 1921. Chief Justice Calvin L. Brown and Associate Justices Oscar Hallam, Homer B. Dibbell, and Andrew D. Holt listened to CA counsel Chase argue in defense of the sanctity of the courts and the integrity of private property. "What

we want to know is whether or not an employer can operate his business as an open shop without interference?" Chase asked the court. He suggested that "where the radical element is avowedly pursuing a rule or ruin policy it is highly imperative that . . . property rights be defined by the court." The strident arguments of Chase and labor attorney George B. Leonard, however, were unable to sway the court. When the court voted 3 to 2 on January 27, 1922, to uphold Judge Bardwell's injunction, it was the vote of the absent Justice James H. Quinn that turned the tide for the CA. Even at the Minnesota Supreme Court level it appears

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JUDGE Bardwell, about 1920, in a formal portrait by Lee Brothers, the Minneapolis photographers

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likely that the CA was able to influence the court's decision. Justice Quinn's election in 1916 and his re-election in 1922 relied in large part on the support of the CA, and it is not surprising that the Labor Review accused him of using his position to support the employers' group in the Wonderland decision.

Writing the majority opinion, Commissioner Edward Lees followed Judge Bardwell's lead and also concluded that "the right of free speech is abused when words become verbal acts and are then as much subject to injunction as the use of any other force whereby property is wrongfully injured." By printing that the Wonderland Theatre was unfair to union labor the CA, and it is not surprising that the Labor Review had conspired to injure Campbell's business and therefore the injunction was legal. To explain this decision to all of the Minneapolis business community the CA devoted its March, 1922, Bulletin to a reprint of the court's decision. Counsel Chase had won an extraordinary legal victory that would sharply curtail aggressive union activities.

EVEN WHILE THE CCA waited for an anticipated legal victory in the Wonderland case, it gradually maneuvered to control the peacetime military apparatus of the state. The CA board of directors realized that an "efficient (and friendly) National Guard is of the utmost importance in preserving 'law and order' throughout the state." The first step, at the invitation of Adjutant General Walter F. Rhinow, was to transfer the Civilian Auxiliary en masse into the state Home Guard. The plan, approved by Civilian Auxiliary commanders Colonel Perry G. Harrison and Major Henry A. Bellows, allowed the auxiliary, now the 13th Battalion of the Home Guard, to be called out by Governor Burnquist in the event of a state crisis or by Hennepin County Sheriff Otto S. Langum to deal with local disturbances. The transfer allowed federal rifles and ammunition to be used to rearm the battalion at no cost to the CCA. More importantly, Colonel Harrison was promoted to a powerful position on the adjutant general's staff and the employers' army, under the command of Major Bellows, was given a legitimate status as part of the state militia.

The Home Guard, however, would be disbanded when National Guard units returned from World War I. When the federal government authorized three new regiments of Minnesota National Guard to be organized from the state's most efficient Home Guard units, the 13th Battalion, with "the best record of public service performed of any unit," was joined with two other units into the First Minnesota Infantry. Bellows was promoted to second in command, and by July, 1918, the Civilian Auxiliary and its commanders had become the Minneapolis unit of the National Guard. With Rhinow, Harrison, and Bellows in command positions the CCA was assured of a friendly state militia.

The National Guard, however, was not a satisfactory replacement for a state constabulary. Basically a military unit, the Guard was undertrained and available only for emergency callup by the governor. Realizing these difficulties, the CA turned its attention to the recently formed Motor Corps. In order to expedite the movement of Home Guard and National Guard troops, Harry E. Pence, owner of Pence Auto and a CCA member, organized a motor corps composed entirely of business and professional men who owned automobiles of five-passenger capacity. The Motor Corps, commanded by Pence's employee Colonel W. R. Stephens, was reputedly the only such military organization functioning during the war and quickly reached a strength of 1,200 men. When Sheriff Langum banned a demonstration of the Socialist party on November 25, 1918, the corps quickly proved its usefulness. The Minneapolis Battalion of the Motor Corps, 180 cars strong and able to mobilize in under 40 minutes, responded to Governor Burnquist's call to establish martial control

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Footnotes:

9 Minneapolis Tribune, Oct. 12, 1921, p. 21; Labor Review, Oct. 14, 1921, Feb. 10, 1922, both p. 1; Minneapolis Journal, Jan. 27, 1922, p. 1; Biographical Sketches of Justices of the Minnesota Supreme Court from Territorial Days to 1976 (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1976[?]), 17. Justices Quinn, Holt, and Chief Justice Brown voted in the majority; Hallam and Dibbell dissented. Quinn, a Fairmont Republican, had been narrowly elected in 1916 and was facing re-election in 1922. In 1916 his campaign had received substantial aid from the Shevlin Carpenter Lumber Co., First National Bank Vice-President Archie Cramer, Judge David Simpson, and Minneapolis lawyer Charlie Fowler, all members of the CCA or the CA. A committee of Minneapolis businessmen had also raised $75,000 for publicity during Quinn's campaign.

10 Supreme Court Case 22200, opinion, 7, 13, 14; CA Bulletin, Mar., 1922.

11 Manufacturer's Club of Minneapolis, Inc., Bulletin, undated, p. 2; Minneapolis Journal clipping, Mar. 5, 1918, both in Edward Karow Papers, MHS. On the recommendation of Rhinow, CPS commissioner John McGee, a CCA member, moved that this transfer take place, and the CPS passed the motion; CPS, Minutes, Feb. 19, 1918, John Lind Papers, MHS; Bellows to Company Commanders, Feb. 16, 1918, Karow Papers. Membership in the CCA and the CA has been determined by cross-checking a number of lists: Commercial Club, Annual Reports, 1903-08; CCA, Annual Reports, 1912-18; CCA bulletins and programs, Albert J. Cramer Papers, MHS; CA, Bulletin, 1917-1930s and annual meeting reports, 1915-19; The Union, July 29, 1904, p. 4; CCA lists, Hennepin County War Records, Minneapolis Public Library: numerous lists, letters, and publications in the CA Records. For more on Karow and on the workings of the CPS, see Millikan, "Defenders of Business," 2-17.

12 CPS, Order No. 3, April 28, 1917, CPS Papers; Minneapolis Journal, May 2, 1918, p. 1, June 28, 1918, p. 9; Bellows to Karow, May 3, 1918, and to Company Commanders, June 21, July 5, 1918, Karow Papers. Civilian Auxiliary men were required to drop their commission as Special Deputy Sheriffs, which eliminated the flexibility of having them under the control of the local sheriff.
of downtown Minneapolis. Adjutant General Rhinow and Brigadier General Harrison commanded the troops of the 4th Minnesota Infantry and the Motor Corps as they swept through downtown streets with machine guns and bayonets. Corps members ferried arrested demonstrators to jail and helped keep a close watch on the TLA hall. Following the Armistice, the Motor Corps moved into the National Guard Armory in Minneapolis and sought federal recognition.13

While waiting for a reaction from Washington, state senator Charles R. Fowler, a Minneapolis lawyer and CA member, introduced a bill to create a military unit to be known as the Minnesota State Motor Corps with the same organization, armament, and discipline that already existed. The adjutant general was “authorized to appoint patrol men as he may deem advisable for the . . . protection of life and property,” to be financed by a yearly appropriation of $150,000. With Rhinow in command, this force would undoubtedly deal effectively with lawless unions, and Twin Cities’ labor unions, which had opposed state constabulary measures before the war, quickly recognized the CA’s intentions for the Motor Corps. Over 5,000 railway shopmen packed the capitol to protest the proposed measure. Union leader A. E. Smith stated that they were “opposed to the bill as it now stands because it makes the corps a state constabulary, for which there is no need.” The Minneapolis Tribune asked “Why should anybody who intends to behave himself and obey the law object to the passage of the Motor Corps bill?” The measure never reached the floor of either house. The Motor Corps, having no legal basis, was forced to disband, but the CA’s postwar campaign for a state constabulary had just begun.14

While CA vice-president Albert W. Strong led a recruitment campaign to strengthen the Minneapolis National Guard, the final challenge to the CCA’s domination of the National Guard was quietly returning from the battlegrounds of Europe. The commanders of Minnesota’s infantry units in France requested that the current Guard units be broken up and reorganized to include World War I veterans. Governor Burnquist turned the controversy over to the State Military Board, composed of Bellows, Harrison, and the commanders of the two other infantries already in operation, all of whom had a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Harrison quickly announced that the reorganization, which would temporarily disband all units, would leave the state unprotected and was therefore impossible. Instead, the old Civilian Auxiliary units, with Colonel George E. Leach, a returning war hero whom the CA felt was trustworthy in command, finally became the 151st Field Artillery. The transition to a peacetime military was thus completed with the Civilian Auxiliary still intact and with commanding officers friendly to the CCA. Unfortunately for the CA, however, the defeat of the Motor Corps bill left the National Guard the only large statewide force to use in maintaining law and order.15

THE CA had consolidated its control over the National Guard and celebrated the destruction of labor’s already weak defenses in Judge Bardwell’s courtroom, but it faced a much greater threat on the political front. On July 20, 1919, the Minnesota Federation of Labor formed the Working People’s Nonpartisan League (WPNPL) to act as its political arm and to work with the farmers’ Nonpartisan League. The WPNPL’s program called for an eight-hour day, the unqualified


right to organize, "public ownership and operation of railways, steamships, banking businesses, stockyards, packing plants, grain elevators . . . and all other public utilities; and the nationalization and development of basic natural resources. . . . [and] a process of government supervision . . . for the benefit of all the people." The NPL, which already controlled the legislative and executive branches of government in North Dakota and had a powerful organization in Minnesota, now was closely aligned with Minnesota's growing labor movement. It was clear to the CA that the laws that Judge Bardwell interpreted and the control of the National Guard, which had been carefully cultivated, would both be eradicated if the NPL and the WPNPL gained control of state government.1"

On March 24 and 25, 1920, the Minnesota NPL and the WPNPL met in adjoining halls and picked Henrik Shipstead as their candidate to run in the Republican primary in what they felt was going to be the decisive election year for their movement. Republican leaders, fearing that a split vote would doom their own candidates, called an unofficial convention in May and chose state auditor J. A. O. Preus to lead the battle of "Americanism against Socialism." Preus declared adamantly that "Socialism is the issue of the coming campaign. Before Socialism or Communism can commence, property-rights, Christianity and marriage must be destroyed." Preus's entire campaign centered on the danger posed by the Socialists who controlled both the NPL and the WPNPL.2

The CA, however, did not rely on the strength of the Republican candidate to defeat the highly organized, well-financed threat of the NPL. In the fall of 1919 the CA met at the Minneapolis Club to plan strategy in support of Preus. In a later meeting at the Schubert Theater the Minneapolis CA, along with its close allies in St. Paul and Duluth and the Minnesota Employer's Association, established the Minnesota Sound Government Association (SGA). The SGA organized an extensive campaign of "educational work which had for its aim and purposes saving Minnesota from the control of the Socialist leaders of the Nonpartisan League." This effort was "based upon a sincere desire to preserve the American form of government; to uphold the elements of law and order." It opposed any policy that would destroy "the political, moral and business structures that have been erected under our constitution."

The SGA message was carried through 19 issues of its paper, Minnesota Issues, which featured such alarmist headlines as "LET US SAVE MINNESOTA," "WHO WOULD DESTROY OUR GOVERNMENT?" and "CERTAINLY THEY ARE SOCIALISTS!" This bi-monthly publicity "newspaper" was mailed free to every farmer in the state at a total cost of $143,500. The SGA also printed and mailed a variety of anti-NPL pamphlets and supported an extensive speakers bureau for another $82,000. The massive fund-raising efforts were handled by a secret organization, the real power behind the SGA's public officers. In Minneapolis the money was funneled through Francis A. Chamberlain and A. W. Strong, both CA officials. Unofficial treasurer Chamberlain was concurrently the treasurer of the American Committee of Minneapolis, a group that had joined the anti-NPL campaign with its own speakers bureau and pamphlets.3

When the primary votes were tallied on June 21, Preus defeated Shipstead by slightly less than 8,000 votes and actually lost in 54 counties. The SGA pronounced it a "Great Victory over Radicalism." Once again the CA had played a critical role in the political defeat of the NPL, a fact that a friendly Governor was unlikely to forget.4

The SGA continued to publish Minnesota Issues through the 1921 legislative session despite Preus's resounding 415,805 to 281,402 victory over Shipstead in the general election. The continued fear of "Anarchy, revolution, communism and socialism" would help in implementing the SGA's seventh principle, "to correct

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2 Morlan, Political Prairie Fire, 279–280; Preus to W. I. Norton, May 6, 1920, and Preus. keynote speech, June 3, 1920, p. 4, 15, 16; Jacob A. O. Preus and Family Papers, MHS. The CA exerted a powerful influence on the Republican party leadership of the period. E. E. Smith, unofficial "boss" of the party, secretly received $41,000 between 1916 and 1921 from Twin City Rapid Transit Co., a powerful CA member since 1902. H. M. Olmsted, "Twin Cities and the Holding Co.: The Minneapolis Street Railway Story," National Municipal Review, July, 1923, p. 376–380; M. H. Hedges, "Who Corrupts Our Politics?" The Nation, July 19, 1922, p. 66–68. The WPNPL did have connections with the Socialist party. Domestic policies of the two groups were similar; their primary disagreement was over war policy. Morlan, Political Prairie Fire, 262; Nord, "Socialism in One City," 149–159.

3 Senate Special Investigating Committee (SSIC), Report, April 18, 1923, p. 7, 10–13; Legislative Special Committees, MHS; SSIC, testimony, April 1–3, 1923, p. 151, 359–362, 374, 397, 401–402, 406, 500–501, 605, Preus Papers; CA Bulletin, April-May, 1925; Minnesota Issues, Nov. 24, 1920, p. 3, Feb. 15, Mar. 1, 15, 1920, all p. 1; Morlan, Political Prairie Fire, 281; American Committee of Minneapolis, application form and pamphlets in MHS library. See, for example, CCA member Rev. Marion D. Shutter, The Menace of Socialism (Minneapolis: American Committee, [1919]), Minnesota campaign law limited spending of the state central committee of any political party to $10,000. This necessitated separate organizations to funnel campaign funds; the American Committee had close ties with the CA and the Republican party.

4 Legislative Manual, 1921, p. 100–101; Morlan, Political Prairie Fire, 283; Minnesota Issues, Nov. 24, 1920, p. 3.
by established constitutional methods any defects in the administration of our laws." O. P. Briggs also fostered the emerging need for antiradical legislation by reporting "a communist scheme of revolution in this country, outcroppings of which have been noted in this city for a long time" to Preus and Rhinow. To meet this threat of "revolution," the National Guard would have 700 soldiers at the ready on May Day to move on the radicals gathered at the Parade Grounds. The reality of this threat was less important than its impact on a Republican-controlled legislature that had narrowly escaped disaster in the 1920 primary. In response, the 1921 legislature removed the NPL threat by passing a new primary law that barred a potential office-seeker from filing for a primary election if he had opposed the regularly nominated candidate of his party in the last election. This act effectively kept Shipstead or any NPL leader from running in the 1922 Republican primary.30

On the local political front the Minneapolis Republican party, chaired by CCA member Fred H. Carpenter, held its convention at the Minneapolis Auditorium and chose Colonel George Leach to run against popular Socialist ex-mayor Thomas Van Lear in the 1921 Minneapolis mayoral race. When Leach refused to run, Horace Lowry, head of the Minneapolis Streetcar Company and prominent CA member, visited him around midnight and convinced Leach to discuss the election with his boss, CCA member Fred W. Van Dusen. When Van Dusen agreed to pay Leach his insurance company salary while he was mayor, Leach finally acquiesced. Carpenter became Leach's campaign manager and quickly raised $50,000. After losing the primary Leach vilified Van Lear as disloyal and un-American and on June 13 won the general election by 15,000 votes. The CA considered this the final knockout of Socialism and the NPL. The voters had turned back "radicalism tainted with disloyalty." The Minneapolis National Guard and the Minneapolis police force were now headed by the same man, Colonel Leach, whom the CA felt was loyal and indebted to the business community. Although the political victory had assured the Alliance of control of the National Guard, CA military leaders felt that an efficient state constabulary would be able to maintain order better than the Guard's undertrained volunteers.31

IN A SPECIAL MESSAGE to the 1921 legislature Governor Preus opened the CA's long campaign for a state constabulary. A "terrific" wave of crime was sweeping across the nation, and a state constabulary was the only way to deal with it effectively. CA publications supported Preus's efforts to stomp out the new wave of youthful criminals that was attributed to movies, pool halls, and war experience. Preus supported a bill to create a 100-man Department of State Police to act as peace officers. Despite a clause that the force "shall not be employed in strikes arising out of labor controversies between employers and employees," the legislature, probably realizing that labor opposition would doom the bill, ignored Preus's effort. Instead William I. Nolan and George Wicker introduced a bill to create a State Public Safety Commission to co-ordinate the activities of all public peace and prosecuting officers.32

The CA immediately supported the Wicker-Nolan bill as a first step toward a state constabulary, and on March 30 it passed the Senate by a 41 to 22 vote. The Minneapolis Labor Review feared that the measure would "give one man complete control over all the police forces of the state" and mobilized the labor community in a petition drive against the bill. Despite continued support by business leaders, the House defeated


31 Labor Review, June 10, 1921, p. 1; George E. Leach, "The Personal History of Major General C. E. Leach," 30, Leach Papers, MHS; Nord, "Socialism in One City," 167-173; Commercial West, June 18, 1921, Nov. 22, 1919, June 4, 1927, all p. 7; notes regarding pending legislation affecting the National Guard, Dec. 26, 1919, Karrow Papers. CA member Herschel V. Jones founded Commercial West in 1901 and ran it until 1909 when he took over the Minneapolis Journal. CCA member Edwin Mead, Commercial West's next publisher, continued in its founder's spirit.

32 Commercial West, Dec. 18, 1920, Mar. 19, 1921, both p. 8; Monticello Times, Feb. 9, 1922, p. 1; a bill for an Act creating a Department of State Police, [1921?], Preus Papers.
the bill by a close 61 to 53 vote. This was as near as the CA was ever to come to its goal of establishing a state-controlled police force of the constabulary type.23

While the CA efforts to create a state police were stalled, the meat packers' union went out on strike in South St. Paul. Governor Preus called out the National Guard to control the streets in the packing-house district. When the companies used this protection to bring in replacement workers, the state was placed in the "untenable position of taking sides where it professes to be merely maintaining law and order." The use of the National Guard to win the South St. Paul strike was precisely why the CA had supported the Guard and Preus, but it created an unforeseen backlash. The labor bloc on the Minneapolis City Council voted down appropriations for the operation of the Minneapolis Armory. Without the appropriation the Armory would have to close, leaving Minneapolis without a base for its National Guard. Generals Rhinow and Harrison and Mayor Leach went to the CA with an emergency proposition. The Alliance, recognizing "the danger to this community if it were left without military protection in case of need," immediately raised $4,000 which it paid into the mayor's contingency fund, thereby saving the city from the council's "Communist conspiracy."24

O. P. Briggs was still lobbying for a state constabulary two years later. He stated that "the reason labor unions oppose it is apparent. Labor does not want to obey any laws during periods of strikes. The strike of a few years ago in the South St. Paul packing industries tended to prove this fact. The cost to the state in calling out the militia to patrol the district of the strikers showed the need of adopting a state constabulary."25

Governor Preus also continued to press for a state police. In the summer of 1922 he appointed a crime commission to "ascertain the needs of the state for better methods of bringing criminals to justice" and to make recommendations to the 1923 legislature. In his opening remarks the governor stated that "we must have some central bureau of identification as well as a state police system." The commission recommended both the establishment of a state constabulary and a Bureau of Criminal Records and Criminal Investigation. Commercial West rallied in support of measures

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24 Minneapolis Journal, Dec. 7, 8, 1921, p. 1; George M. Lawson to Leslie Sinton, Jan. 7, 1922, CLU Papers; American Civil Liberties Union to Preus, Jan. 12, 1922, Governors' Records, MHS; Minnesota Daily Star (Minneapolis), Sept. 13, 1922, p. 1; CA Bulletin, April, 1924.
that were needed to check the "bandit warfare, which is more or less rampant in the larger business centers." The state "has no more important business on hand today than to establish a state constabulary." Despite these intensive efforts the 1923 legislation never reached a vote in either the Senate or the House. Labor opposition to a state police had again triumphed.  

Overcoming this opposition was the CA's critical problem. In reality it was highly unlikely that any argument or subterfuge would sway labor concerns that "state constabularies are a menace wherever they are." CA diatribes against crime were considered "a cloak to cover the real purpose and use of a state police." Advocates recognized this political reality and changed their strategy: they backed a bill in the 1925 legislature (submitted by Highway Commissioner Charles M. Babcock) to create a Highway Patrol with powers restricted to enforcement of traffic laws. "But organized labor fears," Commercial West pointed out, "and probably with reason, that a highway police would be the first step toward a state constabulary with much fuller powers. And it ought to be." The Minnesota Federation of Labor recognized "sooner or later that some police power [had to] be given to our highway department" and that the Babcock bill "would take away a lot of propaganda of those interested in a state constabulary." Despite fears that conservatives would later try to expand the powers of the highway police, the federation finally decided to support the bill. Labor senators ignored this, however, and defeated the bill by one vote. 

IN ORDER to utilize effectively the military and police forces under its influence and to maintain a strong political organization, the CA maintained a thorough and far-ranging intelligence service. During World War I the Civic and Commerce Association had formed the Minneapolis Division of the American Protective League to investigate radicals, traitors, and labor unionists, but on January 31, 1919, the American Protective League went out of existence. Within two weeks intelligence agents were requested to work for a new organization, the A-P-L. This postwar version was still run by Chief Charles G. Davis under the direction of Herbert M. Gardner at the CCA. A-P-L agents were to watch for bootlegging, sedition, and, more importantly, "The Red Radicals of Minneapolis." The CCA depended on these agents "to report the striking of the match that might start the bonfire of revolution."  

A second intelligence organization, the Committee of Thirteen Inc., was also formed in 1919 under the direction of Chief Davis and the CCA. Its purpose was "to promote a thorough understanding of and sympathetic attitude toward American laws and institutions and general obedience to law." Its agents were to detect disobedience and report the facts to public officials. Although this committee purported to be a more public side of the CCA intelligence apparatus, the composition of its board—important business and community leaders such as George D. Dayton, former CA president Edmund J. Phelps, and District Court Judge Edward F. Waite—remained a carefully guarded secret. Both organizations co-operated with various local law enforcement agencies. Davis, although no longer officially affiliated with the Department of Justice, was still in close communication with T. E. Campbell, special agent in charge of the Minneapolis office of the Bureau of Investigation. The mayor conferred legitimate governmental authority on the agents by appointing them to a special police brigade headed by Chief Davis. Co-operation with the Hennepin County sheriff's department was facilitated in May, 1920. The incumbent sheriff was forced to resign in the middle of a liquor-running scandal, and the CA, using its considerable influence on the county commissioners, managed to have Earle Brown, millionaire A-P-L agent and chairman of the Committee of Thirteen finance and membership committee, appointed to the office. By 1920 the CCA's intelligence network—completely reorganized, fully staffed, and financed—had governmental authority and was well connected with all other law enforcement agencies. Every radical meeting, whether of Socialists organizing unions or Bolsheviks plotting revolution, would be closely watched.  

The A-P-L efforts were supplemented statewide by the military intelligence unit of the National Guard. Its intelligence officers had been on duty in South St. Paul during the 1922 strike. When 7,000 railroad workers quit work in support of a nationwide strike in July, 1922, Minnesota Crime Commission, Report, Jan., 1923, p. 5, 6, 17. Governors' Records; Commercial West, Dec. 9, 1922, p. 8. Jan. 6, 1923, p. 7. No state police bill was introduced in 1923; a bill to create a Bureau of Crime Prevention and Identification was introduced but no action was taken; Senate Journal, 1923, p. 400.

Speech by E. G. Hall, June 21, 1922, p. 7, 10, copy in MHS library; Commercial West, April 11, Oct. 17, 1925, both p. 8; Minnesota State Federation of Labor, Minutes, Feb. 11, 1925, p. 1–3, CLU Papers; Senate Journal, 1925, p. 914. Section 33 of Senate File 776 containing provisions for a highway patrol was defeated 29 to 28 on April 3, 1925.  


Minnesota Daily Star, Mar. 7, 15, 1923, both p. 1; Davis to members, April 10, 1919; [Bovey?] to Gardner, April 17, 1919; Davis to Gardner, May 17, 1919; H. M. G[ardner] to Davis, May 20, 1919; Committee of Thirteen Board of Directors list; and T. E. Campbell to Davis, Sept. 14, 1919—all in WRC Records; Minneapolis Journal, May 14, 1920, p. 1; Labor Review, May 21, 1920, p. 2. 

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1922, Adjutant General Rhinow dispatched 7 to 10 intelligence agents to watch picketers and determine if strikers were turning violent. Their reports were forwarded to the governor. With the command structure of the National Guard in friendly hands and since A-P-L agent Robert G. Watts served as one of Rhinow's operatives, it is quite likely that the CA was also informed. The Minneapolis Police Department, Hennepin County Sheriff Brown, and the National Guard would all have adequate warning if they were needed to maintain law and order.

In 1923 the CA's own intelligence organization suffered a major setback. Mayor Leach had shocked the Alliance by suddenly favoring the collective bargaining power of unions. In an attempt to discredit the Leach administration, Charles Davis instigated an investigation that led to a grand jury indictment of Police Chief A. C. Jenson for willful neglect of official duty. Leach immediately removed Davis's legal authority as a special police officer. When all 46 of Davis's agents turned in their badges in protest, the mayor gladly accepted the resignations and claimed sarcastically that "Minneapolis need have no fear" at losing these officers. Davis vowed that his organization would continue to function just as it had, but the CA's intelligence arm was now without legal authority.

The activities of the A-P-L had always been supplemented by the numerous private detective firms that flourished during the 1920s. Shortly after the A-P-L agents lost their police badges, advertisements for locomotive repairmen appeared in daily papers. The job applicants went to Lloyd M. MacAloon's private detective office and were offered double the normal wages if they would keep their "eyes and ears open" and report any conversations about unions or radicals. This method of finding and placing informants, however, was both haphazard and inefficient. In 1926 the CA hired MacAloon as its field commissioner and manager of the Free Employment Service. This office placed 36,372 unemployed men in open-shop firms throughout the city in 1929; it was a perfect conduit through which information could flow. With the demise of Davis's intelligence operations in 1930, MacAloon's Special Service assumed surveillance of union and radical meetings that took place outside the shop. The CA had finally completed the transition from its quasi-governmental intelligence activities of World War I to an in-house Special Service whose activities were much more easily concealed.

Despite the CA intelligence network's organizational and operational success, a serious threat to its defense system had gone undetected—namely, the Minneapolis police force. In 1927 a Hennepin County grand jury was ordered to investigate a series of eight "bombing outrages." There had been four theater bombings in less than a year and each, the CA pointed out in a weekly bulletin, was on the "unfair" list of the Motion Picture Operators Union. The CA demanded that the responsible parties "be apprehended and properly punished immediately." The Labor Review suggested that the circumstances were highly suspicious and that the bombings were clearly a CA frameup. The CCA dominated the grand jury: it was empowered by CCA Judge Bardwell, run by CCA member and foreman Albert M. Slocum, and composed largely of Alliance members, who believed implicitly in the CA version of the story. This was not a coincidence. The grand jurors were selected at random from a short list of less than 200 people whose names were personally picked by the district court judges; in the 1920s CCA members or their wives predominated. When labor complained about less than five percent representation, Judge Horace D. Dickinson commented "We put men of affairs on the grand juries." Hennepin County grand juries of the era were essentially creatures of the CA.
Although the grand jury was unable to prove that unions were responsible for the bombings, it did discover "that almost the entire police department in Minneapolis is an organized labor union, being affiliated with or a branch of the American Federation of Labor." The CA was appalled. While the grand jury suggested that "the police department should be unhampered by alliances with any special interests or organizations," the CA pointed out that the oath taken by AFL members—"that I will obey the rules and regulations of this Central Labor Union"—was "in direct conflict with the oath which a policeman takes as a peace officer." In a special pamphlet the CA accused the police of being in the control of the AFL and demanded that "our public servants be deunionized." Bombings, strikes, violence, and intimidation were all laid at the doorstep of this un-American alliance. The CA tried to rekindle the issue in its May-June, 1927, Bulletin, but the uproar died down without action.²⁴

In September, 1927, dynamite bombings at the Paramount Film Exchange and the New Logan Theater and a series of stench bombings in various theaters gave the Alliance ammunition to reopen the police union controversy. A new Hennepin County grand jury, empowered by CCA Judge Mathias Baldwin and run by CCA member James J. Fehr, denounced the police union. In its November 7, 1927, report the grand jury urgently recommended "that those in authority forthwith take such measures as will abolish, and in the future prohibit, membership of any member of the Police Force in any union."²⁵

The CA publicized the report in a double-length issue of its Bulletin, which included such leads as "How can a Policeman serve two masters?" and "Lawlessness and Disorder Here Alarming" and concluded "It is up to you, the people! What are you going to do?" O. P. Briggs informed Governor Theodore Christianson, Jr., of the problem and orchestrated a flood of delegations, petitions, and letters to Mayor Leach, who requested a full explanation of the relationship between the police and the city's Central Labor Union (CLU). Desperately trying to stem the tide of public opinion, union leadership wrote a lengthy reply to the mayor, laying out the many strike-related actions taken by the police and stating quite simply that "the police oath is our only oath." The public furor continued unabated until the Police Officers Union finally caved in on December 17, 1927, and severed its connection with the labor movement. After months of vilifying the police, the CA was now very gratified that this "splendid body of men—none finer" had deunionized.²⁶

While the theater strike was dominating the newspapers, a long, bitter strike at the Brooks Brothers Parlor Furniture Company, which would have a far greater effect on the struggle between the CA and orga-

²⁴ Minneapolis Journal, Mar. 4, 1927, p. 1; Grand Jury Report, Mar. 4, 1927; CA Bulletin, May-June, 1927. It is unlikely that the well-informed CA did not realize until 1927 the affiliation of the Minneapolis police with the Central Labor Union. This affiliation began in 1917, and Mayor Leach, who was aware of it in 1921, undoubtedly notified his supporters, the CA. The role of the city police in opposing all state police bills and Mayor Leach's gradual shift of allegiance toward labor are more likely reasons for this 1927 attack on the police union.

²⁵ CA Bulletin, Nov., 1927; Labor Review, Oct. 14, 1927, p. 1. A union member was acquitted in one gas attack. Labor implicated the CA in the New Logan bombing, which took place when a settlement of the strike was imminent. Mayor Leach and the City Council offered to mediate the controversy but a solution satisfactory to both sides was reached on Oct. 26, 1927. The Labor Review reported that the CA had offered its services to the theater owners and had been turned down. Labor Review, Oct. 28, Nov. 11, 1927, both p. 1; Excerpt from Grand Jury Report to Judge Baldwin, Nov. 7, 1927, CA Records; Minneapolis Journal, Nov. 14, 1927, p. 11.

nized labor, was moving into the courts. Following the pattern that he had used since the Wonderland court case, CA lawyer Chase obtained an injunction in Hennepin County District Court that prohibited all picketing. In response, the CLU called a mass meeting on October 21, 1927, to launch an anti-injunction campaign. “Either the labor injunction or trade unions must go,” labor pronounced. The Wonderland case, which had dominated the Minneapolis labor battle for six years, was now to be challenged.

The CA had nothing to fear from the judicial system, but on the political front the Minnesota Farmer Labor Coalition (comprised of the NPL and WPNPL) had had its one startling success, finally electing Henrik Shipstead to the U.S. Senate in 1922. It was Shipstead who led the battle against the labor injunction. In 1927 he introduced a one-paragraph amendment to the laws relating to the judiciary, which would allow equity courts to protect only property that was “tangible and transferable.” Chase responded that “the real purpose of this legislation is to give the lawless and irresponsible element of organized labor... full sway in labor disturbances; including mass picketing, the use of the primary boycott, and assaults upon and intimidation of those desiring to work.” In Washington the Senate Judiciary Committee requested the complete court record of the Wonderland case as an example of the unwarranted use of the injunction. James A. Emery of the National Association of Manufacturers represented the CA in Washington. He argued that the bill would somehow give labor organizations “the right to issue injunctions of their own.” When the legislation failed, Shipstead introduced a similar measure in the 71st Congress that was restricted to injunctions that “grow out of a labor dispute.” The CA adopted a resolution opposing it and urged all members to contact Minnesota’s senators. The Shipstead bill, members were informed, would curb the power of the courts to issue injunctions and invalidate the use of individual employment contracts. Emery enjoined the Senate Judiciary Committee that the bill was “arbitrarily contrary to the facts of our social and industrial life, insidiously and gratuitously discriminating and in violent conflict with the public policy of the people of the U.S., declared in the constitution.” In killing the legislation, the committee majority reported that the bill “would be as well a denial of constitutional liberty and property without due process.” The CA’s most vital weapon, the labor injunction, was temporarily safe.

In Minnesota, St. Paul labor advocates introduced a diluted anti-injunction bill in the 1929 session of the House, seeking only to limit the practice of restraining orders being issued pending future hearings. The Minnesota Employer’s Association stated in a flyer that the bill would allow damage to property to be “done and consummated before notice could be given and a hearing held” and suggested that it was “part of a nationwide plan of organized labor.” Attorney Chase argued before a Senate committee that “the sole object of this bill is to permit force, violation and intimidation to continue until an injunction application is heard.” The bill passed both chambers unanimously after it was amended to allow restraining orders without hearings upon a proper showing of violence. Although the first anti-injunction bill was signed into law by Governor Christianson, the business community had rendered it totally ineffective.

BY THE END of the decade the CA was also making some progress in its long campaign for a state constabulary. Although state police bills continued to fail, the 1927 legislature and the governor could not totally ignore the furor that followed the murder of a Minneapolis policeman by a paroled criminal. Public excitement over the “crime wave” was kept alive by Herschel V. Jones, CA member and publisher of the Minneapolis
In reaction, Governor Christianson created another crime commission that recommended the formation of a Central Bureau of Law Enforcement that did “not in any manner involve the creation of a State Constabulary.” House File 1158, to create a Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, was passed overwhelmingly by both houses in April of 1927. The bureau, limited to 12 employees, was to co-ordinate the work of peace officers and promote greater efficiency in detecting and apprehending criminals. Although the law was not an immediate threat to labor, the appointment of longtime CA friend Rhinow as superintendent and the very existence of a state law enforcement body ensured a base for the CA’s future campaigns.

In 1929 the legislature also created a statewide law enforcement body. After a decade of lobbying by the CA, Governor Christianson approved House File 447 on April 26 creating the State Highway Patrol. In order to get through the House on a close 69 to 60 vote, however, the bill limited the force to 35 men and only allowed them to enforce “laws relating to use and operation of motor vehicles as on the trunk highways. The patrol had the power of peace officers for this purpose only.” Although this compromise destroyed the impact of the patrol, the CA considered it a first step toward a state constabulary and was overjoyed at the appointment of Hennepin County Sheriff Brown as chief.

On August 9, 1929, the patrol immediately captured the imagination of the state when Chief Brown and Patrolman Mike Auspos seized three bank robbers. Newspapers statewide praised Brown and called for a state constabulary headed by him. Publisher Jones wrote that “this outstanding deed was the one thing...”

needed to 'sell' the people of Minnesota the plan for a State police force.' Now "the only logical thing is to expand [the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension] and combine it with the patrol in a genuine State police department." A state constabulary finally appeared within easy reach of the CA.41

THE CITIZEN'S ALLIANCE, however, would have no defense against the Great Depression of the 1930s and the drastic political changes that were to follow. The election of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the enactment of New Deal programs, and the rise of the Farmer-Labor party under the leadership of Governor Floyd B. Olson would change the political atmosphere of the United States and Minnesota and gradually erode the CA's law-and-order program.

In 1932 the CA was devastated when the Norris-LaGuardia anti-injunction bill (a later version of the shipstead bill) became federal law. The measure prohibited all U.S. courts from issuing injunctions that forbade "giving publicity to the existence of, or the facts involved in, any labor dispute, whether by advertising, speaking, patrolling or by any other method not involving fraud or violence" or "assembling peaceably to act or to organize to act in promotion of their interests in a labor dispute." The landmark Wonderland Theatre case, which had enabled the CA to suppress union picketing and the unfair list, had been struck down by the U.S. government.42

In Minnesota the fabric of the CA's law enforcement network also deteriorated. In 1931 Governor Christianson supported the idea of enlarged and combined agencies under his control and created yet another crime commission to develop recommendations for the 1931 legislature. Ironically, the state constabulary idea was opposed by the now-famous highway patrol chief, Earle Brown, who apparently feared losing control of his privately trained force. The commission recommended increasing the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to at least 50 men with statewide powers and enlarging the Highway Patrol to 100 men and extending its authority to cover all felonies. Both agencies would be prohibited from any interference in strikes and lockouts arising from labor disputes. When these recommendations finally became law, the CA's long struggle for a state constabulary was terminally frustrated. The Alliance, however, was never without the state's ultimate law-enforcing power, the National Guard. Even when the governorship was captured by the Farmer-Labor party and, years later, by the Democratic-Farmer-Labor party, the National Guard continued to be an effective force in protecting private property and maintaining law and order.43

Only on the local front would the CA's defense system remain intact after 1932. The destruction of the Minneapolis police force's affiliation with the American Federation of Labor was never again challenged, and when violence erupted during the 1934 trucker's strike, it was the Minneapolis police who joined the CA to battle labor unionists in the streets. The most durable of the Citizen's Alliance defense agencies, however, was Lloyd MacAlloon's Special Service. The transition from governmental authority to a private intelligence operation had allowed the CA's spy service to weather the political storm and emerge from the 1930s as an industrial intelligence service, Associated Industries.

In 1929, however, with the clouds of political change still on the horizon, the CA celebrated the end of a remarkably successful decade. Through its campaign for law and order, initiated in front of the Wonderland Theatre in 1917, the Alliance had gained control over the Minnesota National Guard, established and effectively utilized the labor injunction, eliminated the political threat of the WPPL and the NPL, deunionized the Minneapolis police, maintained an effective intelligence service, and helped establish a Highway Patrol and Bureau of Criminal Apprehension headed by men it could trust. The result of these accomplishments was exactly what the CA had intended: Minneapolis remained an open-shop city.

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43 Christianson to Ed. E. Sheasgreen, Aug. 23, 1930, Governors' Records; Minneapolis Tribune, St. Paul Pioneer Press, and Minneapolis Journal, all Dec. 19, 1930, p. 1; Minnesota Statutes, Chap. 13, Sec. 2554, sub. 18(a) and Chap. A, Sec. 9950-6 & 7.

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