

It Took a Tenants' Movement:
Tenants and the Making of Habitations Jeanne-Mance (1959-1994)

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Abstract

This thesis demonstrates how public housing tenants in Habitations Jeanne-Mance (HJM) used their collective agency to challenge governance power within HJM and Montreal from 1959 to 1994. Written from the perspective of tenants and positioned in relation to urban governance studies on public housing within human geography, which consistently undervalue the agency of tenants to shape or challenge governance structures, this history of the tenants' movement within HJM critiques this prevailing view in documenting how tenants governed from below in altering the historical trajectory of their housing project. Framing these tenant struggles historically in relation to governance within a from below dialectical approach grounded within a Gramscian reading of "war of position," I detail how tenants constructed HJM as a space of resistance to elite power and governance. In constructing this space of resistance, I contend the tenants alone fundamentally shaped the history of HJM as a housing project. Situating their movements within the Left and citywide housing movements in Montreal from the 1960s to the 1990s, HJM for tenants from this era became the modality in which these tenants lived their politics.

Incorporating class-based politics within the shifting Quebec nationalist positions into their struggles that shaped the institutions tenants established within HJM and their neighbourhood, the tenants' movement was sustained by the formation of a white Québécois political bloc within the tenants association. With these foundations, tenants challenged local elite political power over the rental contract in demanding recognition in the 1960s; formed the tenants association in the 1970s; campaigned for tenants' management in the 1980s; and defeated social mix redevelopment plans in the 1990s. Through these struggles, tenants changed how the political class within Montreal historically understood HJM and culminated in the tenants making HJM a present-day outlier within postwar era public housing history in North America.

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Acknowledgements

Four years ago, if someone had told me that I would go on to research and write an urban history focused thesis for a graduate degree of a tenants' movement that transpired across multiple decades within one public housing project in Montreal, Quebec, situated on unceded and colonized Kanien'keha:ka (Mohawk) territory, I would have probably told the person that I doubt I would have been qualified to take on such a task. Yet the story that I will attempt to tell in the following pages is concerned with public housing tenants and the history they collectively lived for over thirty years within Habitations Jeanne-Mance, the now oldest public housing project that is still standing in Canada.

Now about four year on—and close to one-hundred visits later to the Montreal city archives—I would like to thank the tenants, workers, priests, nuns, social activists, social workers, students, labour unionists, and even former administrators of Habitations Jeanne-Mance who both lived and interacted within a city from 1959 to 1994 that I have personally had a hard time trying to imagine. It is because of these numerous unnamed people whose lives this story is ultimately about that has made this project the most rewarding and personal fulfilling journey that I have ever tried and successfully finished. The journeys I took with the people who fill these pages will stay with me for the rest of my life.

Over the these rather long four years, countless individuals and friends have helped me along the way in my travels within academia. This usually goes without saying—especially if you knew me before Montreal—but I would not have gone to Concordia without the continued guidance of Elvin Wyly and Trevor Barnes at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, British Columbia. In 2013, at the yearly undergraduate geography gala, I told Trevor that I was rejected from the two graduate programs that I had applied to for graduate studies. Having spent

the previous four days thinking about what I was going to do with my life, I told Trevor over dinner and geography trivia that I wanted to keep on going down the academic path, wherever it may happen to lead. So that's how I met Ted Rutland, his former student and my eventual supervisor. So thanks, Ted, for thinking that I had some kind of academic talent. What I ended up accomplishing in the following pages has fundamentally changed my life and I must, above all, thank you for the opportunity. I must also thank Norma Rantisi, who served as my unofficial co-supervisor and fellow Midwesterner while in Montreal. Without Norma answering my emails— which were mostly about life and not this thesis—most of the following pages may not have seen the light of day.

Having arrived in Montreal in 2013 I found Concordia to be a fascinating experience in actively being connected within a department that was more or less—and sometimes literally—in the process of being constructed. From those early days the people who have been with me since the beginning have been Nick Revington, Trevor Smith, and Cassandra Lamontagne. Without the three of you, I'm not sure I would have survived the past few years.

According to quacks on TV, the older you get, the more you are supposed to realize your quirks and accept them for what they truly are. You are also supposed to become overly sentimental. While I think I have been the overly sentimental type since birth, one of the oddities of mine has to do with making things as challenging and as difficult as possible. Without this challenge, I have to say that I have the tendency to become rather bored. How I went about avoiding an onset of boredom for this research was to delve into volumes of archival materials written in a language I do not really know or understand. This meant I required some help along the way and without the translating efforts of Stephanie Morán, who translated the tenant materials from 1974 to 1985 in the summer of 2014, this thesis probably would not have been

possible. Stephanie also helped the research in conducting a tenant interview in Spanish—yet another language I can barely speak. In the massive undertaking that became the 1960s archival material—which I only discovered after my proposal defense in 2015—Genevieve Nadeau-Bonin graciously translated a handwritten letter I was unable to read by the tenants that advocated for a children’s playground space in the late 1960s. While this effort by both the tenants and Genevieve didn’t make it into the final draft, Genevieve translated the first organized collective demand by the tenants to the city of Montreal that led to the tenants establishing Loisirs Saint Jacques, an organization that still exists today to serve the children and youth of Habitations Jeanne-Mance.

Continuing along the sentimental path, I would also like to especially thank Simon Vickers and Akira Drake-Rodriguez for being my co-conspirators for this thesis. Simon and I research the same city, the same time period, and more or less have the same historical interests. Since Simon is an urban historian this must mean we study the same subfield within urban history. In the end, I’m not entirely sure. Having one foot in geography and another in history has been an odd experience, but Simon has helped me firmly plant my left foot into the historical cement. Simon also helped me figure out what “locataire” meant in French in his graduate office in the Concordia History department in 2013. As I said in the beginning, I really didn’t know the French language at all when I started this journey.

Akira, on the other hand, helped me secure my geographical foundation—even if she likes to claim that she isn’t a geographer. Through the never-ending help, support, and connections of Elvin Wyly, I was given Akira’s email in 2014 and proceeded to pitch her my ideas about organizing a social movements from below session at the AAG in Chicago in 2015. Being on the geography side, Akira helped me find a comrade of sorts in that we also write about

public housing, public housing tenants, and public housing history. Much like urban history, historical accounts of public housing constitute a rather small field, so it was rather a privilege for me find someone out there in this vast academic ocean who could relate to my topic in many different shapes and forms. Otherwise the daily routine of an urban historian, from my experience, is one in which you interact with ghosts while dancing to the past rhythms of time in the basement of a building.

Since this thesis took forever and spans a few years, another group individuals I must thank are those compassionate souls in Montreal who helped me survive this process. Those unfortunate beings are Jeremy Tessier, Thomas James Radcliffe, Emory Shaw, Natalia Izzo Manzano, Brett Hudson, Nil Alt, Jasmine Eftekhari, Mohammad Manshaei, Noah Cannon, Carolina Cruz, Muneesha Punni, and Jim Matthews and Barbara Patterson. For friends from my Vancouver years, their near constant presence in my life still remains—regardless of whether it has only been through texting, phone calls, Facebook, and WhatsApp messages. Without Kevin Chan, Victor Ngo, Iain Majoribanks, Tomi Ihalan, Komal Rizvi, Mischa Markortoff, Brendan Dawe, Michael Kushnir, Matthew Naylor, Isabel Ferarass, Julia Hansen, and Sarah Hansen, I could not have made it through these years without your support.

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north of the border has now been a few years ago, living in Montreal has never truly been the same. More so than the contents of this thesis, the three of you alone and our journeys together in these past four years have made this thesis both memorable, exciting, and life defining. Without your continued love and support regarding anything that I have tried to attempt or accomplish in my life, none of what follows would have been possible.

This thesis is dedicated to the loving memory of Leona Heins, Catherine Nettling, and Henry
“Hank” Nettling

Abbreviation of Terms

(CAP) Comité action politique
(CHJM) Corporation d'habitations Jeanne-Mance
(CMHC) Canada Housing Mortgage Corporation
(CO) Conseil des œuvres des Montréal
(Comité) Comité des Citoyens des Habitations Jeanne-Mance
(CSN) Confédération des syndicats nationaux
(FLQ) Front de libération du Québec
(FRAP) Front d'action politique
(FRAPRU) Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain
(FTQ) Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec
(HOPE VI) Homeownership Opportunities for Everyone
(HJM) Habitations Jeanne-Mance
(MCM) Montreal Citizens' Movement
(MSJ) Mouvement pour justice sociale
(MSS) Montreal Social Service Agencies
(NFB) National Film Board of Canada
(OMHM) Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal
(PRSU) Projet de réaménagement social et urbain
(PQ) Parti Québécois
(SHQ) Société d'habitation du Québec
(SJM) Solidarité Jeanne-Mance
(UQAM) Université de Québec à Montréal

“La plainte de Jo-Crisse”

Si vous êtes petit salarié
Vous n’avez pas fini d’chiâler
Venez, on vous offre une chance
Venez aux Habitations Jeanne-Mance
Les loyers sont très modiques
Les avantages nombreux
Surtout qu’ils ne sont pas fixes

Si vous gagnez beaucoup ou peu
Attention au temps supplémentaire
Ou si un des enfants veut aider
Quelque soit son salaire
On vous aidera à vous enferrer

Si vous gardez votre vieille mère
On vous le fait payer cher
D’avoir de l’amour filial
Payez un peu plus c’est fatal
Mais on n’a pas pensé à tout
J’en connais qui bouche les trous
En s’y prenant d’une drôle de façon
Mesdames tous les moyens sont bons
Personne ne peut contrôler
L’argent peut s’accumuler
Aucun employeur ni compagnie
Peut dire que vous gagnez ceci

Si nous pouvons faire fortune
Et donner à manger aux enfants
Grignotons contre l’infortune
Et réchapons un peu d’argent
Et pourquoi pas, tout nous y incite

Si vous gagnez un peu de supplément
Augmenté vous êtes immédiatement
Allons vite aux gains illicites
Logements de coût modique
Allons ne me faites pas rire
Car qui s’y frotte s’y pique
Et votre situation empire

Jo-Crisse
Tenant of Habitations Jeanne-Mance

Introduction

In the Shadows of the Tower Block

“There are dark shadows on the earth, but its lights are stronger in the contrast.”¹

Charles Dickens, *The Pickwick Papers*

In 2011, Montreal Mayor Gerald Tremblay announced a new renovation program for Habitations Jeanne-Mance (HJM), the city’s first public housing project that opened in 1959 during construction and finished in 1961. In contrast to the neoliberal trajectories within Canada and the United States, the announcement, on the fiftieth anniversary year of the housing project, was not a precursor to the displacement of the tenants who lived in the community with a proposal to ‘socially mix’ the rapidly gentrifying neighbourhood of Saint Jacques. Instead of connecting with the neoliberal policies of the times in North America by proclaiming the end of public housing, Tremblay announced a new era of renovations of the existing housing stock for HJM and the tenants who lived there. Calling HJM an “example of success” in integrating low-income residents into the city with a population now consisting of residents from 70 different countries, Tremblay went even further in suggesting the project had worked to challenge the stigmatization of living in public housing in Montreal. “They said that [the city] had ghettoized the people, that we put isolated people into that category. The challenge was to change this perception.” In both acknowledging the role of the city of Montreal in ‘ghettoizing’ marginalized residents within the

¹ Charles Dickens, *The Pickwick Papers*, ed. James Kinsley (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986), 896.

city and to refer to HJM in a positive light, Tremblay became the first mayor in the city's history to publicly support the project.²

The shift in tone by Tremblay was rather noteworthy due to the historic symbolism of HJM as both a project and for the development of social housing in Montreal since the 1950s. Regardless of the party in power at city hall in the fifty years prior, the political class in Montreal had been historically antagonist to HJM, and sought to undermine the project from the moment of its conception in 1954.³ With the city of Montreal functioning as the landlord of the tenants within HJM due to the Dozois Plan of 1957, neither Jean Drapeau and his populist conservatism from 1961 to 1986, the social democracy of Jean Doré and Montreal Citizens' Movement from 1986 to 1994, or Pierre Bourque and the centre-right Vision Montréal from 1994 to 2001 believed HJM represented a project that was a positive influence on the city. In contrast to the statement by Tremblay, the past leadership of the city had been united in speaking about HJM within a metaphoric image of 'failure' to advance differing political agendas regarding social housing within Montreal.⁴ With Tremblay publicly rebuking this longstanding public narrative of HJM, something, it appears, must have altered the perception of HJM within the corridors of power within city hall.

² Louise Leduc, "Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance se Refont une Beauté," *La Presse* (Montréal, QC), May, 27, 2011.

³ Marc H. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance: Un Projet Social au Centre-Ville* (Montréal: Éditions Saint-Martin, 1995).

⁴ Drapeau associated HJM housing projects with communism, calling it a "communist measure." "Dozois Plan to 'Demolish the Slums'—Drapeau Plan to 'Demolish Dozois,'" *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), March 7, 1957. Continuing on the same theme, Jean Doré, mayor and leader of the centre-left Montreal Citizens' Movement (MCM) increasingly used HJM in the 1980s as an image of never-again. "We must not build a Jeanne Mance project once again, that's for sure." David Wimhurst, "How Not to Run Public Housing," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), January 18, 1984. Pierre Bourque, a neoliberal conservative who followed Doré and preceded Tremblay as mayor, had no apparent thoughts on HJM as he generally ignored low-income and working class communities within the city. Bourque cared so little that during his reelection campaign in 1998, he voluntarily lived with a family for one night in Côte des Neiges to demonstrate his commitment to marginalized and racialized working class Montrealers. Michele Lalonde, "Grown-up Mohammed Looking to Reconnect with his Honorary Grandpa, Former Mayor Pierre Bourque," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), April 8, 2016.

Rather predictably, the public relations shift regarding HJM as a project by the city was not reflected within the press reports by the media. In breaking with tradition in how the local media had covered HJM from 1966 to 1994, journalists at the press conference never bothered to interview tenants who may have been present for the announcement. If local reporters had done so, the politics behind the decision for renovating and not demolishing HJM might have been shown in a different light. For the image of HJM as a ‘success’ for the city of Montreal did not originate from the actions of city hall or the housing authority, but from the collective action of tenants within HJM who demanded to be heard and respected in waging a decades-long political struggle against the city and the Corporation d’habitations Jeanne-Mance (CHJM) to achieve a modicum of political rights denied to them from the very beginning of the housing project. Without this struggle by the tenants against the systemic and institutional neglect from the city, the press conference by Tremblay and the history of HJM would have been entirely different.

This omission of the tenants’ influence in altering the history of HJM, of course, was not surprising. Public housing projects in North America are rarely understood as monuments of achievement worth repeating; and, as a result, tenants’ own unique histories of challenging governance structures and political power within their communities is routinely erased from the public discourse.⁵ Systemically marginalized by governance and public discourses on poverty, public housing, and welfare, efforts by tenants to organize across North America to alter their own conditions and demand for political rights and power, have either gone unnoticed or unrecognized by both the media and academia.⁶ With the statement by Tremblay, however, HJM was

⁵ Edward G. Goetz, *New Deal Ruins: Race, Economic Justice, and Public Housing Policy*. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013).

⁶ Jason Hackworth and Abigail Moriah. “Neoliberalism, Contingency and Urban Policy: The Case of Social Housing in Ontario.” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30, no. 3 (2006): 510-527; Jason Hackworth, “Public Housing and the Rescaling of Regulation in the USA.” *Environment and Planning A* 35, 3

acknowledged as a partial outlier to the history of public housing in North America. How HJM, of course, became an unlikely exception to the rule is a curious development within the history of public housing within Montreal and Quebec. For in the beginning, HJM represented everything that was perceived to be wrong with public housing from the modernist-planning era of the 1950s.

Conceived within the era of modernist planning and urban slum clearance, the Dozois Plan of 1957, an agreement between the city of Montreal and the federal government of Canada through the Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC), led to the construction of HJM in 1958 and its partial opening in 1959. Once all of the residents had completely moved into HJM by 1961, the project became the first large-scale public housing complex in Quebec, and the second in Canada after Regent Park in Toronto. Originally understood by elites in the city as a project to “reeducate” working class ‘slum dwellers,’ the clean and roomy apartments of HJM offered modern apartments for residents in a paternalistic and institutionally oppressive governance structure.⁷ The first tenants of HJM were given very few rights with no political representation within the rental contract or institutional structure of CHJM. Not allowed to organize a tenants’ committee or express their collective views to their landlord, the governance structure of the Dozois Plan reiterated the common-held view by federal and local elites across Canada during the postwar period in not considering public housing tenants to be people. As Émile Desorcy, the second president of CHJM from 1959 to 1985, said of the tenants and their ability to organize in

(2003): 531-550; Jason Hackworth, *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology, and Development in American Urbanism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007).

⁷ Dusty Vineburg, “New Homes Replace Slums: Dozois Plan Chief Allays Suspicions of Future Tenants,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), August 15, 1959.

1969: HJM tenants were “too dumb and uneducated” to even imagine political or collective self-realization as human beings.⁸

In becoming a stigmatized space from the actions of the elites within the city, HJM was consistently understood and depicted as a ‘failed’ public housing project by the media and the political and intellectual class of Montreal, mirroring the then-nascent but soon hegemonic global view on public housing from Jane Jacobs to Oscar Newman and Martin Jencks on the ‘projects’ of modernism. For HJM, an early representation of its failure appeared in *Little Burgundy*, the 1968 National Film Board of Canada (NFB) documentary on the southwest Montreal neighbourhood of Little Burgundy. The NFB film, though focused on Little Burgundy, also documented the development of HJM under the authority of the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ), the Quebec public housing authority, and the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM), the municipal public housing authority of Montreal in 1968. Depicting HJM as a space of authoritarianism and constant surveillance where maintenance workers spied on residents, *Little Burgundy* critiqued the overall conditions within HJM to explain to the audience that public housing and public housing design could be different and more humane in future projects.

The critique embodied in *Little Burgundy* particularly focused on the institutional governance structure of HJM and its month-to-month lease-tenure, where any signs or hints of political organizing or deviance within the project was considered grounds for eviction with a five-day notice. This aspect of daily life for residents of HJM in the 1960s was not lost on the future residents of Little Burgundy. Given a choice by city officials to temporarily move into HJM while Little Burgundy was under construction, a policy that had caused an eviction crisis contro-

⁸ Sheila Arnopoulous, “St Martin’s Looks Beyond Jeanne Mance,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), April 20, 1969.

versy within HJM,⁹ the majority of Little Burgundy tenants refused. “I don’t think [HJM is] democracy. I don’t think it is what people fought for,” said one of the future tenants of Little Burgundy housing about HJM.¹⁰ Shown through the lens of the camera and consistently repeated over the decades by critics of HJM, the film outlined the ‘progressive’ political position of the era that understood HJM as a failure and a project not worth repeating. Instead of projects like HJM, *Little Burgundy* and the generation of political elites that followed the 1969 Hellyer Report—which marked the end of slum clearance ‘urban renewal’ policies in Canada—favoured smaller-scale housing projects and cooperatives. An early purveyor of this view, *Little Burgundy* explained to the viewer how the SHQ’s new model of public and social housing—unlike HJM—would reflect the social values of Montreal and the province of Quebec. The future history of public and social housing in Quebec, in other words, would be defined rise in relation to the HJM towers on Ontario Street.¹¹

With *Little Burgundy* outlining the ‘progressive’ case against HJM and the tenants who lived there, then-mayor Drapeau and a series of mayors in the following three decades would confront tenants at HJM with a political discourse that presented the project as a mistake. This assertion of failure was consistent, regardless if the supposed grounds of the failure contextually differed across time and political party. Whether HJM’s social problems were seen as a design

⁹ Jean-Claude Leclerc, “30 Vieillards sont Menacés d’Eviction au ‘Plan Dozois,’” *Le Devoir* (Montréal, QC) Aug. 10, 1967; Nick Auf der Maur, “Now that He’s a Widower, 76 year old Worries About Losing Home,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Aug. 11, 1967.

¹⁰ *Little Burgundy*, directed by Maurice Bulbulian and Bonnie Sherr Klein. Montreal: National Film Board of Canada. The framing of *Little Burgundy* in relation to HJM housing was the first time the National Film Board of Canada sought to sway public opinion regarding public policy. See Sean Purdy, “Framing Regent Park: The National Film Board of Canada and the Construction of ‘Outcast Spaces’ in the Inner City, 1953 and 1994,” *Media Culture Society* 27, no. 4 (2005): 523-549.

¹¹ This itself was contradictory. During the filming of *Little Burgundy*, tenants at HJM had successfully organized and helped expediate Léopold Rogers, the first administrator of HJM, to resign in accepting the executive position within the SHQ. In becoming an executive of the newly formed SHQ, the provincial housing authority responsible for the Little Burgundy housing project, Rogers had a hand in constructing the project in relation to HJM, which the NFB film sought to delineate in advocating for a different approach to public housing construction and design.

failure or pinned on HJM residents themselves, a range of ‘conservative’ and ‘progressive’ positions regarding HJM ignored, belittled, or sought to circumvent the increasingly powerful tenants’ movement at HJM from the late 1960s to early 1990s. How tenants confronted the power wielded by the city over HJM—and ultimately achieved significant changes—is the major reason that HJM became an outlier in the history of public housing in North America.

How this was achieved was through tenants at HJM waging a long-running struggle against the governance of CHJM through a Québécois and class-based tenants’ movement that sought to alter the power relations between the city and the tenants. In the process, the tenants defended their homes and community, and demanded political rights in direct confrontation with the city in a three decade-long fight for institutional reform. The tenants’ ability to articulate their demands against a local political class that in nearly every situation wanted to delegitimize or openly suppress HJM tenants for political gain became the defining legacy of their struggle and of the HJM project itself. In attending to the tenants’ history of HJM and their struggle for the democratic right to determine the direction of their own community, the historical record on the housing project reveals the tenants of HJM to be the actors who ‘made’ HJM.¹² How tenants within HJM framed and waged their struggle for the housing project must be historically addressed and understood in relation to the political elites and urban governance of Montreal in order to fully grasp how it was the tenants—and not political elites—who built Habitations Jeanne-Mance.

¹² For the perspective of public housing and public policy as the domain of the petiti-bourgeois intellectuals or supposedly benevolent bureaucratic actors within the political class fighting for ‘liberal’ social justice, see John C. Bacher, *Keeping to the Marketplace: The Evolution of Canadian Housing Policy* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s Press-MQUP, 1993). As this thesis hopes to demonstrate, the entire edifice of this approach to understanding the urban and social history of Canada, especially as it relates to housing, social policy, and planning, requires a total reconstruction.

Literature Review: Evicting the Tenant in Human Geography

In thinking about the people who ‘made’ Habitations Jeanne-Mance, studies within the public housing literature in geography provide a counter-point rather than source of insight. This is because the literature has traditionally ignored the agency of tenants and their collective ability to historically alter governance structures within place, space, or territory.¹³ This is an important lacuna within the context of public housing studies since urban governance—a phenomenon best understood by human geographers—significantly shapes the codes, rules, terms, and structures of everyday life for tenants within a housing project. Broadly defined, urban governance refers to the institutional formation of the state or equivalent governing body within an area of the public sphere. It refers to the representation of the state in its actual material form and structure.¹⁴ Though well-studied in human geography, the meaning of urban governance and the ability to change governance has been understood within frameworks that are theoretically limiting and privilege the power of the elites over the ability of everyday actors like tenants to have collective agency to change governance structures.

When public housing appears in studies of urban governance, certain broad insights emerge, but the consistent emphasis on institutional elite actors or policy creation also leaves much out of the picture. In this work, the governance of public housing is linked to a collection of elites in a city forming either “growth coalitions” or “regimes” within a particular place, or else tied to the broad-based neoliberalization of urban politics and policies that non-elite actors

¹³ Jason Hackworth, “The Durability of Roll-Out Neoliberalism under Centre-Left Governance: The Case of Ontario’s Social Housing Sector,” *Studies in Political Economy* 81 (2008): 7-26; Jason Hackworth, “Public Housing and the Rescaling of Regulation in the USA,” *Environment and Planning A* 35, 3 (2003): 531-550; Jason Hackworth and Abigail Moriah, “Neoliberalism, Contingency and Urban Policy: The Case of Social Housing in Ontario,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30, no. 3 (2006): 510-527; Jason Hackworth, *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology, and Development in American Urbanism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007).

¹⁴ Joe Painter, “Governance,” in *The Dictionary of Human Geography* eds. Derek Gregory, Geraldine Pratt, Ron Johnstone, and Sarah Whatmore (West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 312-313.

are unable—it is assumed—to alter.¹⁵ In starting with these theoretical positions, tenants in these accounts are routinely rendered as objects and not subjects of academic inquiry.¹⁶ This undue privileging of elite power and agency is, of course, a problem when researchers want to focus on the tenants and everyday non-elite political actors to think about tenants' collective agency to alter their own material conditions within a public housing project.

Indeed, from the statutes and laws to the institutions the state embodies, aspects of urban governance are consistently represented in the existing literature as expressed, contested, or altered only in relation to the elites and their class power.¹⁷ By continuing to frame governance and agency to change governance within the elites and their networks, this literature, when the focus turns to public housing issues, ignores or underemphasizes the role tenants have played in countering elite power and governance.¹⁸ In only writing in the tenant to objectify, or set tenants and activists up to fail, the tenant and their political struggles are erased or ignored in this work. In relegating the tenant and tenants' movements to the sidelines, questions focusing on how the current governance structure or policy directions within a city have been shaped by past tenants'

¹⁵ See Harvey Molotch, "The City as a Growth Machine: Toward of a Political Economy of Place," *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 2 (1976): 309-332; John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987); Clarence N. Stone and Heywood T. Sanders, eds., *The Politics of Urban Development* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987).

¹⁶ See Hackworth, "Public housing and the rescaling of regulation in the USA," c.f.

¹⁷ David Harvey, "From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism," *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography* 71, no. 1 (1989): 3-17; Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell, "Neoliberalizing Space," *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002): 380-404.

¹⁸ If Hackworth's work on public housing in North America generally defines the current research framework within the literature in political economy where tenants are 'set up to fail,' Jeff Crump's seminal text on deconcentration and demolition in Minneapolis is the original outline in how political economy approaches continue to ask the wrong questions. For Crump, the concern is not on how tenants and social activists altered the plans of the local city and state elites or how their direct actions reverberated within elite power hierarchies across place and space from Minneapolis to Washington D.C., but on how elites still preceeded to displace and demolish the marginalized. In focusing on the elites, tenants, in this framing, are understood to be side-actors to elite power. Rendered as accidental disrupters and not central political actors on their own right, tenant agency is unintentionally deemphasized. Jeff Crump, "Deconcentration by Demolition: Public Housing, Poverty, and Urban Policy," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20, no. 5 (2002): 581-596.

struggles or related social movements within place or across space are written out of the picture through a process of accidental erasure.¹⁹

No further is this problem apparent than within the study of displacement and post-1970s housing policy. Focused on the demolition and privatization of public housing under neoliberal governance structures and policies, the entire literature is centred on elites and their networks of power or policy production within the state. As a result, the latter is presented as overpowering non-elite and non-political actors in demonstrating that everyday people are collectively powerless.²⁰ In rendering the tenants as mere objects to the subject of displacement-inducing neoliberal housing policy, the literature consistently ignores the historical power of tenants to alter policy directions and governance structures, and fails to consider how the history of tenant struggles in

¹⁹ This is where the structural base of the political economy research within the discipline falls apart in addressing the present public housing conditions in North America. In negating the history of place and struggle by tenants to force concessions from governance, regardless of actual historical outcome of a particular public housing project or local housing authority, political economy research will continue to understand the present through an incomplete historical past. For a U.S. critique of this approach, the tenant strike in Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis, MO in 1969 serves as an excellent example to this incomplete history. In Pruitt-Igoe, tenants were successful in not only changing the U.S. Federal Housing Act in 1969, but became fundamental catalysts for the lead paint removal campaigns within Saint Louis in the 1970s. Lastly, the reverberations and afterlife of the rental strike extended beyond the actual existence of Pruitt-Igoe, with tenant activism playing a direct role in the city not raising rents in the 1980s. The lives of these activists, however, does not stop in the 1980s. The leaders of the strike in 1969, particularly the non-tenant leader and law student, Richard Baron, went on to later form the largest for-profit social housing developer of social-mix developments in the United States—a company that directly profits from HOPE VI styled policy shifts, the displacement of tenants, and the demolition of public housing stock within the United States. See Michael Karp, “The St. Louis Rent Strike of 1969: Transforming Black Activism and American Low-Income Housing,” *Journal of Urban History* 40, no. 4 (2014): 648-670. See also Clarence Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway: Class Politics and Black Freedom Struggle in St. Louis, 1936-75* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2009).

²⁰ See Hackworth, “Public Housing and the Rescaling of Regulation in the USA,” c.f. The problem with the research approach used by Hackworth is that he positions his research questions within a overtly structuralist framework that ignores tenants agency—and later, within the context of Canada, Canadian history. In ignoring tenants agency, the research questions that follow are never able to understand or comprehend what tenants—if they were given agency—actually demand, sought, or changed. Instead, public housing tenants are tasked with the weight of demanding more housing construction within each city of the analysis that follows within in the study’s research questions. While admirable in intentions, giving tenants such a task is ahistorical. Public housing tenants rarely, if ever, advocate for more housing construction. That role has never been, historically speaking, the overt political aim of tenants and their associated tenants’ movements.

relation to governance might partially explain the present conditions of tenants, place-specific governance structures, or difference across policy-space assumed to now be neoliberal.²¹

While the literature's focus on governance provides insights that are important to consider, the inability of this work to conceptualize agency beyond the traditional positioning of elites, political regimes, factions of capital, or policy-networks is limiting. It provides, at best, a partial understanding of how governance is altered, and an incredibly weak understanding of how bottom-up social movements interact with governance. The traditional position of governance-focused public housing research, therefore, does not adequately address the potentially context-specific historical political power of tenants vis-a-vis elites in particular cities or political states, or want to know how tenants have sought to challenge the positions of elite power and governance over time in place or across space.²² If this literature did approach the present as a reflection of present and past struggles from below, the entire notion of governance might have to be fun-

²¹ See Hackworth, "The Durability of Roll-Out Neoliberalism under Centre-Left Governance," c.f. This is also the general problem for 'Canadian' research on public housing within Canada. Writing about neoliberal present-day Toronto, social mix and displacement studies have been successful in articulating how similar the experience of Toronto is to HOPE VI housing demolition roll-outs within the United States. The result of this similarity and apparent case of 'travelling theory' has led to an ahistorical reading of local governance power within Toronto and Ontario that originates from the election of the neo-conservative and neoliberal government of Mike Harris in 1995. In writing from within the post-Mike Harris neoliberal era, past tenant struggles or the general failures of the Left within the province and in Toronto have been underemphasized in thinking about how present-day governance power within particular places or current neoliberal policy directions preexist the administration of Mike Harris within Ontario.

²² Edward Goetz has repeatedly suggested the social mix and displacement literature should not generalize public housing outcomes within neoliberal policy directories within in the United States. Through a quantitative longitudinal analysis of public housing centred on HOPE VI adoption rates by cities in the United States from the 1990s, Goetz persuasively argued that as these neoliberal outcomes are the minority and not the norm within the United States. Edward G. Goetz, "Where have All the Towers Gone? The Dismantling of Public Housing in US Cities," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 33, no. 3 (2011b): 267-287. When displacement studies does focus on tenants, the lives of tenants are usually understood in relation to social mix policies and demolition. For examples of this, see Lynne C. Manzo, Rachel G. Kleit, Dawn Couch, "'Moving Three Times is like Having Your House on Fire Once': The Experience of Place and Impending Displacement among Public Housing Residents," *Urban Studies* 45, no. 9 (2008): 1855-1878. Outside of displacement studies focus on documenting how tenants feel about being displaced, there are movements within the field to address tenants in relation to public housing and governance. While not explicitly taking a historical position and focusing on tenants' movement power and governance, these voices are rather powerful. See *We Call These Projects Home—Right to the City Alliance* special issue by Tony Roshan Samara, Anita Sinha, and Marine Brady, eds. "Public Housing and the Public Agenda: Locating a Right to the City," special issue, *Cities* 35, December (2013): 319-390; and Edward G. Goetz, ed., "Resistance to Social Housing Formation," special issue, *Cities* 57, September (2016): 1-62.

damentally reconceived. In particular, the present understanding of governance—so often rendered as an essentialized and predetermined march towards neoliberalism—would become more nuanced, contextually inflected, and contingent. The present understanding of governance cannot be seriously advanced unless the basic assumptions of the literature, namely the assumed power of elites and their policy production, are called into question.²³

Contrary to the assumptions of this literature, tenants have never been powerless beings caught within a straightjacket of policy adoption or elite power domination.²⁴ While the creation and adoption of housing policies studied in this literature are relevant to research, discuss, and highlight, it remains the case that there have always been other forces at play within governance structures and society. One of the ways to illuminate these ‘other forces’ in relation to governance is to approach questions of governance, elite power, and tenants’ agency within an urban historical approach that understands governing power to be the outcome of history and social conflict.

²³ While these studies are only one aspect to urban politics, the reliance on policy-networks or focusing on elites in governance has saturated the field. Whether it is the “roll-back, roll-out” or “actually-existing” neoliberalizing of the state analysis of governance or the policy mobilities literature—the elites, we are consistently told, are the only actors that matter. Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell, “Neoliberalizing Space,” *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002): 380-404; Neil Brenner and Nick Theodore, “Cities and the Geographies of ‘Actually Existing Neoliberalism.’” *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002): 349-379; Mickey Lauria, ed., *Restructuring Urban Regime Theory: Regulating Urban Politics in a Global Economy* (Thousand Oaks and London: Sage, 1996); Jame Peck, “Liberating the City: Between New York and New Orleans,” *Urban Geography* 27, no. 8 (2006): 681-713.

²⁴ The study by Martine August on how tenants in Don Mount Court in Toronto overthrew their revanchist governance structure instituted by the Toronto Community Housing Corporation that priveleged condo owners over tenants, and the study by Jeff Crump on how tenants and local activists caused political and scalar-spatial trembling within the establishment in Minneapolis with a direct action on demolition day are two examples of tenant agency within the displacement and social mix literatures. Neither Crump or August, however, situate their studies within the tenant histories or tenant politics of these respective places to understand governance power as historically rooted. Martine August, “Negotiating Social Mix in Toronto’s First Public Housing Redevelopment: Power, Space and Control in Don Mount Court,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 38, no. 4 (2014): 1160-1180; Jeff Crump, “Deconcentration by Demolition: Public Housing, Poverty, and Urban Policy,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20, no. 5 (2002): 581-596.

Tenant Agency and Governance in Urban History

If the literature on urban governance within human geography is not equipped to grapple with research questions focused on the lives of tenants and their political agency, urban history, on the other hand, has long demonstrated how tenants and other non-elite actors possess some form of agency to change or alter their own conditions. In contrast to the geography literature, urban historical accounts of public housing either explicitly write from and address the ‘from below’ agency of tenants in shaping local, state, and federal politics, or acknowledge how tenant power has challenged or altered urban governance within local public housing authorities.²⁵ In focusing on the agency of non-elite actors and everyday people, tenants are shown to have formed local to national tenant movements which sought to challenge state and federal laws through judicial activism, promote welfare rights for low-income and marginalize people, develop alternative cooperative economies, and organize within municipal socialist movements.²⁶

²⁵ Rhonda Y. Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women’s Struggles Against Urban Inequality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh, *American Project: The Rise and Fall of a Modern Ghetto* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2000). Clarence Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway: Class Politics and Black Freedom Struggle in St. Louis, 1936-75* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2009); Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996). Sean Purdy, “‘Ripped Off’ by the System: Housing Policy, Poverty, and Territorial Stigmatization in Regent Park Housing Project, 1951-1991,” *Labour/Le Travail* 52, Fall (2003): 45-108. Sean Purdy, “For the People by the People: Tenant Organizing in Toronto’s Regent Park Housing Project in the 1960s and 1970s,” *Journal of Urban History* 30, no. 4 (2004): 519-548; Michael Karp, “The St. Louis Rent Strike of 1969: Transforming Black Activism and American Low-Income Housing,” *Journal of Urban History* 40, no. 4 (2014): 648-670; John Baranski, “Something to Help Themselves: Tenant Organizing in San Francisco’s Public Housing, 1965-1975,” *Journal of Urban History* 33, no. 3 (2007): 418-442.

²⁶ Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing*, c.f.; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, c.f.; Venkatesh, *American Project*, c.f. Williams and Venkatesh studies represent a divide within the public housing historical literature. Both represent narrative-driven accounts of public housing histories that are less concerned with policy outcomes and more focused on the people who lived within these communities. Following Williams and Venkatesh, historical research within the public housing field has generally split between accounting for the ‘lived experience of tenants’ or documenting tenants and actual policy or housing outcomes. Seeking to find an empass between the two approaches, work by Sean Purdy on the Regent Park tenants’ movement from the 1960s to the 1990s, John Baranski and his work on tenants’ movements in San Francisco in the 1970s, and Amy L. Howard’s complete public housing history of San Francisco from the New Deal Era to the 1990s are recent literature additions that have sought to find a third position in between these two dominant perspectives within the tenants’ literature. See Sean Purdy, “For the People by the People: Tenant Organizing in Toronto’s Regent Park Housing Project in the 1960s and 1970s,”

But historical accounts go further than merely identifying or placing tenants and everyday people within public housing history. Historians, in addition to this, get to the root at what causes non-elite people to organize, and historical accounts of tenants do this by focusing on the lived experience of tenants in creating or shaping movements that are framed explicitly in relation to their own sense of the world around them.²⁷ By simply starting with tenants and everyday people as the subjects and not the objects of research, historical research on public housing begins to grapple with concerns current geographical approaches ignore due to the economistic foundations of the latter: an interest in how collective action was forged and sustained in the past, and how these struggles fought to alter place, space, and governance.

How historians interested in how tenants' own lives in public housing position their research in thinking about tenant agency fundamentally begins with how tenants negotiate the everyday politics of class, race, and gender across space and within place.²⁸ This is where the geographical literature, especially the more theoretical and top-down and structure-focused, will continue to fail in documenting how people have sought to shape governance and how governance is ultimately a reflection of these attempts by people to shape it. There is more to governance than elite actors, upper-middle class policy analysts from neo-conservative think tanks, and property developers in shaping space and remaking place. If research wants to elucidate how people have sought to change the world that is around them or desire to delve deeper into under-

Journal of Urban History 30, no. 4 (2004): 519-548; John Baranaski, "Something to Help Themselves: Tenant Organizing in San Francisco's Public Housing, 1965-1975," *Journal of Urban History* 33, no. 3 (2007): 418-442. Amy L. Howard, *More Than Shelter: Activism and Community in San Francisco* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

²⁷ See Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing*, c.f.; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, c.f.; Karp, "The St. Louis Rent Strike of 1969," c.f.; Roberta M. Feldman and Susan Stall, *The Dignity of Resistance: Women Residents' Activism in Chicago Public Housing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

²⁸ See Baranaski, "Something to Help Themselves," c.f.; Purdy, "For the People by the People," c.f.; Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing*, c.f.; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, c.f.

standing why in particular places policies at one scale of governance fail to materialize across space, research into public housing in particular must delve into the archives and approach historical answers to these questions. And once research comes to terms with the past, interests might begin to germinate in other directions about how tenants framed their struggles and organized. Once these questions are taken up, as they are in many historical accounts, the tenants' struggle becomes a dialectical movement where the central pivot is the way tenant politics were grounded within their own lived experiences.

When race, class, gender, or the nation are brought into the picture by historians interested in tenants' movements, the questions pursued begin to centre on how the political and social power of tenants' movement was sustained and how tenants confronted differences between each other as tenants. Situated primarily in the 1960s and 1970s, during a time of great social and cultural upheaval, the historical literature on public housing addresses the contradictions within these movements, especially within and between the more ideologically driven social movements of the time. What this work ends up showing is how everyday people confronted the same political and social contradictions of these moments that elites and public intellectuals confronted. In grounding national or regional discourses in the everyday, historians show how, for example, tenants internalized or negotiated these social shifts within their own lived experience.²⁹ What this accomplishes is not only lifting up the politically and socially marginalized, showing how they had a political voice and an ability to speak for themselves, but also demonstrating how everyday people can build movements and challenge structures. In addition to showing how tenants' movements are formed, the historical literature also shows how

²⁹ Baranaski, "Something to Help Themselves," c.f.; Purdy, "For the People by the People," c.f.; Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing*, c.f.; Lang, *Grassroots at the Gateway*, c.f.

power was sustained and formed from within tenants' movements.³⁰ In thinking about how power is sustained within tenants' movements, the questions historians pose when thinking about this issue return to the politics and contradictions of social movements.

As the historical literature on tenants' movements has demonstrated, when governance power and structures are shown to be outcomes of dialectical struggles, the contradictions within and between the respective tenants' movements are far more important to both sustaining local tenants' struggles—or to their own undoing—than policy networks at broader scales. Tenant infighting, their inability to address race, class, and gender differences, or ideological splits between rival tenant factions over strategy against governance, the city, or the state, are shown by historians to be important issues in the struggle to confronting governance and political elites.³¹ As Sean Purdy documents in his history of the tenants' movement in Regent Park in Toronto, these internal differences and divisions matter. In Regent Park in the early 1970s, once consensus within the tenant movement was lost, infighting over the politics of confrontation and strategy by the tenants directly played into the hands of local and provincial officials who placed

³⁰ Karp, "The St. Louis Rent Strike of 1969," 653; Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing*, 188-191.

³¹ As Karp and Williams demonstrated, the efforts to sustain tenant cohesiveness had more to do with contradictions within the various movements and the competing ideologies that sought to organize these movements. For St. Louis strikers, the splits within the movement were concerned with the ideological differences within the Black Power movement and the traditional African-American community church leadership, and how both of these differences negated gender and patriarchy. The rent strike leaders in St. Louis were women, and in their increasing militancy—and later embrace of Black Power positions—the rent strike distanced itself from the traditional male-dominated leadership found within the African-American church. Embracing Black Power, the tenant leaders also confronted the gendered hierarchies and masculinist rhetoric of the men in which Black Power was associated. Splitting from this, tenant leaders in St. Louis began to proclaim "Woman Power" in relation to the male-dominated Black Power movement. See Karp, "The St. Louis Rent Strike of 1969," 655. In Baltimore, a similar contradiction emerged. Focusing on an essentialized Black nationalist position that erased class solidarity with white women or general class awareness within race within governance structures, Williams highlighted how women tenant leaders in Baltimore in the late 1960s began to believe the governance problems of the local housing authority could simply be solved with replacing white housing managers with African-American officials, even if those officials held views on tenants that conformed to the 'undeserving' and 'deserving' governance logic understood by the white dominated local housing authorities. In focusing on race alone, tenant leaders both erased what had worked for tenants' movements in the 1950s and early 1960s in focusing on gender, race, and class, while ignoring the fundamental issue of governance and the tenant-landlord relationship in confronting local housing authority negligence in negating the 'undeserving' and 'deserving' social views on tenants by local governance officials that transcended race within the Baltimore Housing Authority. Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing*, 188-191.

little value on participatory democracy—the principle dear to all tenant movements in North America in the 1960s and 1970s.³² When the unity of the tenants’ association irrevocably crumbled in the early 1970s, elite governance officials used the crisis within the tenants’ association to both eliminate the tenant-management board—a vehicle for participatory democracy—and crush tenant activism in the decades that followed. Tenants, in their historical successes and failures, can be seen here as a key influence on the governance of Regent Park.

What Purdy’s work demonstrates is that public housing and public housing governance has to be understood historically and through the lens of the tenants. Beyond simply allowing tenants to have agency and collective power to alter governance or their own communities, historical approaches to public housing can address fundamental questions the geographical literature routinely misses. Purdy’s work indeed contrasts with the significant and growing geographical literature on Regent Park. His work, in contrast to the geographical literature on Regent Park, demonstrates how the shape of governance within the city and province was institutionally shaped as much by the bottom-up struggles of the tenants movement as by the proclamations and actions of a revanchist, neo-conservative premier.³³

The historical literature, however, has its own limitations. Being a small field and interested in questions that exceed the phenomenon of urban governance, the historical literature does not tend to *theorize* urban governance from below in framing tenants’ movements within or in

³² Purdy, “For the People by the People,” c.f.

³³ Purdy, “For the People by the People,” 540. Only in reading Purdy’s detailed account on how the Ontario provincial housing authority sought to crush the tenants’ movement within Regent Park in the 1970s in Toronto, does the present-day work of Martine August and Alan Walks begin to coherently grasp both tenant power, governance, and public housing history within one city to explain the present governance outcomes in the present. See Martine August, “Negotiating Social Mix in Toronto’s First Public Housing Redevelopment: Power, Space and Control in Don Mount Court,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 38, no. 4 (2014): 1160-1180; Martine August and Alan Walks, “From Social Mix to Political Marginalization? The Redevelopment of Toronto’s Public Housing and the Dilution of Tenant Organizational Power,” in *Mixed Communities: Gentrification by Stealth*, eds. Gary Bridge, Tim Butler, & Loretta Lees (Bristol, UK: Policy Press, 2012), 273-298.

relation to the present neoliberal condition.³⁴ Nor have historians caught up with some geography scholars who have begun to search for places that do not fit the general governance narrative, or delve into why one city or state did not proceed with widely accepted social-mix and displacement policies.³⁵ Instead, the majority of the historical literature on tenants' movements in North America has been centred on the policies, politics, and cities within the United States. In focusing on tenants' movements in the United States, this literature has documented an experience of public housing that does not necessarily reflect the experience of Canadian or other non-United States public housing tenants. Important questions, therefore, are left unanswered and unasked, as the literature has not addressed the question of how the history of two distinctly different countries like Canada and the United States are inter-related. More importantly, the literature has scarcely begun to address an enormous gap, as the tenant movement history within Canada continues to remain unwritten.³⁶ Tending to mirror the United States, the scarce existing research on tenants' movements in Canada has continued to approach the development of public housing

³⁴ In *Grassroots at the Gateway*, Lang and his Gramscian historical account on Black working class politics in St. Louis, MO, is a lone exception in an otherwise sparse subfield within urban history.

³⁵ Because the historical literature is generally focused on understanding history within particular eras, the literature as a whole has a tendency to not follow tenants' movements—or in some cases tenant leaders—into the present. Out of those surveyed here, only Karp attempts to 'follow' the leaders of the rent strike in St. Louis into the present and in the process reveals how much tenant leaders of the strike profited from their efforts in the 1960s. Focusing on the main tenant leader, Jean King, the results of this 'following' revealed how pervasive the 'underserving' and 'deserving' dichotomy is also internalized by public housing tenants and public housing leaders. In St. Louis, this led to King embracing the social mix, defensible space policy, and redevelopment plans of fellow non-tenant strike leader Richard Baron, who went on to establish the largest for-profit social housing developer firm in the United States. Yet for King the task ahead in the following decades still followed and embraced the undeserving/deserving discourse on low-income people in pursuing policies and politics that sought to "build decent people for housing...that means my people got to be educated, they got to understand responsibility." Karp, "The St. Louis Rent Strike of 1969," 662. Yet this is also where Karp goes awry on thinking about the legacy of the actors involved with the strike. Karp failed to connect on how the rent strike and its leaders are deeply entrenched within the politics and policies of the present that continue to displace public housing tenants in the post-Clinton U.S. policy landscape of the 1990s. In failing to connect with the present, Karp also missed how former tenant leaders such as King have internalized and continued to advance the same Progressive Era viewpoint on the "deserving" and "undeserving" low-income tenants in social housing into the present.

³⁶ To date, the only definitive public housing tenants' history regarding Canada remains the work of Sean Purdy on tenants in Regent Park in Toronto, Ontario. See Sean Purdy, "From Place of Hope to Outcast Space: Territorial Regulation and Tenant Resistance in Regent Park Housing Project, 1949-2001," (PhD diss., Queen's University, Kingston, 2003), c.f.

within the same intellectual trajectories found within the United States-based literature, while also highlighting certain differences within the Canadian tenant experience.³⁷ There is considerable work to do, then, on the history of public housing in Canada.

Outside of the historical work of Sean Purdy on Regent Park in Toronto, tenants' histories in most Canadian cities and public housing projects remain largely unwritten. The same is true for national or province-wide tenant organizing efforts. This unfortunate fact about the condition of the literature on public housing tenants and housing movements within Canada must be undone. In taking up this challenge in writing about the history of a tenants' movement at Habitations Jeanne-Mance, this thesis will finally bring into the literature one important strand of the Montreal and Quebec experience of public housing struggles into the urban historical record.

Research Outline

This thesis examines how the tenants' movements at Habitations Jeanne-Mance both engaged with and reshaped the governance of their buildings and surrounding neighbourhood through collective struggle from 1959 to 1993 in the city of Montreal, Quebec. In focusing on how tenants' associations can alter the policies and governance of their local housing authority, the thesis seeks to address the broader question of how urban governance is constituted and reconstituted not only by elite actors but also "from below" through the social struggles of everyday people. Answering this broad question within a historical analysis of one public housing project requires attention to three specific issues or sub-questions related to the tenants' movement at Habitations Jeanne-Mance:

³⁷ In trying to move beyond the strict relational confines of North American urban history, Sean Purdy and Nancy H. Kwak have sought to place twentieth century tenant histories within 'the Americas' by incorporating tenant struggles from the United States, Canada, Caribbean, and South and Latin America. For their special issue on this topic in the journal of *Urban History*, see their introduction specifically. Sean Purdy and Nancy H. Kwak, "Introduction: New Perspectives on Public Housing histories in the Americas," *Urban History* 33, no. 3 (2007): 357-374.

- 1) How have tenant activists engaged with the policies of the corporation of HJM and the city? What issues or policies captured their attention? Why was this the case? How did the perspectives of tenants differ from more elite actors? What were the outcomes of these struggles? In what ways, in other words, did the activism of tenants shape the governance of the HJM project?
- 2) In the context of differing perspectives on public housing, how have tenants sought to craft and impose their perspective? What alternative discourses or ideologies have tenants put forward and relied upon? How has a political base been constructed among the tenants? How have alliances been built with outside actors and activists? Were these alliances driven from the outside or from the tenants themselves?
- 3) How have tenant activists addressed internal differences among HJM tenants and external constraints from higher scales of governance? How has tenant unity, or collective identity, been sought after? How has it been forged? How has disunity emerged? How have organizers dealt with disunity? How did tenant organizers contend with external structural constraints and policy alterations from above? Are there perspectives or populations that tenant organizers subordinated or marginalized? How should internal and external differences like these factor into analyses of public housing governance?

To help answer these three research questions and contribute to the urban governance and urban history of public housing literature, the thesis examined two particular political struggles—in two contextually different periods—in which tenants organized, resisted, and ultimately altered the policies of the city and local housing authority from 1959 to 1994.

The first struggle, the subject of the first portion of the thesis, occurred in the 1960s. It was in this moment of struggle that tenants became politically aware as public housing tenants;

organized a collective campaign for tenant representation on the board of directors of the corporation of HJM; and fought to alter paternalistic rental contract policies and other early CHJM governance practices. This section of the thesis seeks to demonstrate how the HJM governance structure and rental contract reproduced broader North American assumptions about the cultural and racial pathologies of poor and low-income people, assumptions that prevailed from the Progressive Era through the politics of ‘urban renewal’ in the post-war North American period. Consistent with these prevailing elite assumptions in North America and locally in Montreal, tenants at HJM were not given basic political or social rights when the housing complex opened. Why this was the case was due to the tenants of HJM being perceived as incapable of having such rights due to their status as ‘slum dwellers.’

In addition to examining elite assumptions about public housing tenants, the first portion of the thesis also examines how the majority French-speaking (Québécois) residents in HJM related their existence as tenants in the housing project to the broader social and political movements within Montreal and Quebec in 1960s, which were centred on experience of the Québécois working class. Starting with the tenants’ collective struggle for political rights, changes to the rental contract, and tenant representation on the CHJM board of directors, the tenant struggles of the 1960s outlined the political terrain the tenants would continue to wage in confronting elite power and governance structures within CHJM and in Montreal in the following decades. The tenants, like many Montreal-based working class movements in this period, had help in organizing their communities in drawing upon non-tenant and relatively top-down focused social agency actors and from-below radical social activists within the community organizing and neighbourhood “popular power” citizens’ movements of the 1960s. But the tenants also

contributed to these broader movements themselves, and by the end of the 1960s had become central political actors within the Left of Montreal.

The organizing of HJM tenants, in sum, grew and evolved over the course of the 1960s. As this section of the thesis demonstrates, tenants were first organized by outside (non-tenant) social agencies and radical political actors. As the decade progressed, they developed their own unique political consciousness in the course of their efforts to change the conditions of the rental contract, obtain political rights, and obtain tenant representation on the board of directors of the corporation of HJM. All of these efforts put them in confrontation with Lucien Saulnier, the President of Executive Committee, and the second most powerful politician in the city behind Mayor Jean Drapeau. As the 1960s concluded, the tenants were organized within the expanding socialist movements of the late 1960s in Montreal and across Quebec, and the origins of the tenants' movement within HJM, and the course it took in the decades that followed, must be understood within this unique social and political history.

These early struggles, therefore, provided the foundation of broader tenant actions in the 1970s and 80s, the subject of the second half of this thesis. The formation of a tenant consciousness and the articulation of tenant demands in the 1960s eventually led to the creation of a formal tenants' association in the 1970s. As I show in the second half of the thesis, the tenants' association focused in the beginning on changing the neighbourhood around HJM within the politics of everyday life. This section of thesis details how, from this small beginning, the tenants' association sustained and grew its political power both within the tenant population and outside of HJM from 1974 to 1993. Continuing the political and social energies of the 1960s, the tenants' association understood their social position as tenants through the lens of the broader class-based and Left nationalist politics of the time. It also built important connections with Left

municipal political actors, such as the Montreal Citizens' Movement, a political party formed in opposition to Drapeau in the 1970s, as well as neighbourhood-based struggles and tenants' associations across the city.

In the 1980s, however, the ideology and strategy of the tenants' association demonstrably shifted towards an embrace of the politics of race, language, and Quebec nationalism. This shift in tactics by the association occurred after the failure of the first referendum for sovereignty association in Quebec, and mirrored the general movement within the white Québécois, working class Left in the 1980s. This shift involved an embrace of a culturally nationalist and increasingly racist identity politics, a significant break with the class-based—though still nationalist—politics of the previous decade. In practical terms, this shift involved the tenants in efforts to form a language school for the increasingly non-Québécois tenant population to learn French and, eventually, a demand for the CHJM to cap the international and non-white Québécois HJM resident population at 25 percent on an ahistorical heritage to the neighbourhood in which HJM was built that proclaimed HJM as a 'French Canadian' space. In these ways, the tenants' association partially incorporated the cultural and racial nationalist politics in Quebec of the late 1970s and early 1980s to sustain political legitimacy within HJM. The tenants' association did so, in part, due to the threat to its political power and legitimacy from the CHJM under Claude Lalonde, the third administrator of CHJM, who was appointed by the city with the task to politically coopt and repress the tenants' movement in the early 1980s.

The 1980s also represent a period of increased tenant militancy to challenge the both the political class within the city and the governance structure that underpinned HJM. Re-connecting with neighbourhood community groups and the MCM within the district of Centre-Sud, the tenants' association founded Solidarité Jeanne-Mance (SJM), a political action committee

comprised of tenant and community leaders, and John Gardiner, the local municipal councillor for the MCM in 1984. Created with the intention to develop a unique vision of tenants' management for HJM, the campaign was the conclusion of the recognition struggles for tenant representation the tenants had sought since 1966 within the CHJM. Led by SJM, the campaign to democratize HJM resulted in the removal of Claude Lalonde as the administrator of HJM and a re-configuration of CHJM in 1985. Aiming for the democratization of HJM, the tenants sought and secured the recognition to have the two tenant representatives on the board of the directors, the highest political body within the CHJM, to be democratically elected by the tenants within HJM. While the changes to the governance structure were not what the tenants and SJM had articulated in their demand for full tenant democracy, the tenants and their decades long organizing within HJM and Montreal not only led to changes within the governance structure of HJM but also led to stopping potential plans for HJM to be partially demolished in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In first organizing in an alliance with political actors and local municipal parties, such as the MCM, the tenants in the early 1990s were successful in halting redevelopment and demolition plans for socially mixed redevelopment of HJM by the MCM, which began exploratory studies on HJM in 1989. Continuing their prominent activism with city-wide tenant and housing groups, such as Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain (FRAPRU), tenants were successful in wielding political power within the CHJM and in city hall, and the social mix and partial demolition studies commissioned in 1989 by the CHJM and the MCM never proceeded beyond the planning stages.

The tenants, in other words, shaped HJM more than policy shifts or elite actors in political power within Montreal. In becoming a powerful political bloc within the city in the 1980s and 1990s, tenants within HJM also successfully challenged and contradicted the shifting

and neoliberalizing housing policy terrains within North America. Emerging at their strongest within a period in both Quebec and Canada that witnessed an increase in city-led gentrification efforts and the end of national and provincial social housing commitments to building affordable homes, the political successes and the ways tenants wielded their power, determined the course city elites would come to address HJM as a housing project in the decades that followed. In confronting local elite power over three decades within a political struggle for democratic rights within the CHJM to determine the fate of their own community, tenants from the 1990s to the present have served as a contradictory bulwark against status quo neoliberal housing policies focused on market-housing and the displacement tenants with the demolition of existing social housing stock within North America. As the neighbourhood around HJM continues to be made and remade through a gentrification efforts to turn the former district of Saint Jacques into a quartier of mass symbolic consumption, HJM not only sits untouched, but also receives continual reinvestment by the city. HJM, in other words, is an outlier to the present-day understanding of both public housing built in the urban renewal postwar era in North America, and the present-day neoliberal era of demolition, displacement, and social-mix housing adoption of the present. The reason for stark departure was due to the organizing efforts of tenants. In their collective effort to remake Habitations Jeanne-Mance, their history finally deserves to be brought out of the shadows.

Methodology: For The Struggle From Below

Concerned with the development, politics, and struggles of the tenants' association in Jeanne-Mance Habitation in Montreal, and how tenants collectively shaped their community in relation to elite political actors and governance from 1959 to 1994, this thesis is grounded in a "from below" and dialectical methodology. Primarily situated within the "dialectical urbanism"

methodology advanced by Andy Merrifield, the following historical account of a tenants' movement within one housing project can be best understood in the tenants dialectical relationship to governance.³⁸ For Merrifield, dialectical urbanism is a critical methodology of urban praxis grounded in historical accounts of social movements from below through an understanding of how urban space is dialectically shaped through the contradiction between the "experience of urbanism" and urbanization.³⁹ These contradictions in relation to the "experience of urbanism" and the urbanization of capital are understood and shown within the social, cultural and politics aspects to city life of "dystopian politics," or "the contradiction between the city and urbanism."⁴⁰ With the demand of interrogating the contradictions of place and their social relations within the politics at the level of the everyday, dialectical urbanism is an interesting approach to consider for historical research on social movements for it seriously considers and allows for the agency of people from below as agents who actively have the ability shape urban space. There are, however, multiple problems with this approach to understanding social movements from below and at the everyday scale within the processes of urbanization.

In searching for results, which in public housing literature has been the domain of sociologists, political scientists, or critical urban scholars interested in the "outcomes" of social movements in relation to the state or global macro-processes, Merrifield contends these accounts miss the point about social struggles.⁴¹ These accounts, for Merrifield, should instead be concerned within the aspects of the dialectical relationship between urbanism, on the one hand, and the processes of urbanization, on the other, and how particular ideologies, norms,

³⁸ Andy Merrifield, *Dialectical Urbanism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2002), 14.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴¹ Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979); Hackworth, "Public Housing and the Rescaling of Regulation in the USA," c.f.

perceptions, and realities give rise to particular feelings and expressions from within the everyday through social movements in confronting issues related to housing, a living wage, or a tenants' movement.

In framing the world from below, critical research, therefore, might begin to seriously think about how people actively challenge neoliberal hegemony through the policies of the city or the state, and how to build alternative political and social movements at attacking the dystopian political reality of the inequalities within capitalist space. To address this explicitly for Merrifield, the political answer activists and scholars must grapple with in pursuing these research questions is within the contradiction itself—the people—and the requirement of social movements and working class people within disinvested neighbourhoods to put aside their differences or agendas and proceed with a “pursuit of common agreement” in avoiding, what Raymond Williams once referred to as the “politics of militant separatism.”⁴² This conclusion by Merrifield, while rather accurate in thinking about tenants' movements within the present day, however, misses the point about social movements in thinking about how they are constituted, sustained, waged, fall apart or re-emerge. To approach such questions, the methodology of dialectical urbanism has to incorporate a more historically rooted Gramscian reading of urban space. Engaging with both the historical archives and connecting with Gramscian theories on “hegemony” and the “war of position” in regards to how power is sustained within social movements to both form and govern from below in relation to urban governance and elite political power.

Furthermore, the inability to consider the possibilities of working class political formations beyond an unexplored and uncritical approach in understanding “class” – in all of its

⁴² Merrifield, *Dialectical Urbanism*, 68-69.

forms and notions – is rather fundamental to urban historical research on the lived experience of tenants in public housing. Long understood and fundamental to how movements and consciousnesses have formed within place in negotiating how race, class, gender, and space have shaped not only the tenants themselves but their movements and the governance structures their collective struggles have waged against—has long been studied within urban history.⁴³ In other words, the lived experience Andy Merrifield seeks to negate and dismiss is fundamental to the construction of the movement he wants to advocate in the present. Because of this noticeable absence within this otherwise interesting and unique dialectical methodology, a refinement must be pursued if future research regarding social movements wants to seriously consider questions concerning how power from below can be successfully waged from the agency of non-political actors at the everyday level.

To contrast the original methodology put forward by Merrifield, this thesis incorporates a historical approach that documents how the HJM tenants' movement formed and what it accomplished. It also illuminates how these struggles confronted differences from within and from outside their formation, including competing ideologies as well as social, ethnic, and racial differences within the movement. In wanting to demonstrate the extent tenant power and agency had in shaping the overall history of HJM, my aim is to document how power at the everyday was constructed and how counter-formations to elite power were formed and sustained through a from below Gramscian reading of urban governance.

In order to theorize the tenants' movement of HJM within urban history, my research stems entirely from archival materials with one interview of a former tenant leader. For my historical archival research on tenants, I read letters, minutes from meetings, pamphlets from

⁴³ See Rhonda Y. Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women's Struggles against Urban Inequality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

events, newspaper articles, government documents, films and photographs from the Fonds Corporation d'Habitations Jeanne-Mance, and the L'Association de locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance files within the Centre de Documentation: Publications internes et externes, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001), and Fonds Rassemblement des citoyens et citoyennes de Montréal, in the Archives de Ville de Montréal. Additional archival material on the social actors and agencies in the 1960s were searched within Fonds Citoyens Clinic des Citoyens de Saint Jacques in the archives of Université de Québec du Montréal.

Contributions to the Literature: The Point is to Change It

In writing about the tenants' history of HJM, the purpose of this thesis is to advocate for more place-specific, historically grounded research on tenants' movements within public housing studies. Written from within the tenants' perspective that understands the dialectical relationship between tenants and elites, this position not only privileges the tenants and their struggle as the subject of research, but fundamentally reconfigures how governance structures and elite power can be understood within place and across space and time. In framing public housing history away from a focus on design or elite political actors and policy studies, this urban historical position reframes the understanding of public housing within the context of the past in an expression of what I believe to be uncovering "spaces of resistance," or places and histories of struggle that contradict the known history of public housing, or the generalized policy adoption of the neoliberal state restructuring literature.

Uncovering these spaces of resistance allows for the politics of the everyday through time to emerge; and framed from the tenants perspective, the position begins to understand how place, in particular, not only shapes historical outcomes but is demonstrative in outlining why policy outcomes can never fully be generalized across space. In taking up the challenge of discovering

difference within the landscape, historical accounts of tenants' movements within public housing can fundamentally reconstruct housing studies in writing about tenants, tenants' movements, and cities that continue to be either ignored for studies of displacement within the neoliberalization of policy adoption within the field.⁴⁴

Framed within urban history and from below, the point to uncovering these spaces of resistance highlight how tenants struggles have sought to alter their own material and political conditions within a dialectic understanding of history. Once this approach is taken up, the unraveling of place-specific governance structures and how these institutions have been formed and altered through time begin to emerge, leading to a more historically rooted and conceptual understanding of localized social relations within time and space. In embracing this position within

⁴⁴ Convinced this meant qualitative and historical histories on tenants in relation to governance as the way forward for the field, I posed this somewhat-of-a-demand to displacement studies researchers at the American Association of Geographers Conference in Chicago, IL in April of 2015. Critiquing some of the work cited in this introduction, out of the group researchers I talked to on that day, James Fraser seems to have grasped the requirement for future research to think about tenants' agency from a position that understands tenants' political power through place-specific, everyday politics. See Amie Thurber and James Fraser, "Disrupting the Order of Things: Public Housing Tenant Organizing for Material, Political and Epistemological Justice," *Cities* 57, September (2016): 55-61. For taking history seriously, Martine August seems to have also connected the dots regarding the making of historical governance power and the current governance practices of Toronto Community Housing Corporation in directly tying the present to the sustained efforts to coopt tenants by the city for decades within Regent Park. See Martine August, "It's All About Power and You have None': The Marginalization of Tenant Resistance to Mixed-Income Social Bousing Redevelopment in Toronto, Canada," *Cities* 57, September (2016): 25-32. Yet this attempt at engaging with history still has yet to acknowledge what Goetz had already identified with the HOPE VI adoption rates in the United States. See Edward G. Goetz, "Where Have All the Towers Gone? The Dismantling of Public Housing in US Cities," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 33, no. 3 (2011): 267-287. Failing to follow Goetz, the urban affairs wing of public housing studies continues to miss the broader questions concerning why some places have embraced social mix policies while others still have not. In addressing this concern, I still believe that in order to do the kind of research Goetz demands requires future studies framed within an historical lens to governance, place, and tenant agency. In the three years since I made my somewhat-of-a-demand, my position in highlighting the noticeable urban historical gap within the literature still resonates as neither addition to the field cited in this footnote has either advocated for historical work or will, in the future, go out and do the urban historical work required—this is, of course, mostly due to training and the constrictions imposed by disciplinary boundaries and the differing research agendas between the social sciences and the humanities. See Deirdre A. Oakley and James C. Fraser, "U.S. Public-Housing Transformations and the Housing Publics Lost in Transition," *City & Community* 15, no. 4 (2016): 349-366. In confronting this empass, then, one problem to address in moving forward is to seriously think about how two distinct approaches can speak to each other in crossing disciplinary boundaries. From my rather biased view, however, how to start practicing this clearly requires a renewal of urban historical work within geography focused on tenants' movements and their histories. For what public housing research now clearly requires—and almost demands—is a new generation of research and researchers trained in historical methods who take historical geographies of place and urban social struggles seriously.

public housing studies—and bringing tenants out from the shadows of the tower block— existing governance structures and institutions in the present can be reinterpreted as a historically produced outcomes of urban struggles for social rights within place and across space.

Part I:

Laying the Foundations: 1953-1970

Chapter 1

The Making of a Rental Contract:

Elites, Governance, Housing, and Citizenship

“The new housing presents a rare opportunity for re-education and rehabilitation. The only thing is we need more such projects right away.”⁴⁵ – Léopold Rogers

“To shelter and protect people with problems was the object of the exercise.”⁴⁶ – Humphrey Carver

“We appeal to the people of Montreal to help us as soon as possible”⁴⁷ – Comité des Citoyens des Habitations Jeanne-Mance

In most historical accounts, public housing in Canada has been defined within the parameters of public policy elites, politicians, and middle class activists leading the charge for public housing construction or policy adoption within Canada. These efforts, starting in the Progressive Era, finally brought a national plan to public housing to Canada with the National Housing Act of

⁴⁵ Dusty Vineburg, “New Homes Replace Slums: Dozois Plan Chief Allays Suspicions of Future,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC) Aug. 15, 1959.

⁴⁶ Humphrey Carver, *Decades: A Personal Report on the Last Decade* (Ottawa: Topcopy), 49.

⁴⁷ “Communiqué de Presse” by Comité des Citoyens des Habitations Jeanne-Mance, 3 February 1966, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. Upon his retirement as president of the Montreal Urban Community, Saulnier gifted his personal files from his tenure as the President of the Executive Committee to the City of Montreal Archives. In tandem with the voluminous newspaper archive on Habitations Jeanne-Mance from 1954 to 1989 in the City of Montreal Archives, Saulnier’s files on Habitations Jeanne-Mance from 1961 to 1970 are the primary source materials used for chapters 1, 2, and 3 of this thesis.

1954. Framed within this perspective of understanding Canadian public policy history, most historical monographs on public housing would understand the ‘making’ of public housing through these political actors and policy constructions.⁴⁸ The story I am about to tell, however, is not interested in the continued regurgitation of this historical narrative.

Being less concerned with how elites and politicians physically built public housing projects,⁴⁹ the story I aim to tell is focused on how tenants sought to counter the governance structures local elites had constructed to dominate their lives. As Sean Purdy has written on the ideology underpinning public housing development in Canada from 1900 to 1950, HJM was imagined by local Montreal elites within a class-driven narrative of ‘constructing’ middle class and Canadian citizenship through the policy of public housing in confronting the ‘slums’ and the ‘slum-dweller.’⁵⁰ Starting during the Progressive Era, these narratives on ‘the slums,’ and the idea of public housing as project to address the conditions of urban poverty and decript housing conditions, became entangled within a class-driven social project by Canadian elites to reeducate the working classes and low-income city residents within Canada. Simply understood as bodies within a governance structure that refused to consider them as people, the first tenants who walked into HJM between 1959 and 1961 were ‘slum-dwellers’ who required a reeducation and had very few tenant rights. It was through this elite narrative on the slums and slum-dwellers that the construction of the institutional structures of Habitations Jeanne-Mance (HJM) were materially realized.

⁴⁸ See John C. Bacher, *Keeping to the Marketplace: The Evolution of Canadian Housing Policy* (Montreal and Buffalo, NY: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993); Humphrey Carver, *Compassionate Landscape* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1975).

⁴⁹ See Marc Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance: Un Projet Social au Centre-Ville* (Montréal: Éditions Saint-Martin, 1995).

⁵⁰ Sean Purdy, “Scaffolding Citizenship: Housing Reform and Nation Formation in Canada, 1900-1950” in *Contesting Canadian Citizenship: Historical readings*, eds. Robert Adamoski, Dorothy Chunn, and Robert Menzies, 129-154. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.

What this chapter aims to demonstrate is how local Montreal elites and social reformers in the postwar modernist planning period created a governance structure that reaffirmed the class-driven social project of the Progressive Era.⁵¹ Focusing on the rental contract and its gendered definition of tenure, the absence of tenant representation on the board of directors, and the lack of rights for tenants to organize within HJM, this chapter highlights how local Montreal elites constructed the HJM governance structure that structurally reenforced these existing narratives. In keeping with the narrative on slum dwellers, social reformers and housing administrators embodied the cultural pathological explanations on poverty stemming from the Progressive Era. As a result, once HJM tenants began to officially organize from their own efforts in 1966, tenants were not only fighting against the rental contract and governance structure, but an entire generation of elites and social reformers.

The Founding of Comité des Citoyens des Habitations Jeanne-Mance

The history of the tenants' movement in Habitations Jeanne-Mance began with a five-sentence paragraph tucked away in the pages of the *Journal de Montreal* on January 22, 1966. In the short announcement, HJM tenants' had declared the formation of the Comité des Citoyens des Habitations Jeanne-Mance (Comité) and announced the election of Gérard Dufort as their president. The announcement occurred without much public or political awareness beyond the statement in the newspaper. This indifference, however, would change on February 3, when the Comité sent a press release regarding tenant conditions within HJM to the local media and to

⁵¹ In this chapter I am building on the work of Sean Purdy, "Scaffolding Citizenship: Housing Reform and Nation Formation in Canada, 1900-1950."

Lucien Saulnier, the chairman of the executive committee of Montreal within city hall, the second most powerful politician in the city behind the mayor, Jean Drapeau.⁵²

The manifesto by the tenants concerned the television report that had aired on local television on January 10, 1966. The special television report focused on the conditions at Habitations Jeanne-Mance and Paul Dozois, the local member of the Québec provincial legislature and main proponent of the housing project whose name HJM was first known until Jeanne Mance, the co-founder of the city of Montreal, was chosen to represent the urban renewal project within the now former red light district. The communique by the tenants sought to outline the first the criticisms of how HJM was administered in highlighting the injustice of the rent scale and rental contract, staff hiring, the surveillance practices maintenance workers, and the general corruption of Léopold Rogers, the administrator of the Corporation d'Habitations Jeanne-Mance (CHJM). Under Rogers, evictions on a short five-day notice for alleged political activities, behavioural infractions, and searching individual apartments without notice for nefarious rental contract infractions were routinely common. All of these institutional practices, of course, were enforced and legalized through the governance structure that underpinned the Dozois Plan through the rental contract.

Designed by the city of Montreal and the Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC), the rental contract and the governance structure it upheld understood tenants as people who were incapable of having political or social rights due to their position within society as slum-dwellers. An outcome of local and federal politicians, local elites and intellectuals views on the 'slums' and 'slum-dwellers' within urban Canada from the Progressive Era, the original definitions and statues of the rental contract for HJM reinforced the cultural pathological

⁵² No author, *Journal De Montreal* (Montréal, QC), Jan. 22, 1966. With Jean Drapeau, Lucien Saulnier was the co-founder of the Civic Party and served as President of the Executive Committee of Montreal from 1961 to 1970.

perceptions elites had on low-income, marginalized, and working class people within cities, and how the construction of public housing was meant to reinforce these prevailing narratives. Framed as a project of ‘slum clearance’ and ‘urban renewal’ the governance structure and rental contract of HJM reinforced both the narrative of eliminating slums and reeducating ‘slum dwellers.’ What allowed all of this to legally occur, the Comité argued, were the 32 clauses within the rental contract that outlined the rules and regulations of HJM and the power the administration had within a governance structure. Purposefully designed to not consider tenants as having social, political, or human rights, the CHJM, acting as the enforcer of the federal and city agreement outlining the rules and structure of the CHJM, had devised a housing project where tenants were not considered people.

Noting the structural injustices imposed on tenants by the CHJM, the press release by the Comité was predictably met with refusal by Léopold Rogers, the administrator of CHJM. Attached to the Comité press release sent to Saulnier was a letter of defiance by Rogers, who also happened to be a close friend of Saulnier. Denying all claims of authoritarianism and corruption and livid at how the tenants had successfully organized and used the press to air their grievances, Rogers went on the offensive toward those who organized the tenants’ committee. Referring to Napoléan Saint-André, the apparent tenant organizer and writer of the manifesto as a “social and political parasite,” Rogers informed Saulnier that he had summarily evicted Saint-André for political organizing:

Il est le cas le plus indésirable que nous ayons eu à subir depuis 6 ans. Ils possède tous les secrets de l’astuce du parasite social et politique. La Corporation ne pouvait agir autrement que dans l’intérêt de tous les intéressés, elle a résilié son bail pour le 28 fév. 1966.⁵³

⁵³ Correspondence from Léopold Rogers to Lucien Saulnier, 8 February 1966, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

For Léopold Rogers, a former provincial civil servant who had become a postwar social reformer after his appointment as administrator, evicting tenants for expressing their rights as human beings was an idea that he did not find controversial or contradictory. Rather, Rogers would have considered it entirely justified.

Rogers was not alone in this sentiment. Rogers' views on tenants merely mirrored the administrator and social reformers of his era. Framed within the narrative of slum-dwellers, these elites understood their tenants as incapable of achieving middle class norms due to their status as people who lived in slums. Directly confronting both elite power and the narrative imposed on them, the 1966 declaration of the Comité was the first confrontation by the tenants that sought to challenge the decades long narrative on the slum-dweller and the ideology behind public housing.

Desiring to Construct People: The Ideology Behind HJM

Whether our tenants pay \$30 or \$100 a month, we expect them to act like good citizens. Welfare and comfort are our only considerations. The great, great majority of the tenants appreciate what has been done for them.⁵⁴ – Léopold Rogers

In 1959 Léopold Rogers was selected by the city to administer the day-to-day operations of the CHJM, the institutional body that was established in coordination between the CMHC and the city of Montréal. In the agreement known as the Contract of the Corporation of Habitations Jeanne-Mance, the CHJM, under the direction of its administrator, enforced the tenants' rental contract outlining the terms of agreement, stipulations, and regulations of HJM. With the federal government as the absentee financial backer and the city as the official landlord, the purpose of the CHJM was to run and administer the housing project in accordance to the rules the agreement

⁵⁴ Bill Bantey and Myer Negru, "New Community Spirit Noted in Dozois Area," Montreal Gazette (Montreal, QC), Sept. 2, 1961.

established.⁵⁵ But as is the case with rules and regulations, the definitions of these governance statutes had to be enforced. To legitimate these federally defined rules, the CMHC and the city of Montreal allowed for maximum interpretation on how to administer the day-to-day lives of tenants within HJM, purposefully leading to a governance structure designed for the mass surveillance of its residents.

How the city of Montreal and the federal government could approve of the contractual definitions and rental contract under the Dozois Plan was related to the ways in which elites had historically understood working class residents residing in the ‘slums’ of Canadian cities, and role of public housing was used in attempting to remake working class lives conform to Canadian middle class values. Outlining public housing as a project of ‘slum clearance’ and ‘urban renewal’ within the National Housing Act of 1954, public housing construction and expansion within Canadian cities was implemented in historically marginalized, immigrant, and racialized working class districts within city centres that had long been the ire of local elites. Centred on the creation of a citizenship discourse stemming from the Victorian and Progressive Era, elites had consistently defined urban poverty within a condition of personal defect in which working class and immigrant populations lacked proper ‘Canadian’ middle class morals. Under the direction of this culturally produced, classist, and racist pathologization, the working class quarters of Saint Jacques and the Saint Laurent Faubourg in Montreal, along with other urban districts across Canada, where indigenous, non-Anglo Saxon immigrants, racialized people, and non-heteronormative sexualities also resided, were collectively deemed a threat to society due to their licentiousness and potentially radical political views. When public housing advocacy arised

⁵⁵ “La Corporation d’Habitations Jeanne-Mance contrat,” 17 September 1959, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

in the early twentieth century by middle class intellectuals and architects, these longheld views were effectively spatialized and incorporated into the built landscape.⁵⁶

In not challenging but instead only strengthening narratives of cultural pathology, social reformers who sought public housing construction incorporated these preexisting views on working class people into their analyses of the built form. Now poverty, the working class, and ‘slum dwellers’ in ‘slum conditions’ were seen within a narrative that understood their economic and social conditions as an outcome of housing conditions. With this convergence, the task ahead from intellectuals to local politicians and the local slumlords who owned the land was to promote and construct a housing and social policy that physically eliminated the slums and the people who lived within them.⁵⁷

Highlighting the slum conditions and the people who lived there, public housing was being construed as both a means to eliminate the slums and eliminate the slum-dweller. By incorporating the narrative of slum-dwellers with a new approach to addressing the social conditions of the working class within architecture, social reformers ignored questions of governance and institutional structures, which had dominated discussions around housing construction in Europe by trade unions, for concerns about the urban aesthetic. In North America, more broadly, what this accomplished was the continuation of the status quo regarding the public discourse on the slums and slum-dwellers. The only addendum to this narrative was that the ‘poor’ and ‘downtrodden’ now lacked proper middle class morals due to improper housing conditions and architecture. Thus, between 1900 and 1945, the view of poverty as an individualized pathology based on a moralistic defect, lack of an education, and proper citizenship was incorporated into campaigns waged by architects who advocated for housing

⁵⁶ Purdy, “Scaffolding Citizenship,” 131-132.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 141-144.

reform on the premise that proper housing conditions and design could eliminate the slums and confront the housing crisis.

In focusing on architectural designs over institutional governance structures, early housing elites ignored questions concerning how public housing should be run. Ceding these questions to elites in power, early public housing era housing managers understood ‘the project’ of public housing within the prevailing classist and racist definitions of working class poverty. As a result, public housing in practice began to reflect the prevailing social views on poverty between the “undeserving” and “deserving” binary in selecting tenants to live in public housing projects. Preferring the underemployed, or the “deserving poor,” to the unemployed and “dependent poor” in the selection guidelines for local public housing authorities, early public housing administrators designed governance structures to incorporate these longheld narratives.⁵⁸

In the case of Canada, where the idea of the welfare state never included a vision understanding shelter as something other than a commodity, geography and national borders rarely mattered within the social reformist social circles. When public housing in Canada finally arrived with the Housing Act of 1954, the elites who outlined the regulations and the ‘social reformers’ who managed the soon to be built public housing projects were rarely, if ever, concerned about housing as a social right. The focus was instead on eliminating the slums and

⁵⁸ Peter Marcuse, “The Beginnings of New York Public Housing,” *Journal of Urban History* 12, no. 4 (1986): 353-390; Richard S. Scobie, *Problem Tenants in Public Housing: Who, Where, and Why are They?* (New York: Praeger, 1975), 6; Sean Purdy, “Scaffolding Citizenship,” 136. As quoted in Scobie, the pages of the *Journal of Housing* demonstrated how managers and policy makers thought of tenants from the 1930s to the 1970s. “Problem families were ‘uncommitted to the value system of monogamous society, living unregulated lives, inadequately socialized for participation in human organization.’” In an intellectual history reviewing how public intellectuals and elites understood city in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, Beauregard noted how Progressive Era cultural pathological explanatory assumptions on poverty and low-income people continued to inform the political discourse on the American city well into the 1960s and early 1970s. Robert Beauregard, “Why Passion for the City has Been Lost,” *Journal of Urban Affairs* 18, no. 3 (1996), pp. 217-231.

containing slum conditions within the Progressive Era narrative on slum dwellers in the industrial North American city.⁵⁹

Regardless of the city, this view was dominant. In the case of HJM, the narratives on poverty and the slums were reiterated by Dr. Leon Lortie, a professor at Université de Montréal, to the members of city hall on June 25, 1958, during a walkout on a vote by Jean Drapeau and Lucien Saulnier, who were against the project and had proposed the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Montreal headquarters be built in its place instead. While Saulnier contended the public believed the Dozois Plan was a "conspiracy against the east end" of Montreal, and its francophone working class districts, Lortie told the councillors that the current slum conditions would return to Saint Jacques, a district in the east end, if the Dozois Plan was left unchecked by city officials. "The best idea [for the Dozois Plan]," said Lortie, "would be to have social investigators living in the buildings along with the other tenants where they could see what is going on."⁶⁰ What was going on was a plan being constructed not for housing low-income people within Montreal, but a project designed to condition the marginalized through surveillance in compliance with the rental code.

Only after the first tenants were moving into HJM in 1959 did the original backers of the project begin to have second thoughts. A few months after the attempt by Drapeau to halt the project with his counter-proposal, HJM would partially open and the first six families were housed within the project. Frank Hanley, a councillor for Saint Henri and proponent of public

⁵⁹ Bacher, *Keeping to the Marketplace*, 268; 274. Carver, recalling an Elizabeth Wood lecture in his memoir, wrote "[Wood's] subject was 'Public Housing Estate Management' and she spoke about the human qualities of tenants and of managers. She said there were plenty of statistics about the people who moved from Chicago slums into public housing—data about illegitimacy, venereal disease, juvenile delinquency, adult crime, tuberculosis. 'But it isn't easy to understand what the slum-dweller is really like,' she said, 'because he isn't one kind of person. [There is] the good housekeeper and the bad housekeeper; the bitter and the hopeful; the defeated and the undefeated; the moral, the immoral; the god-fearing and the godless. But we have no data on these characteristics.' (As written) Carver, *Compassionate Landscape*, 86.

⁶⁰ "CAL Councillors Stage Protest," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), June 26, 1958.

housing for low-income families, would not be present at the ceremony. Declining to be present at the press conference Hanley, an original supporter of the Dozois Plan, would tell *La Presse* felt that he felt deceived by the project.

"I voted for the demolition of the slums ... but I believed that the Dozois housing units would be for low-income families and that rents would be modest. But I realize that it is not for the poor at all."

Hanley, noting how it was the the tenants and not local public officials who were demanding changes to HJM, from the moment they became tenants in 1959, further clarified his remarks in outlining what would later become an aspect of HJM tenants' public grievances in the 1960s about life within the project:

I received complaints this morning from some families who told me that they were currently paying a rent of \$34, and that in the Dozois project their rent will be increased to \$82. Another told me that his rent in the project will be \$112... I'm very disappointed. I had asked at a council meeting on the Dozois Plan information about the rents that people would be called upon to pay. And I never got the information I wanted. It is from the tenants themselves that I have to get my information, not from the responsible people at city hall. By voting for the Dozois plan I thought that low-income families could get more adequate housing at low rents. But I see today that this is not the case. It is not a project for the poor.⁶¹

Léopold Rogers, a civil servant within the provincial Ministry of Labour, whose only experience in public housing up until his appointment had been to observe the housing conditions and development of public housing in Toronto, New York, and Boston, did not find any of the early criticisms of HJM as a project disconcerting.⁶² Instead, Rogers reiterated the inherent purpose of HJM from the perspective of the elites within Montreal. In 1961, after HJM

⁶¹ "La Conseiller Frank Hanley 'désappointé,'" *La Presse* (Montréal, QC), Oct. 16, 1959. The incoming tenants who informed Hanley of the rental contract disparities after signing their leases were interviewed in the *Gazette* on the same day. "I feel like a goldfish," said HJM tenant Maurice Spinelli on the first day he walked into HJM and realized the rent would go up by 15 dollars once his son went to work. Dismayed at the rent scale penalties, Spinelli immediately became a proponent of homeownership. "All in all it's best to buy your own home," said Spinelli. "6 Dozois Families Move into Project," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Oct. 16, 1959.

⁶² "Administrateur des Habitations Jeanne-Mance," *La Presse* (Montréal, QC), July 21, 1959.

officially opened, Rogers reiterated how the intentions of the CHJM was actually about “rehabilitating” city residents who lived in slum conditions:

There are 2,000 similar projects on this continent and not one compares with [Jeanne-Mance]. In most similar projects, no attention is paid to the social problems. The sociological aspect is our main target. We are actually rehabilitating many of our tenants. The people feel cleaner because they are living decently... We are trying to induce the people to help themselves.⁶³

If Rogers was correct in believing that HJM was a project to not only eliminate the slums but also those who lived there, the rental contract and its definitions and terms of residency underlined and enforced the scope of how Rogers would understand rehabilitation. Rogers, conceivably, did not have to look far to be justified in contending the rental contract and its rent-gearred to total family income, gendered and heteronormative patriarchal definitions of family tenure, or the governance structure designed without consideration that tenants should be involved within the decision making processes of the CHJM, could possibly be understood as contradictory. If confronted with criticisms, Rogers could simply point to the editorial pages of the local press in Montreal, where it was routine in the late 1950s and early 1960s, to demand the city, province, and federal state proceed with a “hundred year war” on the slums.⁶⁴

If this was indeed a “war” on the slums and slum-dwellers, the only way to contain this supposed contagion would be through institutional force and surveillance. And as the rest of this chapter will highlight, how the governance structure and the rental contract was devised by the city of Montreal and the CMHC not only outlined the future grievances of the tenants, but also

⁶³ Bill Bantey and Myer Negru, “Dozois Plan Loses Slums ‘Anonymity,’” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC) Jan. 25, 1961. This “rehabilitation” did not include re-housing the low-income and urban poor within the district with higher quality dwellings. In 1968, the second administrator of HJM, Daniel Marsan, acknowledged that about 90 percent of the original inhabitants of the neighbourhood were displaced from the Dozois Plan and were not offered an apartment. For Marsan, this was not a major concern or legacy of the project. As Marsan explained to *The Georgian*, the student newspaper of Sir George Williams College in Montreal, “Some people don’t like to live in a clean house.” Anne McLean, “Urban Renewal 1 – Jeanne Mance,” *The Georgian* (Montreal, QC), Dec 11, 1968.

⁶⁴ Michael Johnson, “Slum Fight Called Hundred-Year War,” *Montreal-Matin* (Montreal, QC), Aug. 21, 1959.

set the conditions for future tenant struggles centred on governance in confronting the growing narrative of HJM a territorized and stigmatized space. For the purpose of the rental contract and the ideology behind its language and clauses set the tone for tenant-landlord relations in the decades that followed.

As the rental contract made abundantly clear: “In selecting tenants,” the Dozois Plan governance structure outlined in 1959, “the Authority must adhere strictly to the terms of this Annex, and, in addition, take into account the general purposes for which these homes were built.”⁶⁵ For Rogers, the school teacher turned civil servant, his task was to follow the rubric set out in the frameworks demanded by the CMHC in the selection guidelines of the original rental contract, which were primarily driven on the belief that low-income people lacked proper citizenship and morality due to their housing conditions.

Contractual Reeducation: The Rental Contract and the Governance of HJM

On the night of June 26, 1958, councillors at city hall in Montreal debated and voted on the creation of the CHJM, the administrative and official body of the Dozois Plan, the official project name of the second public housing project in Canada. Named after Paul Dozois, a business-friendly city councilor for the Centre-Sud neighbourhood of Saint Jacques, the Dozois Plan was a highly contested project that sought to both “renovate” the physical structure of the neighbourhood and the people who lived there.⁶⁶ Backed by a funding scheme where 75 percent

⁶⁵ “La Corporation d’Habitations Jeanne-Mance contrat,” 17 September 1959, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

⁶⁶ “La Corporation des habitations Jeanne-Mance est constituée,” *Montréal-Matin* (Montreal, QC), Jun. 26, 1958. ‘Renovation’ did not equate to re-housing the urban poor within the district with higher quality dwellings. In 1968, the second administrator of HJM, Daniel Marsan, acknowledged that about 90 percent of the original inhabitants of the neighbourhood were displaced from the Dozois Plan and were not offered an apartment. For Marsan, this was not a major concern or legacy of the project. As Marsan explained to *The Georgian*, the student newspaper of Sir George Williams College in Montreal, “Some people don’t like to live in a clean house.” Anne McLean, “Urban Renewal 1 – Jeanne Mance,” *The Georgian* (Montreal, QC), Dec 11, 1968.

of the overall costs would be financed by the federal government through the CMHC, and 25 percent of total funding from the city of Montreal, the CHJM was envisioned with the task of running the operations of the housing project and selecting tenants starting in 1959. Comprised of an appointed president, vice president, and three appointed boards of directors by city council, the board of directors were patronage appointments who ruled on the advice and opinion of the administrator, who held the actual power within the CHJM.⁶⁷

After outlining the structure of the CHJM, the next step for the city was to define the rules and regulations of everyday life in envisioning how Jeanne-Mance would operate. These regulations were finalized one year later when the project began to admit tenants on September 17, 1959. The purpose of this contract between the city, the CMHC, and the CHJM outlined the governance structure, legal requirements, and duties of the CHJM in upholding the purpose of the Dozois Plan. On May 2, 1961, the city announced that every apartment within HJM was officially occupied.⁶⁸

Within this governance framework the city outlined the legal definitions and regulations of the rental contract between the tenant and the CHJM, solidifying how the city and the federal state understood the project of public housing. The rental contract, the binding document for rental tenure, outlined who was allowed to live in HJM and on what terms. From devising the rent scale, which outlined how much tenants would have to pay for rent in HJM, to demanding tenant ‘families’ selected for tenure in HJM had to meet a stringent social and patriarchal

⁶⁷ The early appointments to the board of directors of the CHJM were individuals who were highly connected to the Union Nationale governments of Duplessis and Johnston. Lucien Tremblay, the first president of the board of directors for the CHJM, resigned his position after being appointed the Chief Justice of Quebec, a position Tremblay served from 1961 to 1977. Émile Désorcy, president of Credit Foncier and slumlord who owned the red light district property sold to the city to build HJM, was appointed as the second president of the CHJM in 1961. Robert Kelder, “Instant Ghetto,” *Logos* 1, no. 6 (1968), 7. For a critical Marxist study on the political economy of HJM as a development, and the history of public housing advocacy in Montreal from 1930 to 1950, see Susan M. Ruddick, “The Movement for Public Housing in Montreal,” (master’s thesis, McGill University, 1979).

⁶⁸ “Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance: les 796 logements sont occupés,” *Le Devoir* (Montréal, QC), May 2, 1961.

normative definition of what constituted a ‘family,’ the rental contract and the governance structure was premised on the race, gender, and class definitions of the Victorian and Progressive Era in Canada.

As Frank Hanley had realized rather dramatically regarding the rent scale on the first day tenants were allowed to move into HJM in 1959, the rental agreement also had gender and traditional family rental clauses built into the tenant contract. The selection committee of CHJM, the body within the project tasked with selecting tenants for residency within HJM, made its decisions on tenure through the rules and definitions set forth in the Family Allowance Act of 1944 and the CHMC Housing Authorities guidelines of 1959. Based off these two mutually enforcing definitions, the regulations of the rental contract enforced the tenant selection committee of HJM to select prospective tenant households that conformed to hetero-normative and Christian based sexuality and monogamy ideals and identities. Discursively and publicly imagined as a housing project for ‘families’ in the local Montreal press, prospective tenants for Jeanne-Mance had to fit the accepted federal policy definition of what constituted a “natural” family in accordance with Family Act and CMHC guidebook.⁶⁹ In both the Family Act and the CMHC guideline, a “natural family” consisted of a male-household breadwinner with “one or more” individuals by “blood, marriage or adoption” living together. Prospective tenant households who were “a group of unrelated persons living together, residents or people living alone” would be denied residency to HJM.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ “Ceci est L’Annexe “B” Au Contrat,” 17 September 1959, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. To underscore this discourse in the 1950s to 1970s, Rogers and the CHJM would only refer to the total number of people living in HJM in the press as “796 families.” This administrative produced discourse was how the entire Montreal press corp spoke of HJM until tenants became politically active in 1966.

⁷⁰ “Ceci est L’Annexe “B” Au Contrat,” 17 September 1959, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001).

The rental contract also defined how tenants would pay their rent. Devised by Humphrey Carver and Elizabeth Hopewood by the Civic Advisory Council of Toronto in 1948 as the proposed rent scale for the Regent Park housing project, their rent scale system was adopted as the universal Canadian rent scale for public housing with adoption of the National Housing Act of 1954. Referring to the rent scale as his greatest professional achievement, Carver and Hopewood developed the rent-to-gross family income that limited how much tenant households could earn while living within a housing project in Canada.⁷¹ In defining who was eligible to live in Jeanne-Mance on a gross-family income level basis, the scale determined the eligibility by the

Archives de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. The family definition clause in the rental contract read: “Family’ means a natural family consisting of a householder and one or more persons related by blood, marriage or adoption, plus a natural family. The expression may include part of the family group and whose income and resources are available to meet the living expenses of the group, but the expression does not include a group of unrelated persons living together, residents or people living alone.” Historically, the policy and social origins of this definition framed early efforts to define welfare within Canada in selecting low-income families who fit the normative gender family perceptions, race, and class definitions that determined welfare eligibility. As Strong-Boag has pervasively argued, the origins of the Mothers’ Allowance movement in Canada, the precursor to the Family Allowances Act, which the original HJM rental contract is guided by, was predicated on the women’s social role as the providers and procreators for the “preservation of the race” from the Progressive Era. Veronica Strong-Boag, “Wages for Housework: Mothers’ Allowances and the Beginnings of Social Security in Canada,” in *The Social Basis of Law*, eds. Stephen Brickley and Elizabeth Comack (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1986), 93. In Québec, these notions of “survival” were prominent within the ultra-conservative and nationalist Duplessis era with its connections with the Catholic Church regarding the development of a French Canadian identity predicated on defined gender roles in constructing a racial identity through language. For French speaking working class women in Quebec, conservative intellectuals and elites in public life constructed policies and promoted social norms that sought to “preserve” French Canadian society by explaining it was the women’s role to have large Catholic families. Sean Mills, *A Place in the Sun: Haiti, Haitians, and the Remaking of Quebec* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 2015), pp. 26-27.

⁷¹ Carver, *Compassionate Landscape*, 85. “Of all the things I did during that period [the Regent Park rent scale] proved to have the most lasting value, for the so-called Carver-Hopwood scale was used for all public housing in Canada.” Designed explicitly for Toronto in taking account the local social and economic conditions, the Carver-Hopwood scale became the official rent scale for all Canadian public housing built between 1948 and 1968. If read explicitly from the report in 1948, Carver and Hopwood would have disagreed with universalizing Toronto as Canada. As they wrote in 1948 “Though the proposals made here are intended to apply particularly to the Regent Park project it is thought that the principles involved might ultimately be applied in public housing projects undertaken elsewhere in Canada. These principles are consistent with well-tried practices in other countries but the rent-scale here proposed contains certain unique features which, it is believed, would make it pre-eminently fair without being too complicated,” Humphrey Carver and Alison L. Hopwood, *Rents for Regent Park: a Rent-Scale System for a Public Housing Project* (Toronto: Civic Advisory Council of Toronto, 1948), 9. Their report based the Canadian rent scale from studies on the rents in Newark, New Jersey, Buffalo, New York, Boston, MA, Detroit, MI, Australia, and London and Birmingham, England. Out of these cities, Carver believed Birmingham was the most appropriate and comparable city for Toronto, which also happened to be his hometown.

maximum gross rent of each household in relation to the total number of occupants within the dwelling who received an income—including income obtained by children—with household sizes ranging from two to 10 members.⁷² For families on this sliding scale who brought in more income than their level of rent mandated, the rental contract stipulated that these families would be fined.⁷³

The rent scale and the gendered definitions of family became two guiding principles for the tenant selection committee of the CHJM. These two pillars of the contract, built on rather stringent “deserving poor” guidelines, however, would create an institutional contradiction for Léopold Rogers and the CHJM. Interviewed by the *Montreal Star* in 1961, Rogers lamented at how the rental scale of the rental contract had nullified the purpose of “rehabilitation” of Montreal’s slum-dwellers. “One of the problems I’ve encountered,” he explained, “is that excellent tenant prospects—couples with many children who can’t find adequate homes elsewhere—must be turned down because their income is too high.”⁷⁴

Faced with the choice of wanting to select the “most deserving” tenants who had fit the family definition of prospective tenure, Rogers and the original business elites who promoted the

⁷² “Annex C rental contract,” 17 September 1959, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. In penalizing children who worked, the scale unintentionally reinforced child labour reliance for income within each household. In the 1950s, it was still common in Montreal to have working class families with working children. See Magda Fahrni, *Household Politics: Montreal Families and Postwar Reconstruction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 41-43.

⁷³ “Rental Contract Annex C,” 17 September 1959, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. Carver and Hopwood universally applied the fines for households that accumulated more income than mandated in accordance to the rent scale. Regardless of the household income, family size, or total gross income, tenants could not exceed 330 dollars a month in gross total income. Only family units of nine and ten were allowed to have the highest total gross family income of 365 dollars per month. To determine the scale and the maximum allowed by the rent scale, the total gross income of each household was configured in relation to family size. Tenants were then sorted to a scale of rising rents of every five dollars from the minimum monthly income of 150 dollars to the maximum allowed 365 dollars per month. If households exceeded their monthly rent defined in their contract, tenants were given a 30 percent of their total gross income fine for the penalty.

⁷⁴ Bill Bantey and Myer Negru, “8 Years Later: Top Dozois Plan Goal not Realized,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC) Jan. 27, 1961.

project in the planning stages in the 1950s were dismayed by how Jeanne-Mance had become a housing project without a purpose. As Roland Savignac, former head of the Municipal Sanitary Housing Bureau, the city organization tasked with developing HJM in the 1950s, explained to the *Gazette* in 1965:

To a certain extent, the project has turned out to be public housing instead of increasing the standard of living of the people already there.... whatever problems there have been or are, I would still be in favor of the Dozois Plan today for the proportion of trouble it cured.⁷⁵

What Rogers and Savignac were publicly lamenting in the press was their concern over the original intent of HJM as a project designed to both demolish the slums and eliminate the slum-dweller. With the definition of family regulation, and its explicit guidelines on selecting the “deserving poor” candidates who met the middle class social norms of the elites in the post-war era, this position was the continuation of the cultural pathological narratives on low-income people from the Progressive and Victorian Eras.⁷⁶ These narratives, however, were incompatible with a rent scale that was, in theory, potentially designed for the “undeserving poor” with its limits on family income. For social reformers who were more interested in eliminating the slum-dweller and not eliminating the slums, the rent scale denied these housing advocates of their meaning to what Jeanne-Mance was to them as a project. Instead of explicitly ‘making better people,’ HJM had merely become a public housing project of 796 housing units.

Yet for all of the complaining by Rogers and the original backers of the project, the rent scale and the rental definitions from the CMHC legally entrenched the power of the

⁷⁵ Bill Bantey and Myer Negru, “8 Years Later: Top Dozois Plan Goal not Realized,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Jan. 27, 1961.

⁷⁶ Marcuse, “The Beginnings of New York Housing,” 363-365. The undeserving/deserving binary also extended to tenant leaders in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. Detailing how Black Power inspired tenant leaders in the 1960s and 1970s began to speak the elitist and administrative language of “making better people” as their lives continued after their late 1960s activism, see Michael Karp, “The St. Louis Rent Strike of 1969: Transforming Black Activism and American Low-Income Housing,” *Journal of Urban History* 40, no. 4 (2014): 648-670.

administrator over the tenants. In accordance with the rental contract and regulations of the Dozois Plan, Rogers and the CHJM were by law required to uphold the definitions of tenure within the rental contract. How the CHJM enforced the gross household income rent scale and the definition of a family was through the continual auditing and surveillance of tenant household finances. As the seventh amendment of the contract agreement made abundantly clear, the “Authority,” the administration of the CHJM, was mandated by federal law to audit each individual household “at least” once every twelve months to determine whether the gross family income of each rental unit did not exceed the maximum gross income allowed. Pursuant to this requirement, the Dozois Plan agreement had no guidelines, instructions, or stipulations on how this audit was to be enforced or conducted. The task to determine these boundaries was legally up the digression of the Léopold Rogers, the administrator.⁷⁷

Allowed considerable discretion, Rogers understood this directive as a signal to develop a mass surveillance system within the housing project. Enforcing a prison-like environment to the everyday life with HJM, tenants were treated as prisoners. In going beyond enforcing the rental scale, which allowed Rogers to instruct maintenance workers to break into tenant apartments and demand tenants hand over their tax returns, Rogers enforced punitive social codes on the tenants with a 9 pm curfew with a paternalistic enforcement of social habits of tenants ranging from admonishing drinking, public bathing, or tenant social gatherings. To uphold the surveillance practices, Rogers wielded the threat of eviction and routinely evicted tenants on a five day notice

⁷⁷ “Ceci est L’Annexe “B” Au Contract, 17 September 1959, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. The power to surveil tenants financially was also enforced beyond the CHJM. The city of Montreal and the CMHC also had the power to force the administrator of the CHJM to conduct tenant audits, if the CHJM did not comply.

from tenant organizing to unforeseen life events that did not meet the merits of a proper, Canadian middle class citizenship.

Confronting Elitism: Tenant Responses to the CHJM in the 1960s

“Whatever lessons there are to be learned from this project will be applied in any future undertakings of this kind.” – Gerry Synder, chair of the urban renewal committee for the city of Montreal⁷⁸

If tenants were living under a life of constant surveillance, the press within Montreal never fully addressed the issue until later in the 1960s, when tenants were politically organizing against their conditions and the narratives on the slums.⁷⁹ In 1969, Sheila Arnopoulous of the *Montreal Star*, anonymously interviewed tenants within HJM. Fearing eviction from the CHJM for speaking out publicly against the housing authority, no names identified in the article. In their own words, however, the tenants spoke to the mindset social reformers had regarding low-income people in the post-war era in Canada. “I go out for a walk... and I get worried they think I’m going to work to add to my income. One constantly feels spied on. Of course we all try to beat the system by making a little extra money,” said one tenant regarding the rental scale. With the rent scale, and the built-in surveillance structure to uphold it, the tenants contended life resembled an urban penal colony where tenants were stuck in perpetuity. As one tenant told *The Star*, “We can’t afford anything else. Perhaps one of the reasons we don’t like Jeanne-Mance is because we know there’s nowhere else to go.”⁸⁰

The institutional framework devised by the city and CMHC and enforced by Rogers also had a deleterious effect on how tenants viewed their homes and community. From the tenants’

⁷⁸ Bill Bantley and Myer Negru, “New Community Spirit Noted in Dozois Area,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Sept. 2, 1961.

⁷⁹ Robert Kelder, “Instant Ghetto,” *Logos* 1, no. 6 (1968), 18. Kelder also contended the absence of critical journalism on HJM and tenants’ activism within the housing project in the 1960s was due to a city-wide blackout by the press regarding the conditions and tenant organizing within the project.

⁸⁰ Sheila Arnopoulous, “St Martin’s Looks Beyond Jeanne Mance,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), April 20, 1969.

point of view in the 1960s, while the housing was exceptionally high in quality for its time, there was simply more to life than having an affordable apartment with superior modern interior design qualities. “I really can’t put my finger on what’s wrong with this place except that I know I hate it and my kids hate it,” said one tenant to *The Star*. “It’s clean, it’s roomy, and God knows, I couldn’t do better. Where else could I find a place for \$75 a month? But I can hardly wait to get out.”⁸¹ The tenants were not alone in criticizing HJM in this period, but they were the first to confront both the narratives on public housing and slum-dwellers in Montreal. In focusing on the institutional frameworks of the Dozois Plan, tenants were developing in the 1960s a political narrative that countered the position of Jean Drapeau, who opposed the construction of the project, on the grounds HJM would only serve to create more slum-dwellers.

Tenants were also countering the intellectual driven public criticism of HJM in the 1960s and early 1970s and its focus on architectural and planning design, or how the modernist buildings reinforced and its spatial territorialization as a ‘slum clearance’ project in the former red light district. From the tenants’ point of view, the problem with HJM was located within the politics of everyday life and how the rental contract legitimated state surveillance, and not the design of the buildings. As one tenant told *The Star*: “There are a lot of things I could tell you about this place. But quite frankly, I don’t want to see you. They could throw me out if they heard I was talking to a reporter. And I can’t afford that.” For other tenants, the reason for the paternalism from the CHJM was class-driven. Regarding the maintenance crews and the administrative practices of the CHJM and how their classist paternalism was legitimated by the

⁸¹ Sheila Arnopoulous, “St Martin’s Looks Beyond Jeanne Mance,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), April 20, 1969.

rental contract, one tenant told *The Star*, “It’s the guys who are just one rung up... they’re the ones who enjoy telling us we’re no good anyway and should be grateful for what we’ve got.”⁸²

When allowed to speak on their own terms, the tenants of HJM in the 1960s demonstrated that the fundamental tension between the elites and how they viewed tenants, poverty, or the slums, outlined and guided their public narratives and governance structures. Not being allowed to participate within their own homes and communities from the beginning of the history of housing project, tenants within HJM were trapped within a structure historically devised by elites within a narrative that originated from the Progressive Era. Continuing to hold the view of working class and low-income people as unworthy human beings who could be controlled and managed, the original framework underpinning HJM was designed to be repressive. With laws and social codes enforced by Léopold Rogers, administrator of the CHJM, the Comité organized by the tenants in 1966, sought to challenge this narrative. Organizing

⁸² Sheila Arnopoulous, “St Martin’s Looks Beyond Jeanne Mance,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), April 20, 1969. Within HJM, Rogers talked to the tenants the same way he talked to the press, and the *Montreal Star* report in 1969 highlighted this personal views on tenants within the project. “For mercy’s sake, help us to help you. Do not let anyone (not even an evil-minded neighbor) steal away the comfort you have the right to live with and that we are seeking for you with all possible security. Report to the maintenance building all acts of vandalism committed on the grounds or in the buildings that you cannot restrain,” he told tenants in a mass circulated letter in the 1960s. Another letter to tenants from Rogers read: “It has been brought to our attention that some tenants are keeping their balcony door opened to all weather inclemencies[sic] and this involves a great deal of repairs for damages caused by rain which swells and rots the wood.” Rogers particularly policed women’s bodies. In the same *Montreal Star* article, tenants told the reporter that Rogers had evicted a woman for having an “illegitimate child.” Yet this type of patriarchal and sexist behaviour was shown much earlier. In 1961 Rogers told the *Gazette* that he had called the police on a woman sunbathing “in a bikini” after the woman “refused to go in doors as Rogers requested.” Bill Bantey and Myer Negru, “Dozois Plan Loses Slums ‘Anonymity,’” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Jan. 25, 1961. Rogers’ paternalism was not lost on social agency actors organizing within HJM. Speaking to the *Montreal Star* in 1969, Peter Katadotis, a social worker for Projet renovation d’habitation urbansime (PRSU), explained how the tenants were stigmatized with class-based paternalism from both institutional governance actors and the wider society. “Everyone knows it’s public housing, it’s not integrated into the community, it’s a ghetto and everyone knows it. No one really wants to have a Jeanne-Mance address. There’s a stigma attached to it... public housing dwellers have far more rules than any average tenant in an average building... tenants are constantly being suspected of ‘immoral behavior.’” Sheila Arnopoulous, “St Martin’s Looks Beyond Jeanne Mance,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), April 20, 1969.

knowing Rogers could evict political tenants at any moment for their activities, the Comité began a two-year struggle for political recognition. In their fight against Rogers and the CHJM, the purposefully idealized, top-down governance structure where tenant agency was not allowed to exist, would be openly challenged.

Chapter 2

Making Alliances:

Changing the Rental Contract and Developing a Class-Consciousness in 1967

“People are not dictators because they express their will. It is simply the force of wills opposing one another.”⁸³ – Jean Drapeau

In 1967 Montreal was a city on the verge of beginning a new era of political and social upheaval and working class resistance. Stemming from the “social animation” organizing tactics of the Montreal Social Services (MSS), the Projet renovation d’habitation urbansime (PRSU), and the Conseil des oeuvres de Montréal (Conséil), anglophone and francophone working class districts within the city were in the early stages of becoming politically organized. For these social agencies, the purpose of organizing was aimed at addressing the social policy pitfalls and failures of the neo-nationalist approach to addressing social issues during the ‘Quiet Revolution’ of the early 1960s. The so-called ‘Quiet Revolution’ from 1961 to 1965 saw Quebec society embrace secularism, neo-nationalism, and the state as the vehicle to modernizing Quebec in the postwar era. Connected to the Church and state agencies, the social animation organizing tactics of the PRSU, MSS, and Conséil were explicitly designed to create the energies required to change social policy within the state. In this regard the tactic of animation and its efforts to promote “participatory democracy,” the mantra of the 1960s in North America, was understood by the executives of the Montreal social agencies as the continuation of the status-quo and the neo-

⁸³ Brian McKenna, Susan Purcell, 1980, *Drapeau*, (Toronto/Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1980), 109.

nationalist and bureaucratic state-centric project. Not all social actors and activists within these social agencies, however, held the same view on the purpose behind this form of community organizing.

Connecting with social activist Jean Grenier of PRSU before the MSS and Conseil began to organize the neighbourhood of Saint Jacques, the trajectory of the tenants' movement in 1967 incorporated a more socialist direction that both empowered and later countered the social agency positions of the more moderate MSS and Conseil in the years that followed in the 1960s. With Grenier influencing tenants and tenant leaders, the tenants' movement within Habitations Jeanne-Mance made its first alliance and connection with the Left in Montreal in the summer of 1967. Through Grenier, this period for tenants represented an increasingly socialist and anti-capitalist ideological trajectory that led tenants in newfound directions and toward increased political militancy.

How tenants within HJM made alliances with social activists and political connections within the Left of Montreal in 1967 is the subject of this chapter. Articulating their demands through the Comité and Mouvement pour justice sociale (MSJ), a tenant-community linked neighbourhood group associated with Jean Grenier, tenants began to incorporate their struggle for tenants' rights into demanding the rights and recognition of low-income residents within the neighbourhood of Saint Jacques. In the process of successfully campaigning to raise awareness on the issue over evictions of widowed tenants due to the definition of family clause in the rental contract, raising awareness about the institutional practices of the CHJM, and creating enough media scrutiny to force Léopold Rogers to resign as administrator, the tenants associated with the MSJ gained notoreity through the increased media attention, but also became known to the police through an investigation into the activities of the MSJ by the Drapeau-Saulnier

administration. In being helped by social service actors, HJM tenants' in 1967 were able to challenge the CHJM and the city of Montreal with its first alliance with social activists on the Left in the Montreal, a connection that would serve to the tenants' movement advantage in the decades that followed.

No Longer a Family: Evicting Widowers During Expo '67

In 1967 the world's media attention came to Montreal to witness Expo '67, the World's Fair. Celebrating Canada's centennial, the event achieved the largest World's Fair attendance on record. Pitched to the global media as the world's largest party, Expo '67 also marked the beginning of Jean Drapeau's mega-events and mass-consumption driven policies that outlined the political economy of Montreal between 1967 and 1976 to entice capital investment within a city undergoing economic restructuring, decline, and population flight to the outlining suburbs.⁸⁴ Yet within the backdrop of this mass-consumption and the mass-commercial spectacle waiting to be consumed by an ever-growing, suburban, and middle class francophone population—was a controversy over rent tenure of recent widowers at Habitations Jeanne-Mance. What started out first as rumours in the spring of 1967 had become a full-on crisis for the CHJM by the summer, and led to an increase in media awareness for the tenants and the institutional practices within HJM from the media.

How this moment occurred was a direct result of the definition of family clause in the original rental contract of 1959. For what became known as the Expo eviction crisis in the summer of 1967 stemmed from a series of rumours circulating within Jeanne-Mance regarding 30 recent widowers potentially being evicted by Rogers over their marital status. The potential the threat of eviction for widowed tenants stemmed from the definition of family clause in the

⁸⁴ See André Lortie and Olivio Barbieri, *The 60s: Montreal Thinks Big* (Montreal and Vancouver: Canadian Centre of Architecture/Douglas & McIntyre, 2004).

rental contract and the temporary housing shortage for both tourists visiting Expo '67 and future residents of St. Martin's Block, the first public housing project built by Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ), the newly established provincial housing authority. The threats of eviction were, of course, real and entirely legal. The rules and regulations of the 1959 rental contract, which in 1967 had yet to be updated, mandated that prospective tenants had to be living together in heterosexual relationships in order to be selected for residency. Under these terms, therefore, the death of a partner allowed for the legal justification of an eviction by the Rogers and the CHJM.

To confront what the CHJM considered to be rumours, tenants went to the press with the backing of social service actors helping tenants behind the scenes. Also empowering the tenants' struggle against the rental contract and its family definition of tenure was Mouvement pour Justice Sociale (MSJ). Founded by Comité president Gérard Dufort, Jean Grenier, ex-CHJM employee Roger Goulet, and HJM tenant Jules Boudreault, the MSJ was the first community-based political action group that spoke of tenants concerns within HJM in relation to the city government. An alliance formed from due to the previous efforts by tenants to organize themselves through the Comité—which had already gained media attention in 1966—Jean Grenier was the first political social service agency actor to politically organize HJM tenants over a year later in 1967. As a social worker with PRSU, Grenier had only become aware of the tenants situation in HJM through the manifesto and founding of the Comité in January of 1966.⁸⁵ Proofing manifestos and encouraging tenants to begin speaking for themselves, Grenier quickly became the connection for tenants to the Left within Montreal. As a result, HJM tenant leaders associated with the Comité would also become more radical with their public confrontations.

⁸⁵ Robert Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique des Citoyens des Saint Jacques (1968-1988): des citoyens des citoyens au CLSC Plateau Mont-Royal* (Montréal: VLB, 1988), 24

With help from Grenier and the MSJ, the effects of the campaign to end the threats of widower evictions reverberated through the CHJM hierarchy. For the first time since the founding of HJM, Rogers, concerned about the public image of CHJM, was forced to address tenant complaints in the media in an effort to delegitimize the tenants' committee. Unaccustomed to being questioned about his authority within HJM, Rogers began to contradict his statements on whether or not such an eviction policy within HJM was in place within the press. Pressured by the MSJ to clarify the official policy in a letter to Rogers, the MSJ letter, republished and paraphrased in *Le Devoir*, asked "in case it would be 'true,' we would be very grateful to give us the reasons for this decision." Unable to coherently answer an affirmative, Rogers, replying to the MSJ in a letter on August 7, 1967, gave the tenants a non-answer that acknowledged how the definition of family defined the rental tenure within the housing project. As explained in *Le*

Devoir:

Dans sa réponse en date du 7 août, M. Léopold Rogers, sans contester l'une ou l'autre des affirmations des locataires, se borne à rappeler que les Habitations sont administrées en vertu d'un contrat intervenu entre la Société centrale d'hypothèques et de logement, le ville de Montréal et la Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance, et cite une stipulation de ce contrat définissant ce qu'il faut entendre par "famille." Le texte du contrat stipule que 'l'expression ne comprend pas un groupe de personnes non apparentées qui vivent ensemble, des pensionnaires ou des personnes qui vivent seules.'⁸⁶

With Rogers' response to the MSJ published in *Le Devoir*, the public fallout was immediate. Contending to *La Presse* on the following day that he was ultimately powerless due to his position as an administrator of a project that was created by the city of Montreal and the CMHC, Rogers' own evasiveness to the tenants' question was reinforced in his answer to the media. Pleading his innocence as an administrator merely following the rules of the governance structure, Rogers told *La Presse* in an interview on August 11, 1967:

⁸⁶ Jean-Claude Leclerc, "30 vieillards sont Menacés d'Éviction au "Plan Dozois," *Le Devoir* (Montréal, QC), Aug. 12, 1967.

We have never ousted one person unless there were occurrences of scandal or harmful behaviour... we have never forced the hands of single persons to leave their homes... “We have never put anyone in the street.”⁸⁷

The newfound media attention for Rogers—which never directly questioned his governing practices, but merely asked if complaints by the tenants were real—was too much for the first administrator of HJM. In contrast to his public persona between 1961 and 1965, when press articles rendered Rogers as a benevolent postwar social reformer, the eviction crisis in 1967 served as the first example in the cracking of the postwar façade. Never fully questioned or criticized in the media through editorials, the simple increase in media awareness of institutional practices within HJM from the tenants through a media focused campaign had been picked up by all major city and local newspapers. And as a result, the journalists who were assigned to cover the situation began to both take the tenants complaints seriously and question the governance practices of the CHJM. Taken together, the moment signalled a new era of criticism of both the CHJM and its governance practices and critiques of post-war public housing projects within Montreal.

In response to the media simply asking questions about HJM, Rogers—a bureaucrat careerist who was not used to the media spotlight—lashed out at the tenant agitators and the overall purpose of the ‘project’ of Jeanne-Mance. “This is not funny,” he told *Le Devoir* on August 12, 1967, “of being placed in a situation where I have to decide whether [a tenant] is going to die or will [a tenant] live.”⁸⁸ Contending only the CHJM was capable of leading tenants out of a living condition that had been “created by a previous social humanity,” Rogers blamed

⁸⁷ Claire Dutrisac, “Nous N’avons Jamais mis Personne dans la Rue,” *La Presse* (Montréal, QC), Aug. 11, 1967.

⁸⁸ Jean-Claude Leclerc, “Même s’ils sont Seuls, les 60 Vieillards ne seront pas Évincés du “Plan Dozois” si Montréal ou la SCHL n’exige pas leur Renvoi,” *Le Devoir* (Montréal, QC), Aug. 12, 1967.

the tenant leaders and social activists like Dufort and Grenier for the social problems within Jeanne-Mance. With tenants now publicly speaking out about their living conditions within HJM for the first time, Rogers believed this new era of criticism in the media by the tenants had “stirred up unnecessary changes” and “deprived [tenants] of the only support on which these elderly people can count on, the spirit of stability and security.”⁸⁹

The complaints in the press by Rogers regarding HJM would also be his last. Publicly frustrated by the widowers’ crisis, Rogers resigned as administrator following the media attention to take an executive position within the newly formed provincial housing authority, Société d’Habitation du Québec (SHQ).⁹⁰ In vacating the position—which had allegedly been planned in advance—Rogers appointed Daniel Marsan as the new administrator. At 21 years old, Marsan had spent the last eight years working within the CHJM as the official accountant of the housing project.⁹¹ Before resigning, Rogers also fired Georges Jasmin, the in-house social worker on the tenant selection committee who fought against the anti-tenant regulations within the CHJM and sided with the tenants during the crisis in the summer.⁹² The move to fire Jasmin

⁸⁹ Claire Dutrisac, “Nous n’Avons Jamais mis Personne dans la Rue,” *La Presse* (Montréal, QC), Aug. 11, 1967.

⁹⁰ The promotion for Rogers had been planned in advance. Rogers would be an executive at SHQ until his retirement in 1972. He died in 1988. The promotion for Rogers to the SHQ should be understood within the patronage networks of the Union Nationale provincial party in Quebec. Between 1966 and 1968, the Union Nationale and its pro-urban renewal political actors briefly returned to power after defeating the Liberal government under Paul Lesage in 1966. In victory, Montreal officials associated or connected with the creation of Habitations Jeanne-Mance and the Union Nationale in the 1950s resumed their political careers. Paul Dozois, the original backer of HJM, established the the SHQ after becoming the Minister of Municipal Affairs during this short period. As Bacher noted, the Union Nationale and not Lesage and the Liberals, were the political party in Quebec that brought public housing to the provnince and consistently championed urban renewal efforts in the 1950s and 1960s. Bacher, *Keeping to the Marketplace*, 19; 184. For his efforts in building HJM, Humphrey Carver referred to Dozois as “the hero of the battle” for promoting HJM as a project. Humphrey Carver, *Compassionate Landscape*, 141.

⁹¹ “Service de la Police de Montréal Rapport Général No. 14133/67-123.2,” 23 October 1967, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. Marsan’s age was documented in the Montreal Police report on the MSJ. In the Montreal media, the age of Marsan after his appointment to the post of administrator was never questioned.

⁹² Robert Kelder, “Instant Ghetto,” *Logos* 1, no. 6 (1968).

enraged the politically organized tenants. Incensed over the firing, the Comité and the MSJ would use the situation to harness more political exposure and power through the media.

“Like a Prison” : Reshaping the Narrative on Habitations Jeanne-Mance

If Rogers thought firing Jasmin would quell the media portrayals of his administrative practices within HJM, he underestimated the resolve of Gérard Dufort, leader of the Comité and spokesperson for MSJ. When Dufort called a press conference in his living room on September 26, 1967 to denounce the firing of Jasmin, the entire press corp of Montreal covered the event. During the press conference Dufort escalated the claims of criminality Rogers had installed with maintenance workers acting as spies for the administrator: “[The maintenance crews] are a kind of secret police. We are not free here. It’s a prison of the poor,” Gerard Dufort told the press corp. Led by Dufort, the Comité and MSJ had invited the press to hear the grievances of 25 tenants who gave public testimony about the daily living conditions within Jeanne-Mance from the rental contract to demanding the reinstatement of Jasmin.⁹³ Under Rogers, every tenant who spoke explained that maintenance crews had become “kind of a secret police” in spying on residents for the administrator, tracking their movements, and enforcing a 9 p.m. curfew Rogers had instituted. Tenants also spoke to the rental contract regulations and the nefarious ‘behaviourial codes’ that allowed Rogers to evict tenants on a short five-day notice.⁹⁴

The living room press conference also demonstrated the growing power of the tenants’ since of the formation of the Comité in January of 1966. Due the Expo ’67 widowers’ exposure

⁹³ John Yorston, “Jeanne Mance Spies Claimed,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), Sept. 27, 1967. For the tenants, the firing of Jasmin was entirely political and symbolic of the overall living conditions at HJM. According to Marsan, Jasmin had been kept on for “charity purposes,” as the social worker on the tenant selection committee. The official line on firing Jasmin was due to truancy from illness. Unable to find work and living in poverty, Jasmin died of cancer in February of 1968. Jasmin was buried the day after his death. The financial situation of the Jasmin family was so dire that his family was unable to pay for any funeral arrangement. Robert Kelder, “Instant Ghetto,” *Logos*, 1, no. 6, April 1968.

⁹⁴ Nick Auf der Maur, “Housing Project ‘Like a Prison,’” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Sept. 27, 1967.

and the creation of the SHQ, the provincial housing authority, the Montréal media and the general public were now taking notice of the internal affairs within HJM. The media and New Left, in particular, were now becoming increasingly interested in HJM and tenants who lived there and for what HJM represented to these voices in the 1960s—an increasingly ‘failed’ project of post-war modernist planning. For tenants and tenant leaders, this new exposure also came with new opportunities to express themselves and add to this growing narrative of HJM. Speaking as a collective group to the press for the first time, tenants were able to bring to attention the living conditions at HJM—and a governance structure that made life at Jeanne-Mance resemble, in their own words, the internal workings of a prison.⁹⁵ Beyond, however, the media coverage and contemporary intellectual criticisms of public housing—as shown most vividly in the NFB film *Little Burgundy*—Habitations Jeanne-Mance and its ‘project’ was now also being openly challenged by the tenants themselves. The emergence of this new voice by the tenants would eventually lead to a counter-narrative to the New Left view on HJM.

The Dufort living room press conference, in many respects, marked beginning of this long discursive struggle for the tenants to shape their own unique narrative on public housing and HJM from within a position on the Left. Rejecting the explicit ‘ghetto’ discourse or the increasingly popular argument by postmodernists and their critiques on the architectural design of HJM, tenants in HJM framed their criticisms institutionally and structurally in relation to the Drapeau-Saulnier administration. Instead of contending the built design of HJM had caused marginalization of its residents to occur, as tenants in Regent Park were beginning to argue in

⁹⁵ Nick Auf der Maur, “Housing Project ‘Like In Prison,’” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Sept. 27, 1967. Until the press coverage of the founding of the Comité in 1966, HJM tenants in the Montreal press were cosigned as helpless objects in relation to the benevolent administration and the project of urban renewal. Every newspaper article on Habitations Jeanne-Mance between 1959 and January 1966 centrally focused on the benevolence of Léopold Rogers in championing the purpose behind the housing project. For more on how HJM was covered in the press and how this reflected the social shifts within the Quebec in the 1960s, see Marc Raboy, *Movements and Messages: Media and Radical Politics in Quebec* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1984).

Toronto, HJM tenants were advocating for social demands and respect for low-income Montrealers.

The results of these demands and campaigns by the tenants during this period after the press conference speak for themselves. After the summer of 1967, tenants would begin to use the press to empower campaigns started by the MSJ in opening an emergency clinic for residents, campaign for more social space for residents, and demand the city make children playgrounds safer in replacing the asphalt with grass. In each moment, when taking their campaigns for renewal to the press, tenant leaders were not framing HJM as a space of marginalization due to its modernist architectural design. In contrast to the anarchist and New Left design focused critiques of HJM, the tenants were demanding democratic renewal on the grounds that low-income and working class tenants deserved these social social services.

As a result of this newfound activism and noteriety within the city, the HJM tenants and tenant leaders like Gérard Dufort were articulating a Left narrative on HJM that did not condemn the housing project and the people who lived there through the emerging critique of modernism by the design-focused New Left. The tenants were, in other words, critiquing both the discourses on public housing by the anti-working class Right and the architectural position on postwar public housing within the New Left as demonstrated in the NFB documentary *Little Burgundy*. How tenants articulated this foundational position that framed the tenants' movement in the decades that followed was primarily the result of the founding of the MSJ, and the relationship tenants and tenant leaders had established with one social activist in the city—Jean Grenier.

From the Comité to Mouvement pour justice sociale

For the tenant leaders in HJM, their introduction to social activists and the Left in Montreal— and by association the competing ideological positions within the Left— started with

their association with Jean Grenier. Socialist activists like Grenier, who was connected to PRSU, took a strong interest in the HJM tenants' committee after becoming aware of the tenants situation with the small media coverage following the formation of the tenants' committee by the tenants themselves in January of 1966.⁹⁶ Being the first to interact within the HJM community, Grenier had a major impact in how tenants understood both their movement and politics within the Left in Montreal in the 1960s.⁹⁷

Grenier also left a lasting ideological legacy within this generation of francophone and Québécois tenants from the 1959 to 1970. Increasingly expressing socialist and later anti-capitalist and revolutionary positions on the purpose of social organizing at the neighbourhood level, Grenier helped fundamentally shape the contours of the tenants' movement in HJM in the following decades. More than either the top-down state-centric approaches of the MSS executives or the socialist positions of the Conseil activists in the neighbourhoods—who both understood social animation as merely a means to advocate for better social policies⁹⁸—Grenier

⁹⁶ Robert Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique des Citoyens des Saint Jacques (1968-1988)*, 24.

⁹⁷ See Robert Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique des Citoyens des Saint Jacques (1968-1988)*, 64-94. As this chapter and the following chapter will demonstrate, I am unable to understand or situate the development of the Clinique de Citoyens des Saint Jacques without first addressing the influence of Jean Grenier on tenants within HJM and on tenant leaders like Gérard Dufort. It is through the MSJ and Dufort in which the clinic is founded. In the process, the legacy or imprint of Grenier on tenants in tandem with social animators in the neighbourhood made tenants at HJM working class celebrities in the late 1960s and early 1970 through a series of Bonnie Sherr Klein directed NFB documentaries on HJM, the citizens' committee of Saint Jacques, and the clinic. Besides *Little Burgundy* (1968), those films were *Opération Boule de Neige* (1969), *La Clinique des Citoyens* (1970) (also known as *Citizens' Medicine* in English), and *VTR St-Jacques* (1969).

⁹⁸ See Michel Blondin, *Social Amination* (Ottawa: Community Funds and Councils of Canada, Canadian Welfare Council); Robert Boivin, *Histoire de la Clinique des citoyens de Saint-Jacques (1968-1986): Des Comités de Citoyens au CLSC du Plateau Mont-Royal* (Montréal: Éditions VLB, 1988), 17-19; Donald McGraw, *Le Développement des Groupes Populaires à Montréal (1963-1973)* (Montréal: Editions coopératives Albert St-Martin, 1978), 94-99. From the view of the executives within the MSS, social animation was understood as an organization tool in which social agencies could alter public policy from above by influencing government policy. Montreal Council of Social Agencies, *Shaping The Council To Modern Needs: Program Committee Report on Function and Organization* (Montreal: Montreal Council of Social Agencies, 1965), 4. During the eviction crisis during Expo '67, this tactic by the MSS executives and related social agencies became apparent in their correspondence with Léopold Rogers. Correspondence from J.W. Frei to Léopold Rogers, 3 October 1967, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. As this rest of this chapter will demonstrate,

was the first social animator in Saint Jacques who let tenants speak for themselves while connecting tenants to the Left within the city. Arriving on the premises of Habitations Jeanne-Mance nearly an entire year before the Conseil began organizing a neighbourhood citizens' committee within Saint Jacques in 1968, it was through Grenier that tenants first became connected with the growing Left in Montreal.⁹⁹

The marks Grenier would leave on the tenants' committee began with the widowers' eviction crisis and the creation of the MSJ. Turning the tenants concerns into a political group within the city that began to lead the campaign for neighbourhood and HJM institutional governance changes through the media, the tenants were articulating their demands directly to power instead of relying on the executives within the MSS to lobby for their cause behind the scenes. This break was made shortly before the tenants' pro-Jasmin press conference in September of 1967. On September 28, 1967, HJM tenants Gérard Dufort and Jules Boudreault, ex-CHJM employee Roger Goulet, and Grenier penned the first MSJ letter to Lucien Saulnier, the vice-president of the executive committee in Montreal, the second most powerful person in the city behind the mayor. Expressing a more militant politics within HJM, the letter cited their demands and denounced the "criminal brutality" of the CHJM, the lack of children recreational spaces, rent scale injustices, and the absence of democracy within the board of directors in the

if the executives of the social agencies understood these tactics in a top-down policy direction, the 'animators' within the working class districts of Montreal did not. Sean Mills, *The Empire Within: Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montreal* (McGill University Press, Montreal, 2010), 46-47.

⁹⁹ Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique des Citoyens des Saint Jacques (1968-1988)*, 24; 65-77; McGraw, *Le Developpement des Groupes Populaires à Montréal (1963-1973)*, 75-90. "Comites de Citoyens Journee-Recontre du 19 Mai 1968," 79P1/1, Fonds d'archives de la clinique des citoyens Saint Jacques, Archives de Université de Québec à Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. For the Clinique des Citoyens de Saint Jacques, CO social animator Pierre Durocher, who initiated the organizing of the citizens' committee with tenant leaders like Gérard Dufort, did not arrive until the beginning of 1968. Other notable animators for Saint Jacques was Thérèse Dionne. For a history of Dionne and activism of other working working class women in Point St. Charles, see Anna Kruzynski, "Du Silence à L'Affirmation: Women Making History in Point St. Charles," (PhD diss., McGill University, 2004), 106-107. Early social animator tactics within Saint Jacques were documented by Bonnie Sherr Klein in the NFB film *Operation Boule de Neige* in 1969. *Operation Boule Neige*. Directed by Bonnie Sherr Klein. Montreal, QC: National Film Board of Canada.

CHJM governance structure.¹⁰⁰ The letter, which read like a manifesto by a political action group, had its own letter head. Impassioned and defiant in tone, Jules Boudreault, who a year later would become the second president of the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques, personally signed the manifesto with an enlarged signature.

The purpose of the letter both represented the announcement of a new political group associated with HJM tenants and the organizing strategy by the MSJ for political awareness for issues concerning HJM which became centred on direct action tactics by the tenants. In the following months in 1967, any political action by the MSJ would follow this precedent: a telegram or a letter would be sent to Saulnier to inform of tenant demands which would be immediately followed by a direct action that garnered the tenants city-wide media attention that furthered their political aims.

For the MSJ, the strategy also implied an escalation in tactics away from the activities of the Comité—which was designed by the activist tenants in the 1960s as an attempt to create an internally focused tenants' association—towards explicitly tying the concerns of tenants to Drapeau-Saulnier and the Civic Party. Still organized by the leaders within the Comité, the MSJ was nonetheless a departure from the Comité, which focused entirely on the relationship between tenants and the CHJM. In speaking to the concerns of tenants and residents within Saint Jacques, however, the MSJ began to articulate the demands for social rights and services at the level of the neighbourhood in relation to the political indifference and paternalism of Jean Drapeau. In this respect, the MSJ became the first tenant-community alliance with political actors on the Left in Montreal, a connection tenants in the following decades would continue to foster.

¹⁰⁰ Correspondence from Les Locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance to Lucien Saulnier, 28 September 1967, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

The MSJ, therefore, differed from the Comité in its presentation and its inherent purpose. Using an official red letterhead with a more confrontational writing style, the MSJ felt and acted as if it was a movement for increasing the political and social power of residents both within HJM and in Saint Jacques. In being less of a rupture, the scaling up of the tenants' movement to incorporate the concerns of the entire neighbourhood altered how the Drapeau-Saulnier administration would view HJM tenants. Saulnier, a strident anti-communist and notorious anti-youth politician, was rather disturbed by the MSJ's allegations of "criminal brutality" in the MSJ letter regarding the CHJM. He was also disturbed by the size of Jules Boudreault signature on the manifesto. Ordering an immediate police investigation into the practices of the CHJM, the investigation that followed was less concerned with what the tenants and the MSJ were claiming, and more concerned with the people associated with MSJ. In the guise of investigating the CHJM, Saulnier proceeded to use the powers of the city to investigate potential rival political groups that were beginning to pose a threat to the power of the Civic Party.

Under Investigation: Being an Activist in the 1960s in Montreal

Known within city hall as the "Black Pope," Lucien Saulnier was a paranoid public official whose colleagues referred to him as an "authoritarian liberal."¹⁰¹ Wielding the day-to-day power behind Drapeau, Saulnier used the office of the executive-vice president to transform Montreal in the 1960s, and in the process repress any form of political opposition to the Civic Party—whether these threats were real or imagined. The extent of perceived threats to his power was so extreme, Saulnier significantly reshuffled the police department after returning to office in 1960 after Drapeau suspected that the police had actively conspired against him during his

¹⁰¹ Brian McKenna and Susan Purcell, *Drapeau* (Toronto and Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1980), 175-176. Saulnier, who lived on Île-Bizard, spent his evenings reading Lewis Mumford and Greek military theory and strategy.

first term as mayor from 1954 to 1957.¹⁰² In the process, Saulnier, a notorious micro-manager, used the Montreal police as his own private investigators from 1961 to 1970 to protect the political interests and power of Drapeau and the Civic Party.

In using the information acquired by police investigations, Saulnier used police reports to discredit the Left in the 1960s. How Saulnier and the city sought to discredit individuals—if the need for political reason arose—was shown through the infamous public statement issued by Saulnier about the alleged “terrorist” activities of the non-for profit, federally funded Company of Young Canadians and its alleged and nefarious connections to the anti-capitalist revolutionary terror cell Front de Liberation du Quebec, during the city-wide Montreal Police strike on October 11, 1969.¹⁰³ As the case of the Company of Young Canadians demonstrated, Saulnier would use various police reports and the information gathered in them to discredit political opponents in a tactic that would serve the interests of Saulnier, Drapeau, and the conservative elites within the ruling Civic Party within city.

In this regard the police report on the Jeanne-Mance tenants and social workers who interacted with tenants was no ways different in its aim and intent. Included in the report were criminal background checks on social workers and the politicized tenants who spoke to the police. Politically motivated, the report highlighted alleged political mischief or past criminal

¹⁰² McKenna and Purcell, *Drapeau*, 140-141; 111. Saulnier reorganized the police department on Drapeau wishes. Drapeau, who returned to power under the Civic Party banner in 1960, was convinced the Montreal Police department during his first term as mayor from 1954 to 1957 had been out to assassinate him due to his moralistic campaigns against organized crime and the red light district.

¹⁰³ CBC Digital Archives. “Company of Young Canadians accused of terrorism.” CBC.ca <http://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/1969-company-of-young-canadians-accused-of-terrorism>. (Accessed on June 13, 2017). As the 1960s wore on, the Greek military theory Saulnier loved to read at nights may have helped fuel his increasing paranoia regarding students, the youth, and the Left in Montreal. Virulently anti-communist, Saulnier denounced the federally funded organization of the Company of Young Canadians as a communist organization involved with “subverse... revolutionary and terrorist activity” in promoting “left-wing agitation propaganda” with “more than one member previously convicted in Montreal with terrorist activities” on October 11, 1969, on local CBC television.

activity by social activists, former employees, and tenants within HJM, which Saulnier could use at his disposal to discredit HJM tenant voices within the city if the opportunity presented itself. The latter emerged for tenant leader Gérard Dufort, who had an arrest record and served time in prison as a teenager for larceny. In December of 1965 Dufort, who also had a son in prison, was interviewed on this subject in an expose meant to fuel the public discourse on ‘slum’ individuals living in marginalized neighbourhoods as people in need of reform.¹⁰⁴ Until Saulnier abruptly resigned in 1970 to take a position within the Montreal Urban Community, the regional political body for the island of Montreal, Saulnier had this information in his office at city hall. If the tenants’ movement within HJM was to embark on a path Saulnier did not politically approve of, Saulnier could have potentially used the information on Dufort to discredit the tenants’ movement in the press.

In highlighting the police records of tenants and social workers, the report on MSJ also reinforced how city elites within Montreal understood the purpose of HJM as a project for reeducation for the tenants who lived in Jeanne-Mance between 1959 and 1969. Following the view of how the elites within the city understood the project of HJM in the 1950s, the report also served to highlight the extent to which Léopold Rogers—and his generation of social reformers who ran public housing projects—understood tenants within the binary of “deserving” and “undeserving” low-income residents. As Georges Jasmin, according to police investigator who wrote the report, said regarding the administrative policies of Rogers:

Mr. Rogers, knowing that he was about to resign his post as administrator, fired [Jasmin] for vindictive reasons. Jasmin cited numerous irregularities in the administration...he alleged that Mr. Rogers fired employees of the project in order to accomodate his friends and relatives; that he frequently evicted tenants, who had criticized the administration; and

¹⁰⁴ “Ce père de famille réclame une enquête!,” *Le Nouveau Samedi* (Montréal, QC), Dec. 18, 1965.

in general that he (Rogers) [as written] administrated the project somewhat as a dictator with little regard to employees or tenants.¹⁰⁵

Regardless of the political motives behind the investigation, the police report into MSJ did not have the effect Saulnier intended. When the investigation finished one month later on October 23, 1967, the detective assigned to the case, Sergeant Detective Michael Ballard, partially collaborated with the claims that tenants were making in the media about the practices of Léopold Rogers and the CHJM. Not given the task to look into HJM criminality cases, the report by Ballard, titled “Sujet: Movement for Social Justice” interviewed Jean Grenier, Gérard Dufort, and former CHJM employee Roger Goulet of the MSJ. Including the members of the MSJ, the investigation also interviewed Georges Jasmin, social workers working within HJM, a current employee of the CHJM who went off the record and refused to be identified, and the newly appointed administrator of CHJM, Daniel Marsan.¹⁰⁶ Ballard, tasked with investigating the MSJ and not the CHJM, attempted to discredit the MSJ as merely a “movement [that] exists only in the fact it has had a letterhead printed in that name.”¹⁰⁷ Discrediting the MSJ and not taking the organization seriously as a political threat, Ballard nonetheless let social activists, former CHJM employees, and tenants speak to the extent of the institutional problems within HJM.

In allowing tenants and social workers to speak to the concerns of the institutional and governance practices of the CHJM, Ballard wrote a report conclusion that appeared to at least

¹⁰⁵ “Service de la Police de Montréal Rapport Général No. 14133/67-123.2,” 23 October 1967, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

¹⁰⁶ “Service de la Police de Montréal Rapport Général No. 14133/67-123.2,” 23 October 1967, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. In total, ten individuals were interviewed. Those questioned consisted of tenants, social workers, and one anonymous employee of CHJM. Saulnier was by the act of Jules Boudreault, who signed the MSJ manifesto by hand in massive handwriting. Taking the gesture seriously, and originally thought by the police to be part of MSJ, both Grenier and Boudreault, according to Ballard, denied the signing was “representative of the group as a whole.”

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 2.

acknowledge the tenants concerns. Social worker Jean Grenier, in particular, was adamant about injustices prevailing within HJM in the 1960s under Léopold Rogers. Interviewed by Ballard in the office of the MSJ on 3553 Saint Urbain, Grenier reiterated to the detective how Rogers had instituted a governing approach that had empowered the administrator to the level of a “dictator” who “ruled over the project in the same manner as would a warden over a prison.” As a result, Ballard wrote, paraphrasing Grenier in the summary, tenants in Jeanne-Mance were “living under a virtual reign of terror.”¹⁰⁸ Declining to look at evidence tenants and social workers within HJM wanted to show Ballard proving criminal behaviour from the CHJM, Ballard believed there was nothing criminal “in nature” about the practices of the CHJM. Ballard did, however, appear to take the tenants and social activists seriously in regards to their consistent criticism of HJM in his conclusion to Saulnier:

[I]t would appear that there exists within Jeanne Mance Housing Project, a measure of discontent with the present administration. If the most unscientific sound of ten families, which we interviewed is any indication, the percentage is small, however, there does appear to be a definite problem. The members of the Movement for Social Justice have expressed their desire to have a voice in the administration of the project in the form of a residents committee; and the administration on the other hand seems most willing to act upon grievances lodged by tenants, however, there appears to be very little interaction between the two groups, which has probably given rise to the present situation. Although we do not feel qualified to comment on matters of this nature it would appear that there exists a need for a study of the situation on a level other than that which our department is able to provide.¹⁰⁹

The conclusion by Ballard reiterated the main desire of the politicized tenants in the 1960s: to have recognition and be allowed to form a tenants’ association in order to take part in the governing decisions of their community. In the end, the report by Ballard tended to

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 3. According to Ballard, the actual offices of the MSJ was the address of the University Settlement, a social welfare organization connected to McGill University. University Settlement merely owned the building, however, as room 304 of the building, which the MSJ used as its official address, was in reality the office of the PRSU. Funded jointly by the Quebec Department of Family and Social Welfare, McConnell Foundation, and the Montreal Rotary Club, PRSU was headed by Peter Kadodis, a well-known social animator of the 1960.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 5.

validate—rather than undermine—the work of tenant organizers and the MSJ. Such work and influence, however, which would be underscored in the following months regarding the demand for tenants representation and recognition in confronting city hall and Saulnier, was only possible due to the influence of Jean Grenier. Without Grenier, the history of the tenants' movement within Habitations Jeanne-Mance might have been different.

Making Complex Alliances with the Left: The Lasting Legacy of MSJ

The summer months of 1967 marked a political shift and rise in awareness of the tenants' movement within Habitations Jeanne-Mance and in Montreal. With this shift, both the tenants' movement and the tenants who organized within it soon found themselves as emerging political leaders within the city. With the support of outside, non-tenant allies connected to the Left within Montreal, the formation of the MSJ served as less a break with the Comité and more of an addition to the movement. In forming an alliance with Left political actors within their neighbourhood, MSJ represented the first connection the tenants' movement had in linking their political causes with either city-wide social movements and oppositional to Jean Drapeau within Montreal. This relationship, as the following decades would underscore, was essential to the MSJ and later successful attempts at forging alliances in the 1970s and 1980s with the Montreal Citizens' Movement (MCM) and Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain (FRAPRU), the social housing activist organization that emerged out of east end of Montreal in the late 1970s.

Yet the MSJ was more important than simply creating a connection to the Left within Montreal. It fundamentally taught tenant leaders the requirement of a tenant-led—but community and neighbourhood focused—movement to address structural issues concerning the governance structure within Habitations Jeanne-Mance. In connecting with Grenier, tenant leaders within

HJM were forming alliances that would reappear continuously throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and culminate with Solidarité Jeanne-Mance, the political action committee that sought end the CHJM governance structure as imagined through the Dozois Plan in 1984. In this instance, learning from the experience of 1967 would change both the strategies tenant leaders employed in articulating their demands, while also increasing their political awareness and connections to the social and political movements within the city of Montreal in the 1960s.

Connecting with the Left in 1967, the tenants were embarking on a course that led to a confrontation not only with city elites, but within Left politics in Montreal. Starting in 1968, tenants learned how to speak and organize for themselves, albeit with help from social agencies such as the CO and PRSU, or through social activists like Grenier. The differences between Grenier and other social agencies, however, in both ideology and organizing tactics, would begin to create noticeable challenges for social animators in the Saint Jacques neighbourhood surrounding HJM in 1968 and 1969, after the formation of the Conseil initiative to organize a neighbourhood citizens' committee within Saint Jacques. These differences would eventually confront Pierre Durocher within Saint Jacques and other CO affiliated social animators within the district of Saint Jacques regarding the question on the purpose of the citizens' committees. For the CO organizers, the point to citizens' committees was to express the social rights of low-income and working class residents. For animators associated with Grenier, the increasingly anti-capitalist animators within Saint Jacques began to understand the citizens' committees as political vehicles for revolutionary socialism.¹¹⁰ And for a time in 1968, the CO position would co-exist with the more revolutionary, conflictory politics of Grenier, and his belief that citizens' committees without a political purpose to challenge state-power were meaningless endeavors.

¹¹⁰ See McGraw, *Le Développement des Groupes Populaires à Montréal (1963-1973)*, 93-98; Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique des Citoyens des Saint Jacques (1968-1988)*, 73.

By May of 1969, however, animators like Grenier began to reject the MSS position out of hand within Saint Jacques in favour of organizing a municipal political movement grounded within these citizens' committees.¹¹¹ For these activists, who later became prominent Marxist-Leninist animators between 1970 and 1974, the purpose of organizing was to build and formulate a political organization to seize power in order to radically transform society. Following this lead tenants within HJM, who were active within the citizens' committé of Saint Jacques, would become absorbed within the politics of the Left in late 1960s. And it was through social animators like Grenier, who increasingly began to focus more on the demand for the working class within Montreal to challenge state-power through anti-capitalist and revolutionary aims, who most profoundly shaped the tenants in the 1960s.¹¹²

These two differences within the Left became more distinct and visible from 1968 to 1970 with the McGill Français movement and the founding of the Front d'action politique (FRAP), the socialist from below and neighbourhood based political party formed from the citizens' committees to challenge the Civic Party in the 1970 municipal elections. And yet, these competing positions on how to exactly organize working class neighbourhoods, on the one hand, and what the purpose and role of these newly politicalized communities should be, on the other, were also present within the tenants' movement of Habitations Jeanne-Mance in 1967. Increasingly part of a larger social and political working class movement within the city by the winter of 1967, HJM tenants would begin to follow the position of Grenier and others who were more adamant about the true political power behind the citizens' power movement of the late

¹¹¹ According to Boivin, the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques no longer functioned according to its original purpose by May of 1968. At this juncture, the Comité released its anti-capitalist and revolutionary inspired manifesto proclaiming "the Citizens Committee Saint-Jacques...has set a goal to participate in the awakening of conscience of Quebecers and to engage resolutely in a revolutionary political action." Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique des Citoyens des Saint Jacques (1968-1988)*, 73.

¹¹² Mills, *The Empire Within*, 171-173; Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique des Citoyens des Saint Jacques (1968-1988)*, 73-77.

1960s. Connecting with these social and political directions, the tenants' movement began to aim their struggle at the level of the city through the media and other neighbourhood groups. In articulating their demand for recognition by the city and the CHJM in 1967 through the MSJ, the MSJ served as the precursor to Solidarité Jeanne-Mance, the political action community group formed from within the tenants' association aimed at overhauling the entire governance structure of HJM in favour of tenants' management in 1984. In this respect, the MSJ served as the first realization that in order to fundamentally change HJM, tenants would have to connect to oppositional Left political movements within Montreal that sought to take power in city hall. MSJ, therefore, was the first realization by tenants' leaders about who actually held the real political power within CHJM. In scaling up the struggle to the level of city hall, tenants in 1967 began to realize how their actual landlord was not the administrator of the CHJM, but the mayor of Montreal.

But all of this history of alliances with the Left of Montreal would not have been possible without the connections social activist Jean Grenier began to foster in working with tenant leaders in 1967. Through the association with Grenier and the creation of *Mouvement pour Justice sociale* in the summer of 1967, the tenants successfully removed the definition of family requirement for tenure and hastened the resignation of Léopold Rogers, the first administrator of Habitations Jeanne-Mance. These two events would have a lasting impact on how the CHJM would operate in the decade that followed. Speaking to the *Montreal Star* in 1972, Daniel Marsan, the second administrator of the CHJM, went so far to suggest life in Habitations Jeanne-Mance had now become more peaceful with the removal of the definition of family clause.¹¹³ Instigated by the MSJ through a media campaign that brought increased visibility to tenants—

¹¹³ Leon Harris, "Housing Project success Belies dire Predictions," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Jan. 21, 1972.

and connected tenant leaders with the Left within Montreal—these early organizing efforts would help create an environment that would lead to the beginning of an era of increased scrutiny regarding the practices of the CHJM. In directly playing a role in resignation of Léopold Rogers, the tenants' movement within Habitation Jeanne-Mance had reached a new phase by December of 1967. With their increase of visibility within Montreal, tenants within HJM were increasingly becoming well-known political actors on the Left within their neighbourhood and in the city. With this new turn in the movement itself, tenants in Habitations Jeanne-Mance would, from 1968 to 1970, begin to become active participants in the politics of Montreal.

Chapter 3

Scaffolding Revolutionaries:

Achieving Recognition, Advocating for Liberation, and Practicing Revolutionary Politics, 1967-1970

“We demand to be heard”¹¹⁴ – banner of the tenants’ committee

From 1967 to 1969, Habitations Jeanne-Mance and the neighbourhood of Saint Jacques were central to Left struggles in Montreal and public housing movements in Canada in the late 1960s. With Gérard Dufort as the helm in these years, the tenants’ movement connected with socialist community groups within Montreal and made connections with the increasingly Marxist-oriented Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN) labour union. Through these connections, the Comité and MSJ began to confront city hall and the power of the Drapeau-Saulnier regime in articulating their demands for tenant recognition at the highest level of governance within HJM—the board of directors of the CHJM. Believing the fundamental requirement of the tenants’ movement within HJM was to confront the undemocratic board of directors and the lack of a tenants’ voice within the governance of HJM, tenants shed their reliance on social agencies to speak on their own behalf. In beginning to speak authoritatively and powerfully for themselves, tenants became increasingly integrated into the anti-capitalist and nationalist Left within Montreal.

HJM tenant activism was also informed by, and contributed to, broader struggles over public housing in Canada and national liberation in Quebec during the late 1960s.¹¹⁵ The HJM

¹¹⁴ Robert Kelder, “Instant Ghetto,” *Logos*, 1(6), April 1968.

tenants' actions in 1968 coincided with growing tenant activism across Canada that put federal postwar urban renewal policies in question within the Trudeau government. In Montreal, HJM activism in this period of tenant uprisings across the country achieved a modicum of recognition by the Drapeau-Saulnier administration through the creation of a token CHJM-approved tenant representative on the board of directors in 1969—a first step toward tenant representation and participatory democracy within HJM. This achievement, however, did not occur within a political vacuum. Occurring alongside tenant struggles in other cities and provinces in Canada, the efforts by tenants in 1967 and 1968 led to the publication of the *Report of the Federal Task Force on Housing and Urban Development* by Robert Hellyer, the federal Minister of Transport on January 22, 1969—otherwise known as the Hellyer Report—which officially ended the urban renewal era in Canada and acknowledged public housing tenants should be given some form of political representation within their communities. Connecting with other tenants' movements across Canada within public housing in the late 1960s, HJM tenants and their struggle for recognition in 1967 and 1968 were direct causes for this sudden shift in federal policy in 1969.

At the same time, HJM tenants in the late 1960s were beginning to understand their movement in relation to the broader Montreal and Quebec Left.¹¹⁶ Outside of the continued influence by anti-capitalist political actors within the Comité des Citoyens des Saint Jacques, tenants in this period also found guidance, support, and inspiration in the CSN 1968 “Second

¹¹⁵ This chapter adds to the work of Sean Purdy, “For the People, By the People,” *Journal of Urban History* 30, no. 4 (2004): 519-548. Outside of Purdy's work on Regent Park in the 1960s, the literature on the organizing efforts of Canadian public housing tenants across Canada does not currently exist. This chapter is also indebted and roughly follows to the notion developed by Rhonda Y. Williams regarding public housing tenants understanding their homes and communities as an “organizational base” of mobilization and political support that extended beyond the confines of the housing project in the 1960s in Baltimore, Maryland. See Rhonda Y. Williams, *The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women's Struggles Against Urban Inequality* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 192-228).

¹¹⁶ In focusing on the relationship of tenants to the Left in Montreal in the late 1960s, particularly as it relates to Saint Jacques, this chapter also adds to the work of Robert Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique des Citoyens des Saint Jacques (1968-1988): Des Comités des citoyens au du Plateau Mont-Royal* (Montréal: Éditions VLB, 1988).

Front” manifesto and strategy for organizing the working class of Quebec. As a result, tenants began to understand their situation within HJM in relation to the decolonizing analysis of the Montreal and Quebec Left in the late 1960s. In realizing their social, political, and economic conditions as tenants within the politics of national liberation, tenants incorporated their tenant-specific experiences into the growing political project on the Left that was centred on socialism and liberation for the Québécois working class against Anglo-British bourgeois domination. This political realization was important for cementing the tenants’ movement in the following decades. For as the 1960s came to a close, the tenants’ collective transformation became hitched to their political connections and alliances on the Left, with its socialist political ideology, and its political and social framing within a *Québécois* working class identity. With these early foundations firmly in place by 1970, the tenants’ movement within HJM would continue to be guided by these interwoven threads into the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

Demanding Recognition Through Direct Action: The Storming of City Hall

On December 7, 1967, 25 tenants and community activists from *Projet de réaménagement social et urban (PRSU)* interrupted city council proceedings with “singing” and placards. Unfurling a giant banner from the rafters that both Lucien Saulnier and Jean Drapeau could see from the floor of the chambers, the tenants startled the council proceedings on the grounds that the city was not listening to their concerns. The immediate reason for this storming of city hall and disrupting city council proceedings was due to the reappointment of the existing board members of the CHJM on that particular night. The board members up for renewal—Emile Désorcy, RG Gilbride, MM. Paul Côté, Joe Dunne, Rene Dupont, Bernard Gregory, and E. Letellier-de-Saint-Just—were the same individuals who had been on the board of the directors throughout the 1960s. With the interruption by the tenants occurring right before the

reappointment of the board of directors, neither Drapeau nor Saulnier were amused by the disturbance. After Drapeau immediately ordered the police to confiscate the banner and placards, Saulnier addressed the tenants from the council floor. Describing tenant democracy within HJM as an affront to democracy—since tenants were not elected members of society and thus, according to this elite governance view, had no accountability to the public who funded their communities—Saulnier defended the practice of appointing board members of the CHJM by the city, and raised fears about the anarchy tenants would ostensibly install if they were allowed decision making power. “These directors we want to dislodge [have sat on the board] for seven years and nobody could blame them [on] anything either,” Saulnier told the tenants. “I am also sensitive to the agitation because I am an elected representative of the people, but I do not sing.”

The response to the tenants by Saulnier caused the chambers to descend into political chaos. Serving as a moment to reveal the political divide within the politics of Montreal between anti-Drapeau and pro-Drapeau councillors, the tenants had become an opening catalyst to air political grievances between the two factions and proceedings for the meeting were halted for over two hours. Tenant allies, such as Hyman Brock, an anti-Drapeau councillor in the city, contended that the years a person sat on a board should not be the only “criterion” for continued reappointment to the board of directors. Councillor Jacques Brisebois, another tenant ally, pushed even further. Concluding that since the city of Montreal was the real landlord for HJM, as designed within the framework of the Dozois Plan, elected council members themselves should be the representatives who should sit on the CHJM board of directors. “Why not appoint representatives of the city council?” Brisebois asked.

The question by Brisebois led to a hardening of the position on the board of directors by Saulnier. Responding harshly to the suggestions of tenants and their councillor allies, who were

beginning to question whether an investigation should be undertaken to look into tenants' claims of injustice that had dominated the summer press coverage on HJM in 1967, Saulnier revealed an investigation had already occurred and repeatedly lambasted the tenants for forcing his hand in investigating Rogers, a personal friend. Firm in his position on what ceding power to tenants would cause, Saulnier was not going to budge on rescinding the reappointment of the board of directors because nothing, he claimed, was wrong with the status quo within CHJM. "In the circumstances and the result of [the MSJ] investigation," Saulnier said, "my word is as good as these guys and I have no hesitation in recommending the appointment of directors to another term." The response by Saulnier to the Drapeau-Saulnier critics in the room led Roland Bourret, a councillor affiliated with the Civic Party, to go further in demonstrating the resolve of the Drapeau-Saulnier position on the CHJM. Echoing Saulnier's claim that tenant democracy was undemocratic, Bourret contended that even invoking or openly questioning how to democratize the CHJM was a slippery slope towards anarchism. In framing the democratization of HJM as a domino that would knock down existing political structures across the city, Bourret sounded the elitist alarm. "[If] we created a precedent this evening, [it] can become dangerous," he said. "If all citizens covered in each of the articles adopted at the council were to manifest, it would be an impossible situation. The board would be a gesture by substituting arbitrary names to the current [board of] directors of Habitations Jeanne-Mance."¹¹⁷

The efforts of Saulnier-Drapeau and their council allies to paint any move toward a more open, transparent, and democratic government as undemocratic anarchism was predictably

¹¹⁷ The storming of city hall taken from Florian Bernard, "Saulnier Déclare aux Locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance qu'on ne le fera pas Chanter," *La Presse* (Montréal, QC), Dec. 8, 1967; Maurice Archambault, "Les Directeurs des Habitations Jeanne-Mance Reelus pour 2 Ans," *Montréal-Matin* (Montréal, QC), Dec. 9, 1967. "Déception pour les Protestataires!," *L'Est Central* (Montréal, QC), Dec. 12, 1967.

successful. In the end, once debate resumed, the council passed the original resolution of appointing the current executive to another two-year term. The tenants, though dismayed by the result, left city hall encouraged by their employment of direct action in forcing their collective everyday issues to be heard by the political establishment of Montreal.¹¹⁸ Buoyed with excitement about the action, tenant leadership within HJM were confident that a new beginning would emerge regarding tenant-landlord relations within HJM.

This excitement for a more open future was evident in the letters and telegrams sent to Saulnier before the storming of city hall. Gérard Dufort, through the Comité, had sent a telegram to Saulnier reminding the executive of the unreplied letter from September 28, 1967. In asking for a delay in the appointment of the board, Dufort asked Saulnier to meet with the Comité:

The committee believes that the renewal of this mandate will perpetuate a situation of intolerable injustice. We ask that these appointments be delayed to allow time for members to meet you and introduce you to competent persons [with] prior knowledge of human relations in order to better understand the problems of tenants...this meeting should take place towards the end of next week. Desiring strongly that you will consider our request, we remain your constituents.¹¹⁹

Similar to every letter to Saulnier from the tenants in the 1960s, these calls by the Comité for a meeting would go unanswered. In the end, the tenants within HJM would never officially meet Lucien Saulnier, but their actions would have repercussions for both the Comité and their struggle for recognition within HJM.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Correspondence from Gérard Dufort to Lucien Saulnier, 6 December 1967, VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

¹¹⁹ Correspondence from Gérard Dufort to Lucien Saulnier, 7 December 1968. VM074-3-D153, Habitation: Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1961-1970, Bureau du président, 1960-1999, Fonds Comité exécutif (1921-2001). Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. Attached to the letter from Dufort was an unsigned note written by Saulnier's secretary asking whether Saulnier would like to "receive" the tenants—whom the secretary inadvertently associated with the CHJM—before the council meeting. "Are you going to receive this committee from the Corporation before the council meeting? If so, what time, please."

¹²⁰ Brian Stewart, "Saulnier's City Hall Exit Blow to Public Housing?" *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), June 29, 1970. When Saulnier resigned as vice-president of the executive committee in 1970 to become president of the

There were, of course, political reasons for Saulnier to refuse to acknowledge the Comité. One reason Saulnier would never consider meeting the tenants was due to the illegality of the Comité. In 1960s Montreal, tenants' associations within the city were illegal in inaccordance to an unwritten existing rental contract stipulation. This fact, which went unknown within the general public until the *Montreal Star* exposé on Habitations Jeanne-Mance and St. Martin's Block tenants in 1969, was likely enacted by Marsan and the CHJM in following weeks after the direct action during the council meeting on December 7, 1967. To form a tenants' committee, in other words, meant facing eviction, and the CHJM had decided by Christmas of 1967 that this illegal expirement by the tenants had gone on far too long in challenging the institutional power structures of the CHJM. For tenants within HJM after the New Year in 1968, the threat of conviction levelled by the CHJM had caused tenants to publicly renounce their disassociation to the Comité for the remainder of the decade. As Sheila Arnopoulous wrote in the *Montreal Star*:

According to a number of tenants—especially those who had anything to do with the tenants association which went to City Hall in 1967 to make grievances known—[basic liberties] were violated. Residents said they were informed that if they didn't get off the committee, they would be turfed out. One woman claimed she had a threatening call about it in the middle of the night.¹²¹

Using the power of repression, which tenants from the 1959 to 1969 understood as an everyday experience of surveillance, the CHJM threatened eviction for tenants either organizing with the Comité or simply connected to the group by association. This also applied to social workers, who would disappear from HJM following the direct action on city hall. Following these threats, the Comité, the first attempt as a tenants' association, was forcibly disbanded from

Montreal Urban Community, the regional governing body of the entire Island of Montreal, the *Gazette* considered his resignation a blow to social housing within the city in proclaiming Saulnier its greatest "champion."

¹²¹ Sheila Arnopoulous, "St Martin's Looks Beyond Jeanne Mance," *Montreal Star* (Monteral, QC), April 20, 1969.

the threats of eviction by the CHJM in January of 1968.¹²² As the early Comité organizing efforts officially came to a close, the early efforts by tenants to collectively express their positions on recognition would cause material changes to the governance structure of HJM by 1969. The Comité, however, as a tenant political body, would not exist to take advantage of them.

Achieving Recognition Without Power

With tenants reeling from the repercussions following the direct action at city hall, the assertion of their own political voices to political power on that night was representative of a wider, national uprising of public housing tenants across Canada. By the end of the 1960s, the political conditions HJM tenants had argued for were beginning to resonate at the national level with major changes in federal policy occurring in regards to urban renewal and public housing. With public housing tenants in this period increasingly calling for participation in the decision-making processes within local housing authorities across Canada from 1966 to 1968—by the summer of 1968, Ottawa, the CMHC, and the federal social agencies connected to public housing tenants had officially begun to notice. Federal officials, taking a new look at existing urban renewal and housing policies, began to respond favourably—to an extent—to the demands of recognition by tenants across the country. As shown in the CMHC advisory board ‘Right to Housing’ conference held in Toronto between October 20-23, 1968, public housing tenants were now being talked about and mentioned within the bureaucratic policy networks within Canada.

¹²² Sheila Arnopoulous, “St Martin’s Looks Beyond Jeanne Mance,” *Montreal Star* (Monteral, QC), April 20, 1969. On December 11, 1968 Marsan told *The Georgian*, the Sir George Williams University newspaper that HJM was “the ideal” community. “We don’t have too much trouble here. The police force doesn’t have to come too often,” Marsan said in regards to alcoholism, delinquency, and crime within the neighbourhood. Anne McLean, “Urban Renewal 1 – Jeanne-Mance,” *The Georgian* (Montreal, QC), Dec. 11, 1968.

Aimed explicitly on public housing and public housing rights, the gathering reportedly invited tenants and tenant leaders to participate, a first in Canadian public housing conferences.¹²³

The movement for tenant participation was furthered in July 1968 with the Trudeau government initiating the Hellyer Task Force to study public housing and housing conditions in Canada. Hellyer, the federal transport minister, spent the last months of 1968 touring Canada, meeting with business executives, developers, and city officials, and paid a visit to HJM in December of 1968.¹²⁴ In January of 1969, the Task Force Report conclusions were officially published. Marking the end of ‘urban renewal,’ ‘slum clearance,’ and public housing—as it had been known—the document acknowledged for the first time that tenants deserved basic recognition as capable individuals who had a right to participate within the affairs of their community. What the report did not define, however, were the specifics of this ‘right’ to participate, or the extent of governance power tenants would have within the structures of their public housing authorities.¹²⁵

¹²³ Carver, *Compassionate Landscape*, 162-163. The actual minutes of the proceedings of the tell an entirely different story to Carver’s claim that he and Harold Clark of the Toronto Citizens’ Association had a hand in public housing tenants arguing for tenant representation to the powerful elites for the first time in Canadian history. During the conference tenants lambasted conference goers representing local and national developers, public housing managers, CMHC officials, and national social agencies in their suggestion that the elites took tenant concerns seriously. As John Wheeler wrote in the minutes of the meeting, “Though ‘citizen participation’ was the *in* thing, few representatives of the consumers, particularly those of low-income, were present at the conference. How could they be adequately heard? How could those present avoid the position of *doing good* for others, instead of giving them a genuine opportunity to do what *they* wanted in seeking the good life? It was a question that was not answered. One delegate suggested that if such low-income tenants were present they would insist on rent control, since many were compelled to spend far too much on rent. The right to housing, it was pointed out, was meaningless unless there was an adequate supply of housing in the first place and the conditions for governing were clearly enshrined in law.” (italics as written) John Wheeler, ed., *The Right to Housing* (Montreal, QC: Harvest House Limited, 1969), 299-300.

¹²⁴ Sheila Arnopoulous, “St Martin’s Looks Beyond Jeanne Mance,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), April 20, 1969. For tenants, the visit was an unannounced surprise. Controlling the public image of HJM, Marsan had selectively invited 15 non-political tenants to meet Hellyer during the official visit in October of 1968. For the majority of tenants, the visit was a complete and total surprise.

¹²⁵ Robert Hellyer, *Report of the Federal Task Force on Housing and Urban Development* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1969), 55.

The ultimate meaning of tenant participation would be worked out on the ground and within individual public housing projects across the country in the years that followed. Each housing complex, therefore, had different priorities and positions on what tenant representation and recognition entailed. Within Jeanne-Mance in the late 1960s, tenants were demanding a “co-partnership” and an “advisory” role within the CHJM. In practical terms, this meant placing tenant representatives on the CHJM board of directors. The city, while agreeing to tenant representation in 1969 after the publication of the Hellyer Report, insisted on choosing the tenant representative itself. To this end, on March 17, 1969, Lucien Saulnier announced the nomination of Raymonde Dulude to the board of directors of CHJM as the first tenant representative of HJM. This move, Saulnier announced, would satisfy tenant demand for recognition: “This nomination...will provide tenant representation, which responds to [the tenants] request.” Dulude, a tenant, had been living in Jeanne-Mance for the past five years. What Dulude was not, however, was part of the group of politicized tenants from within the Comité. The selection of Dulude also came as a surprise, as the tenants were not consulted by the CHJM of their decision. In not selecting politicized tenants and not informing tenants of their selection, the CHJM, who selected Dulude, had set a precedent that would last for the remainder of the Drapeau administration. Thus the tenants’ demand for ‘co-partnership’ from 1967 to 1968 had won only token recognition in 1969.

This token rendering of tenants’ representation did not go unnoticed by the tenants at the city council meeting—or by the pro-tenants, anti-Drapeau city councillors within city hall. HJM tenants, as vocally present at the meeting as they had been in December of 1967, collectively expressed their displeasure with booing and singing to the announcement of Dulude as the first tenant representative. Contrary to the view of Saulnier, the tenants in the rafters and the few pro-

tenant and anti-Drapeau-Saulnier councillors on the chamber floor did not interpret this political move by the city in nominating Dulude to be the beginning of a new era in participatory democracy within tenant-city landlord relations.¹²⁶ Instead, the dissenters within the room understood the political calculation by Saulnier and the CHJM in adding a tenant representative as the continuation of the status-quo.

Even if tenants within HJM now had recognition without the power, the creation of a tenants' representative on the board of directors, nevertheless, reflected some progress on the part of HJM tenants and the broader national tenants movement in the late 1960s towards official recognition within their communities. On the one hand, the appointment of Dulude clearly indicated the political strength and legitimacy the tenants had acquired through their activism. They were now a force that, at the very least, needed to be publicly appeased. On the other hand, the appointment revealed the limited extent the city of Montreal and the Drapeau administration were willing to go in acknowledging tenants' rights, and a reassertion of how little city hall and the CHJM still thought of tenants or what tenants' management might actually entail. In demonstrating view on official tenant representation through a mix of appeasement politics that never addressed the actual power imbalance within the tenant-landlord relationship within HJM, the conditions and lines between the Drapeau administration and the tenants regarding the central

¹²⁶ "Habitations J-Mance: Un Locataire Accède au Conseil d'Administration," *Le Devoir* (Montréal, QC), March 15, 1969. Saint Michel councillor, Léopold Lavoie, led the charge for the tenants on the grounds the nomination did not represent participatory democracy and demanded the recommendation be rescinded. Lavoie, backed by councillor Frank Hanley, tabled a counter-motion calling on the Dulude nomination be returned to the board of the executive committee. Contending the nomination failed to "ensure participatory democracy," Lavoie wanted guarantees that the nomination would be consulted with the tenants. On a 42 to 3 vote the Lavoie motion failed and Raymonde Dulude became the first tenant representative of HJM. Tenants, seated in the public gallery above the council chambre, erupted with applause during Lavoie's defense of tenants and participatory democracy. After the council meeting the Association of Montreal Tenants announced that it would begin to help the tenants at HJM. "Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance: Unconseiller du Nouveau District Saint-Michel-Nord Demande le Vote," *La Presse* (Montréal, QC), March 18, 1969.

issue of governance had finally been drawn in 1969. In setting the terms of engagement, the remainder of Drapeau's tenure as mayor would follow the Saulnier rubric until the mid 1980s.

The move by Saulnier to add a tenant representative on the board of directors also signalled an end for the tenants' movement as it related to HJM in the 1960s. For tenants associated with Comité, the efforts to demand recognition and tenant representation in the late 1960s—and the reliance the movement had on social agencies to speak on issues on the tenants' behalf in the local press—had also come to an end. In order to actually address tenant concerns—as some tenants were beginning to believe—the future for real change could only materialize from an independent tenants' association and not through a benevolent or allied social worker. As “Mrs. X,” an anonymous HJM tenant told *The Montreal Star* in 1969, the task ahead was to both reject the fear of eviction by Marsan and the CHJM, which caused some tenants within the movement to backdown after the direct action in December of 1967, and stop relying on social workers to express their grievances. To do so, the task ahead was to collectively unite:

We're a lot like the people on social assistance. We expect the social workers to fight our battles. It's time We (as written) rose up en masse and fought our own wars...until we have a large organization of people who are not afraid of reprisals from the administration, we might as well forget the whole thing. I'm tired of reporters and social workers coming in here to talk to us. Nothing will get done that way. It's up to us.¹²⁷

The tenants, however, did not stop organizing after the demise of the Comité. With the struggle for Jeanne-Mance put on hold due to fears of repression by the CHJM, the tenants within HJM began to look elsewhere for changing their social and material conditions. Looking beyond HJM for organizing—and within spaces where the CHJM could not overtly threaten their rent tenure with eviction—HJM tenants became leaders within their neighbourhood in 1968. In

¹²⁷ Sheila Arnopoulos, “St Martin's Looks Beyond Jeanne Mance,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), April 20, 1969.

turning to the neighbourhood politics within Saint Jacques, tenants became active participants in the movements on the Left in Montreal, which in 1968 were beginning to no longer concern itself with liberal notions of ‘participatory democracy.’ Instead, organizing within the neighbourhood and across the city began to course a trajectory in which the Left organized for the liberation of the Québécois working class in advocating for revolutionary socialism. How tenants connected to the Left in 1968 were through the previous connections tenant leaders had made with prominent social activists within the city in 1967. Connected to the Left through the MSJ and Jean Grenier, which continued on after the demise of the Comité, the establishment of Citoyens Comité de Saint Jacques in 1968 saw tenants begin to embrace the politics of liberation for Quebec within their neighbourhood.

The Liberation Will Begin Within The Neighbourhood

Occurring alongside the tenants’ well-known struggle for co-partnership/representation within the governance structure of HJM, the HJM tenants also were building links with broader Left movements in Montreal. As 1968 arrived, citizens’ committees were forming across the city in working class quarters. These committees were the result of burgeoning (Left) Québécois nationalist politics, in tandem with a newly empowered and radicalized labour movement in Quebec. Under the leadership of Marcel Pepin, the CSN turned dramatically towards embracing a libertarian socialist political position focused social and community unionism in the late 1960s. As defined in Pepin’s “Second Front” address to the CSN national conference in 1968, labour unions in Quebec needed to look beyond the factory floor—or the the first front—and support to build alliances with neighbourhood based organizations and social movements—known as the second front, or consumption concerns—in advocating for a libertarian socialist Quebec. In understanding class struggle outside of the factory, under this new political directive, CSN and

affiliated labour unions would begin to organize neighbourhoods around class with political concerns that extended beyond the workplace; and these efforts would begin to affect organizing efforts within Saint Jacques and the political views of HJM tenants.¹²⁸

In understanding systemic oppression and exploitation beyond the factory floor, housing and tenant rights were central to the CSN's Second Front strategy. In February 1968, the Montreal Central Committee established a series of housing workshops focused on social housing construction centred on developing cooperatives. Starting in the district of Saint Louis, up the street from Jeanne-Mance, these 'teach-ins' connected local tenants with labour organizers, social activists, and affiliated Catholic religious leaders, such as priest Hubert Falardeau, who espoused a socialist politics grounded in Catholic liberation theology as the parish priest within the district of Saint Louis, the adjacent neighbourhood to Saint Jacques. Positioning their politics in relation to HJM, the Montreal based CSN and Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ) labour organizers understood cooperative housing as an example of a future socialist society within Quebec. This cooperative society, the CSN and FTQ implied, was in stark contrast to the "urban renewal" of HJM and its public housing in which workers were displaced: "Not a brick should be taken away until families whose homes have been expropriated are relocated," the unionists demanded.¹²⁹ In positioning the demand for social housing within a socialist political project for the working class, the FTQ and CSN, under the influence of Marcel Pepin, were not only beginning to take social housing in Quebec seriously, but articulating a position on social housing that would be the most radical position on

¹²⁸ Marcel Pepin, "The Second Front: The Report of Marcel Pepin, National President, to the Convention of the CNTU, October 13, 1968" in *Québec Labour: The Confederation of National Trade Unions Yesterday and Today*, ed. Black Rose Editorial Collective (Montreal: Black Rose Books), 85-134.

¹²⁹ Jean-Claude Leclerc, "Un Teach-in sur la Crise du Logement," *Le Devoir* (Montréal, QC), Feb. 26, 1968; "Expropriation System Scored by Labor Men," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Feb. 26, 1968.

social housing within Canada in the late 1960s. In contrast the prevailing view within the historical accounts on the development of social policy within Canada, unions in Quebec from 1968 to 1973 not only had an official position on social housing, but were adamantly leading the *cause* for social housing construction within the province. Without the Second Front and its focus on housing, therefore, the history of social housing in Quebec would be entirely different.¹³⁰

Focused on tenants' rights in market housing, the 'teach-ins' from these events strengthened the desire of organized labour to organize working class neighbourhoods in the city. Tenants across the city were making political connections with the CSN and FTQ, whether in connection with the two unions' demand for cooperative social housing, or due to the CSN's Montreal Central Committee's promotion of teach-ins which focused on tenant rights. For the tenants of HJM, however, their connections to the CSN in the late 1960s would be felt the strongest within the politics of the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques.

How tenants within Saint Jacques connected with the CSN was the result of its own political strategy emanating from the Second Front manifesto in 1968. The energies of CSN's

¹³⁰ Much to the confusion for John Bacher, who wrote, regarding the publication of the Hellyer Report in January of 1969, "The deputy leader of the [New Democratic Party] initially denounced it as 'reactionary,' a position repeated by the Quebec unions, the only segment of the labour movement that bothered to comment." Bacher, *Keeping to the Marketplace*, 27. Why Bacher was befuddled by the presence of the labour movement having an official opinion on public housing in Canada is due to the general opinion within Canadian urban and social history about how labour unions had never articulated a demand for social housing in the same manner as seen in Europe throughout the twentieth century. In short, public housing, according to this view, was never the cause of working class politics at any point in the history of social housing policy in Canada in the interwar or postwar period. The existence of CSN's Second Front in 1968 and its focus on demanding social housing for workers in Quebec directly negates this predominant urban historical view in Canada extolled by Bacher in believing the Canadian labour movement did not play a critical role in the development of social housing in Canada. As Bacher incorrectly stated, which the existence of the Second Front negates, "Marxist authors writing on the state in Canada have tended to ignore the evolution of social housing. There are many peculiarities in its history that do not fit with their analysis of the roots of the legitimation aspects of the Canadian state. Unlike unemployment insurance or family allowances, the 1949 acceptance of subsidized housing cannot be tied to a surge of unrest, since post-war labour militancy had long since peaked by this time. Similarly, major events in expanding social housing, such as the passage of the 1964 [National Housing Act] amendments or those of 1973, do not belong in such a context, for labour agitation did not play a major role in their achievement." Bacher, *Keeping to the Marketplace*, 32-33.

Second Front strategy would eventually lead to the formation of a municipal party of the Left in Montreal. And in the political maneuvering that led to this formation, the tenants associated with—and active within—the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques would become central actors in this emergence. The first move in the direction for a Left political party involved the formation of political action committees (CAP) at the neighbourhood level in Montreal in 1969. Occurring under the guidance—and tenuous alliance—between the Montreal Central Committee activists within the CSN and anti-capitalist social workers such as Grenier, the pivot towards the development of a political party was in direct response to growing emergence of the national question for Quebec independence and its connection to socialist and decolonization discourse concerning liberation of the working class on the Left within the city.¹³¹

With CAPs originating from the anti-capitalist and revolutionary politics influenced citizens' committees in the east end of the city, starting first within the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques, these political action committees joined together with local union councils in creating a city-wide political formation called Front d'action politique, or FRAP. Union backed, working class led and formed to defeat Drapeau in the municipal elections in November 1970, the FRAP was the first serious workers' municipal party in the city's history.

How FRAP materialized was directly due to the ideological differences found within the citizens' committees movement, and particularly within the politics of Saint Jacques. Becoming the base of anti-capitalist and revolutionary politics through its association with Grenier, the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques experienced an ideological rupture in 1969. Transforming into a CAP in 1969, CAP Saint Jacques became anti-capitalist and revolutionary ideological answer to the contradiction of the citizens' committees. Developed as a pilot project by the CO

¹³¹ Mills, *The Empire Within*, 173-175.

and MSS in 1965, citizens' committees were never intended to serve as political vehicles to challenge state power. Neo-nationalist in inclination, the citizens' committees were conceived by the more moderate to social democratic social animators within the 1960s as opportunities to advocate for changes to social policy within the state. With the emergence of CAP Saint Jacques in 1969, however, the power of citizens' committees became directly linked to the decolonizing discourse of Quebec on the Left in relation to the national question and towards the liberation of Quebec.

To decolonize and liberate Quebec, in other words, required a political party. With the emergence of CAPs within the neighbourhood movement in Montreal, voices on the Left, particularly those associated with anti-capitalist, anarchist, and revolutionary and libertarian socialist positions, began to ask whether the Left itself required a political party to challenge the nationalist Parti Québécois (PQ) which was established in 1968—a newly formed provincial party which was quickly becoming the neo-nationalist answer to addressing the national question of Quebec independence. In contrast, the FRAP, which was formed from the CAPs and the Montreal Central Committee of the CSN, was imagined by activists and labour union leaders within the city as the answer to the party problem in relation to the Left in Montreal municipal politics. The attempt at forming a party of the Left within the city would, historically, be the first and last time the Left attempted to form an explicit workers' party within Montreal municipal politics.¹³² Entirely focused on working class representation and political power emanating from the neighbourhood citizens' committees, and framed within an independence and socialist

¹³² Stephen Schecter, *The Politics of Urban Liberation* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1978), 175-176.

liberation political movement for Quebec, the Left in 1970 believed it was on the verge of a break through with the upcoming municipal elections in Montreal that November.¹³³

Instead, the FRAP met state repression following the October Crisis the month before the election. Dramatically hindered by the Front de Liberation du Québec (FLQ) kidnappings in October of 1970, on the eve of the municipal election, political leaders in Ottawa, Quebec City, and Montreal tied the kidnappings to all Left formations, including the FRAP. Their public disparagement, along with police repression, was a major blow to the Left. Through all of this, HJM tenants, whether or not actively involved within the struggle within Jeanne-Mance, were connected to a growing network of multiple socialist and liberation focused movements within the city. The result of these connections, though they had little effect on the municipal election of 1970, would have lasting effects on the tenants' movement and the leaders who led them within HJM.

The Passion of Gérard Dufort

Tenants, of course, were not oblivious to the changing social and political landscape within Montreal and Quebec in the late 1960s. In some cases, tenants became, especially in 1968 and 1969, public leaders within the city to create from-below social institutions. The tenant who best exemplified this development and the rise of the Montreal Left in the 1960s was, of course, Gérard Dufort. With the citizens' committees, the early tenant leaders such as Gérard Dufort became politically self-actualized with each new confrontation and development within HJM and

¹³³ Mills, *The Empire Within*, 171-175. For an interview on Paul Cliche, a former CSN labour activist who was active in both The FRAP and later the Montreal Citizens' Movement, on Pepin's reluctance to form The FRAP, see Pierre Beaudet and Richard Fidler, "Quebec's Long Struggle to Build a Democratic Left Party," *Rabble.ca*, April 1, 2015. <http://rabble.ca/blogs/bloggers/pierre-beaudet/2015/04/quebecs-long-struggle-to-build-democratic-left-party> (Accessed on June 17, 2017). Pepin's reluctant ideological stance on building a municipal Labour Party within Montreal and Quebec was emblematic of the continuing legacy of the corporatism instilled within the CSN labour union leaders by the Catholic Church, which had originally founded the labour union in 1921. See Carla Lipsig-Mummé, "Future Conditional: Wars of Position in the Quebec Labour Movement," *Studies in Political Economy* 36, Fall (1991): 73-107.

Saint Jacques. Dufort's actions at this time included leading the movement for the Clinique des Citoyens de Saint Jacques. Starting the campaign for the clinic as leader of the MSJ and president of the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques in 1968, Dufort conducted a 1,000 signature campaign against the city to open up a twenty-four hour, seven day a week, emergency clinic for HJM and Saint Jacques residents. Through actions like these, Dufort had become the de-facto leader within the neighbourhood residents by the spring of 1968. Closely connected to Grenier and his political activities, Dufort symbolized the growing militancy by HJM tenants within the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques.

Dufort also typified the shifting social and cultural values of Quebec society in the late 1960s. Mirroring the increasingly secularizing Quebec society, Dufort's socio-political awakening and successful community organizing lead to dramatic public confrontations with conservative local religious figures within the Catholic Church. Contrasting much of the present-day public discourse and assumption on the rapidly changing social views in Quebec during the 1960s, the notion of a confrontation between the Church and secularism in the 1960s period of the so-called 'Quiet Revolution' was not a universal binary. Depending on where working class residents were living in Montreal, in particular, church officials in the late 1960s could either be openly hostile or dogmatically supportive of socialism, social movements, and the Left. These unique geographical differences within Montreal and within the Church also revealed itself within HJM and Saint Jacques. Catholic nuns and priests connected to Société de Saint Vincent de Saint Paul began serving as covert everyday actors in helping tenants through their social orders in the 1960s, first in regards to their position as Catholic social workers, and later, in the 1970s and 1980s, as explicitly pro-tenant community organizers and eventual residents. Representing the generation of priests and nuns who sought to critique the traditional

social conservative power of the Church within Quebec—and its colonial relationship to Latin America and the Caribbean—these church actors were increasingly preaching a Marxist-attuned liberation theology as the politics of everyday life.¹³⁴ If the younger generation of Church workers within the immediate orbit of HJM tenants were becoming openly radical, the local priest in control of Église Saint Jacques was not considered a believer in the liberation of the Québécois working class.

Contrasting parish priests elsewhere within working class districts in Montreal, most notably in the neighbourhoods of Saint Henri and Saint Louis, local Saint Jacques parish officials attacked both the Left and tenant leaders who appeared to be the most interested in socialist causes. For tenant leader Gérard Dufort, the anti-socialist views of the local officials would ultimately change his life and the political leadership within Saint Jacques. As the founder and first elected president of the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques, which was organized in tandem with Paroisse de Saint Jacques, the CO, and PRSU social animators in the spring of 1968, local Church officials were becoming publicly hostile to the increasingly radical and politically prominent Dufort. During his tenure as the first Citoyens president, which began with the campaign to create a community clinic, Dufort had begun to raise his political profile and stature in HJM, Saint Jacques, and within the Left in Montreal. In his rise as a neighbourhood political leader, local priests increasingly lashed out at Dufort about his politics with a Red Scare campaign aimed at parishioners within the church. Escalating their anti-communist tactics against Dufort, a dramatic confrontation between the local Church priest and Dufort eventually occurred during a Sunday mass after Easter in April of 1968 that would, in the end, dramatically change Dufort's political life.

¹³⁴ Mills, *The Empire Within*, 25; 171-173.

“As long as this revolutionary and communist will be there, you will not do any good,” lambasted Father Lalonde from the pulpit at Saint Jacques Church across the street from Habitations Jeanne-Mance. Lalonde’s denouncement was aimed at Dufort, who sat with his family in the pews. Dufort, the tenant leader and volunteer ambulance paramedic, rose from his seat and allegedly shouted back, before an argument ensued, about how Father Lalonde did not follow the liberation theology practiced by the local parish priest up the street in the adjacent Saint Louis district in the Le Plateau-Mont-Royal neighbourhood. “Why can’t you be more like Father Hubert Falardeau!” cried Dufort.¹³⁵

Growing increasingly tired of the escalating harassment by local church officials, the altercation during the church service was the final straw for Dufort. Writing a letter to the members of the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques on April 15, 1968, Dufort along with his wife and family, announced they were collectively resigning the citizens’ committee. In his resignation letter, which was partially republished in *L’Est Central*, the neighbourhood newspaper, Dufort lamented about how Lalonde and other local church officials drove him to resignation. Contending he could no longer “fight against his own parish priest, who has gone to war against him,” Dufort was tired of Lalonde contending he was a communist revolutionary: “La plupart de ces dénigreur ignorent que je suis Chevalier de Colomb, qualité absolument incompatible avec l’esprit révolutionnaire et communiste.”¹³⁶

In the wake of his sudden resignation, Jean Boudreau, erroneously referred to as the ‘first’ president of the Comité within the historical record on the community clinique for Saint

¹³⁵ “Le curé le traite de Communiste et de Révolutionnaire,” *La Semaine* (Montréal, QC) Aug. 5, 1968. The priest’s ire towards Dufort, the paramedic who started the movement for the Clinic, who was the first elected leader of the tenants, was not all that surprising. Rumours had flown for years that Rogers, when he was administrator, had paid off the local priest at Saint Jacques to give him information on what tenants had said to the priest during weekly confession. Robert Kelder, “Instant Ghetto,” *Logos*, 1, no. 6, April 1968.

¹³⁶ “M. et Mme. Gérard Dufort on quitté le Comité des citoyens de St-Jacques,” *L’Est Central* (Montréal, QC), June 25, 1968.

Jacques, would follow Dufort as the second president of the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques in 1968.¹³⁷ Dufort, ending his resignation letter with the hope that “one day, we will have our clinic of ours,” had started a movement that the following president and former MSJ member and HJM tenant, Jean Boudreau, would go on to complete. The citizens’ clinique des Saint Jacques, the twenty-four hour, seven-day a week clinic 1,000 residents had petitioned and campaigned for, would open on October 28, 1968 in a first-floor apartment at 1764 Rue Saint Christophe.¹³⁸

The consistent hostility towards Dufort’s politics by the local parish of Saint Jacques hierarchy was also the reflection of how far the CHJM would go to surveil tenants in the 1960s. Throughout the 1960s, there had been rumours within HJM that Léopold Rogers had bribed Father Lalonde, the local priest in charge at Saint Jacques, in order to provide Rogers with information on what tenants had said during their weekly confession. The extent of the surveillance also extended beyond the confines of Église de Saint Jacques and HJM. Anonymously going on the record with *Logos* in 1968, social workers told the underground newspaper that Rogers was—in contrast to his public statements in the press on tenant organizing—willing to allow social workers to organize tenants and form various tenants’ committees. Except Rogers had one condition: social workers would have to disclose the information discussed during the meetings to Rogers.¹³⁹ With Rogers obsessed to know everything the tenants did or thought, inside or outside of HJM, the extent of surveillance Rogers and the CHJM was willing to institute clearly knew no bounds or limitations. According to

¹³⁷ See Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique de la Citoyens de Saint Jacques*, 25-26 for erroneously stating Boudreau as first president of the Comité des Citoyens Saint Jacques and the famous clinic. Initiated because of the near death of a toddler within HJM, the championing and later establishment of the clinic was due to Dufort.

¹³⁸ “M. et Mme. Gérard Dufort on quitté le Comité des citoyens de St-Jacques,” *L’Est Central* (Montréal, QC), June 25, 1968; Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique des Citoyens des Saint Jacques*, 35.

¹³⁹ Robert Kelder, *Logos*, “Instant Ghetto.”

Georges Jasmin, the fired CHJM social worker, Rogers suffered from “psychotic states of paranoia.”¹⁴⁰ As it turned out, so did the local Catholic Church hierarchy within Saint Jacques.

Red-baiting tenants from the pulpit, however, was not a McCarthyian illusion between 1967 and 1970 within the district of Saint Jacques. The general antagonism shown towards the tenants by Father Lalonde and their increasingly ideological embrace of socialist—whether real or imagined—was not an outlier political trajectory within the neighbourhood. Influenced by Jean Grenier and others, the social animators affiliated within the Comité and the Clinique des Saint Jacques were largely becoming anti-capitalist and revolutionary in orientation by the summer of 1969.¹⁴¹ How the tenants and the neighbourhood arrived at this political consciousness—whether or not the tenants themselves individually self-identified with anti-capitalist politics—had a lot to do with their connections to the Left and the socialist liberation movement in Montreal and Quebec.

The changing political atmosphere within Saint Jacques would also deleteriously affect the institutions tenants had helped or were in the process of creating. The clinic, first started by tenants, had increasingly ceased to become a community institution associated with the neighbourhood—or the residents who founded it—as the decade came to a close. In 1970 the clinic moved from Saint Jacques in relocating to the district of Saint Louis on Rue Rachel in the Le Plateau-Mont Royal neighbourhood. Under the direction of Jean Grenier, and eventually Marxist-Leninist activists after 1970, the clinique was turned into a community-run cooperative. Becoming nationally famous from 1970 to 1974 and subject to a NFB film directed by Bonnie Sherr Klein, the so-called people’s clinic of Saint Jacques was no longer associated with the low-

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique de la Citoyens de Saint Jacques*, 72-76. See also Mills, *The Empire Within*, 171-173; 210. According to Boivin, after May of 1969, Jean Grenier had become the unchallenged leader within Saint Jacques.

income and working class people on social assistance who helped found it. In moving away from Saint Jacques in 1970, the clinic, with its now famous social and political activists, ceased to have a relationship with either the community in which the clinic named, or with the people who founded it. The social activists who helped galvanize and organize HJM tenants in the 1960s had and socially and politically moved on from HJM in 1970s.¹⁴²

Conclusion: After Hellyer

The period between the storming of city hall in December of 1967 to the announcement of the Hellyer Report by the Trudeau government in January of 1969 fundamentally changed the course of the tenants' movement within Habitations Jeanne-Mance in the decades that followed. No longer asking for help or relying on social agencies to think or advocate on their behalf in public by 1969, the period between the direct action in December of 1967 to the founding of the Comité des Citoyens de Saint Jacques in 1968 repeatedly demonstrated how tenants and tenant leaders within HJM had become prominent political voices on their own within Montreal. From 1966 to 1970 tenants at HJM had successfully challenged the CHJM, the city, and the public discourse both aimed at their class as 'slum dwellers' and increasingly 'public housing tenants' in articulating their demands collectively in struggling for their social and political rights. Their successes and achievements must be taken into consideration in writing the history of public housing movements in the 1960s in Canada. Without the efforts of these tenants, the history of the public housing in the 1970s within Canada and Quebec would have been dramatically different.

Mobilizing around everyday life and social issues—at first with elite social agencies and later within the socialist to anti-capitalist Left within Montreal—the HJM tenants who organized

¹⁴² Boivin, *Historie de la Clinique de la Citoyens de Saint Jacques*, 76-77; Mills, *The Empire Within*, 173.

and fought for their rights and recognition in the 1960s outlined the struggles ahead for tenants in the 1970s and 1980s. Realizing how they could speak for themselves and collectively organize and articulate a political message, tenants overwhelmingly began to believe that they were capable of “fighting their own battles” on their own terms.¹⁴³ As the 1960s were coming to a close, HJM tenants, were coming into their own as a collective.

The work, however, as the 1960s came to a close was not finished. The struggles that would lay ahead for the tenants within HJM in the following decades were a direct outcome of the tenant uprisings across Canada within public housing projects in the 1960s. Within the historical accounts on public housing in Canada, the general consensus is that the Hellyer Report, produced by the Trudeau government in January of 1969 to directly confront the issues tenants across the country had been organizing against, fundamentally changed public housing and later tenant rights in Canada.¹⁴⁴ Following the publication of the Hellyer Report, tenant leaders, federal officials, and local housing managers in public housing across the country began to discuss what tenant representation within public housing projects would look like in practice. The central contention to how far federal and local officials were willing to concede defined the scope of tenant rights beyond simple recognition in the 1970s.¹⁴⁵ While not involved within these

¹⁴³ Sheila Arnopoulous, “St Martin’s Looks Beyond Jeanne Mance,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), April 20, 1969.

¹⁴⁴ Bacher, *Keeping to the Marketplace*, 27; Hellyer, *Report of the Federal Task Force on Housing and Urban Development* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1969), e.f. Strong on its language regarding the purpose of public housing, the document marked the end of ‘urban renewal’ in Canada.

¹⁴⁵ Canadian Council on Social Development, *Who Should Manage Public Housing? Report of a Workshop held at Point-Claire, Quebec June 19-21, 1970* (Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, 1970). At the workshop with public housing managers, CMHC executives, social animators, and tenant leaders across Canada in the 1960s, André Paul, a social animator for Société de Service social aux Familles in Montreal, summed up the view of Lucien Saulnier and the political class of Montreal regarding tenants’ management: “As an animator with citizens’ committees, I am convinced that anyone can the job if he [sic] is given the tools... Tenants can handle it, there is no question of that. But I do doubt that it will ever come about. After all, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the City of Montreal [Lucien Saulnier] has said: ‘Never, but never, will we give up our power.’ This he said when he dediced [sic] the composition of the Montreal Housing Bureau, on which there are three administrators and two citizens. Therein lies the basic problem. What is to be done in the face of this? We thought we were going to have some power but we never got it because of the poor structure. It isn’t ability that’s at stake here, it’s the distribution

discussions or later movements in the early 1970s—particularly in regards to the creation of a national tenants’ organization for public housing tenants in Canada—HJM tenants and their struggle for recognition in the 1960s were fundamental catalysts to these movements. Without the struggles and determination of the Comité, the era of new ‘openness’ from Ottawa regarding tenant rights and representation between 1972 to 1976 would not have emerged.

The tenant struggles of the 1960s, therefore, represented a period where tenants in HJM collectively articulated their political demands, their right to exist, and in the process won concessions from the city and the CHJM and create enough public pressure to have the first administrator of HJM, Léopold Rogers, resign. The extent to which tenants had achieved success in the 1960s in shaping HJM was echoed in the words of Daniel Marsan, the second administrator of HJM, in 1972. Speaking to the *Montreal Star*, Marsan quipped about how life in HJM, from his perspective, had changed for the better: “In the beginning, we had some difficulty getting the people to adjust to the project... now we are satisfied with the operation... it’s far better than it used to be.” One of the reasons for this, according to Marsan, was the change in the rental contract regarding recently widowed tenants. In 1970, the Corporation of Habitations Jeanne-Mance officially removed one of the “rules” that had galvanized the tenants. As Leon Harris of *The Gazette* wrote: “Eldery people left alone by the death of their spouses are no longer asked to leave the project. Until the rule was changed, no single person was permitted to remain

of power.” Responding to Paul, Bernard Galarneau, the Assistant-Director of Housing Service of Montreal, dismissed the response. “When Mr. Saulnier said that, he added, ‘under the present structure.’ He acted in accordance with the existing legislation. The law is clear at the moment. If the law changes, all right. Everything can change.” Ibid, 50-51. Saulnier’s shadow loomed large over the meeting. In experiencing the recognition struggles of the late 1960s, tenant leaders and activists perused positions on tenants’ management during the Pointe-Claire conference that would define the later decades on tenants’ rights within public housing. In understanding that managers were never going to relinquish power to manage to tenants, the main thrust behind the tenant positions during the meeting centred on demanding the enshrinement of tenants’ rights through legislation at the provincial level, and the basic recognition to allow tenants to form tenant associations.

[in Habitations Jeanne-Mance.].”¹⁴⁶ The reason for this change, of course, was due to the actions of the Comité and MSJ in 1967 to campaign against the CHJM during the Expo ’67 eviction crisis.

With changes to the rental contract, governance structure, and advocating for community services within Saint Jacques, tenants in Habitations Jeanne-Mance had fundamentally transformed the housing and the neighbourhood in which they lived in the 1960s. In achieving these victories, tenants developed a collective political consciousness within a working class—and later Québécois identity— politics that produced a decades long connection to and within the Left in both Montreal and in Quebec. In challenging early the classist rhetoric of the elites regarding the “slums,” and developing an early “political base” of support within HJM and in the neighbourhood of Saint Jacques—the early tenant struggles framed their tenant-landlord relationship in relation to the policies and practices of postwar era elites and within the socialist Québécois nationalist politics within Montreal in the 1960s. In finding a consciousness within these movements, the tenants’ movement in the 1970s and 1980s would increasingly begin to frame their struggle for tenants’ management and the democratization of the CHJM from the struggles forged in the 1960s. Entering into the 1970s, the foundations of the tenants’ movement and their struggle to remake Habitations Jeanne-Mance, had now officially been set.

¹⁴⁶ Leon Harris, “Housing Project success Belies dire Predictions,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Jan. 21, 1972.

Part II:
Governing from Below: 1974-1994

Chapter 4

The Tenants Association and the Politics of Everyday Life:

Lease, Rent, Security, Planning, and Governance, 1975-1979

The 1970s Canadian public housing authorities across the country saw the emergence of tenant representation within local public housing authorities with the development of tenants' associations. An outcome of the nationwide tenant uprisings that had swept across the country from Newfoundland to British Columbia in the late 1960s, the Canadian state in the 1970s began a period where tenant associations were openly allowed to exist. What was still contested, however, was the idea of tenants' management and the specific terms this management would entail for tenants within their individual governance structures. This temporary openness regarding tenant rights by Ottawa, provincial governments, and local housing authorities would also not last the decade. Largely a consequence of local political connections and internal decisions within tenant associations in the 1970s, how individual associations across Canada traversed the 1970s in large measure determined their fate in the 1980s.

In contrast to politics of the times for a tenant in public housing in Canada in the early 1970s, l'Association des locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance (from hereafter known as the tenants association) would not explicitly address the concerns over tenant representation or the tenants' management question in the 1970s. Organized relatively late in comparison to other associations across Canada, the tenants' association emerged near the end of the peak tenants' rights advocacy from 1972 to 1976 period within Canada.¹⁴⁷ However, being situated in

¹⁴⁷ For this chapter, I am working off of Sean Purdy, "By the People, for the People: tenant organizing in Toronto's Regent Park Housing Project in the 1960s and 1970s," *Journal of Urban History* 30, no. 4 (2004): 519-548.

Montreal and still connected to the Left within the city had its particular advantages that other tenants' movements in Canada—and in Montreal—did not have. Connecting with the oppositional Left and Montreal Citizens' Movement (MCM), the tenants' association used the connections that were forged in the 1960s to politically legitimize the tenants' association in the 1970s.

This chapter examines how the tenants association of HJM understood its early formation in the 1970s and led concerted efforts to solidify the association as the legitimate voice for tenants. Coming out of the recognition struggles—and having experience of being active participants in the Left in late 1960s within Montreal—the tenants association sought to reconnect with the growing oppositional political movements within the city in continuing a form of politics the Comité des Citoyens had crafted almost a decade earlier. In focusing on the politics of the everyday life for tenants, the tenants' association became associated with the MCM—which in the 1970s was led by neighbourhood associations focused on housing rights and community organizing. Through this connection, the tenants association would frame their concerns over the lease, rental contract, and building security issues within the politics espoused by the growing Left opposition to Drapeau-Niding administration within the city. With their reconnection with both the Left and in developing a politics of everyday life that demonstrated a concern for HJM tenants, their homes, and the neighbourhood in which they lived, the tenants' association echoed the socialist libertarian mantra of the CSN in the 1970s. In their aim “to be the masters of our own house,” the tenants association used the 1970s to lay the groundwork for the battles that were to come in the 1980s within a politics that sought to legitimize the tenants' association within HJM. In helping to forge a foundational legitimacy within HJM in the 1970s,

the tenants' association was well-positioned for the shifting geographies of governance, politics, and tenant rights that would begin to recede in Canada in the 1980s.

Challenging the New Façade on an Old Regime: The Formation of the Tenants' Association

As light snow fell during the evening on April 11, 1973, 29 tenants from Habitations Jeanne-Mance congregated in École Saint Jacques at the corner of Saint Catherine and Saint Denis in Montreal to discuss restarting a tenants' movement within HJM. Filing into the school room, the purpose of their gathering was to discuss the social and political conditions at Habitations Jeanne-Mance and determine how residents could best address their collective concerns. Led mostly by the organizing efforts of Berthe Marcotte, a sister at Petite Sœur de l'Assomption, the meeting would have otherwise not had happened. Unlike elsewhere in Canada after the Hellyer Report in 1969, which led to the formation of tenants associations across Canada, the tenants and greater community at Habitations Jeanne-Mance had not attempted to organize a tenants' association after the CHJM suppression of the Comité in 1968. Political activity, much like that of the neighbourhood movements which surrounded HJM in the late 1960s and early 1970s, had focused its attention at the neighbourhood and municipal political level. For tenants at HJM, this shift in focus was partially a response to the fear of eviction for tenant organizing. Now, with a federal government supporting a vague conception of tenant rights, and with federal social agency services funding tenants associations, the prospects for forming an official organization was now more realistic than ever before.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ Purdy, "By the People, For the People," 536-540. HJM tenant activists were relatively late to the tenants' association movement that had swept across Canada in the early 1970s. Becoming officially recognized by Ottawa after the Hellyer Report in 1969, relative discussions on tenants' rights between federal, local, and tenant leaders between 1970 and 1972 also outlined the shift within Canadian housing policy particularly with the amendments to the National Housing Act of 1973. Canadian Council on Social Development, *Who Should Manage Public Housing? Report of a Workshop held at Point-Claire, Quebec June 19-21, 1970* (Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, 1970). The CMHC also during this period subsidized the Canadian Organization of Public Housing Tenants until the national tenant organization had its subsidies eliminated in 1976. Bacher, *Keeping to the*

Discussions on how to proceed after the initial meeting lasted nearly a year until Valentine's Day of 1974, when tenants met again at École Saint Jacques. The attendance had now nearly doubled to 40 tenants with more concrete, everyday life concerns being discussed. From these discussions, three systemic problems within life at Jeanne-Mance were articulated by those at the gathering: problems with the rent scale, the lease contract, and tenant representation on the board of directors of the CHJM. A vote was also held on whether to proceed with a "provisional" tenants' committee, similar to the Comité des locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance that formed in January of 1966. Passing unanimously, the tenants' committee continued organizing group discussions related to tenant issues and possible formation of an official—and now legally recognized—tenants' association. The achievement of a tenants' association, the central desire and focus of the recognition struggles in the 1960s, when tenants were legally deprived and evicted for attempting to organize, occurred on January 28, 1975, when 125 people assembled in Cégep du Vieux Montréal to discuss the systemic issues tenants faced on an everyday basis within Habitations Jeanne-Mance. Unbeknownst to the tenants who filed out of the school that night, the tenants who assembled at the meeting to formalize l'Association des Locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance after electing their own board of directors on the executive of the association, had changed the course of history in Habitations Jeanne-Mance in creating one of the strongest public housing tenants' associations within North America.¹⁴⁹

Wandering in the Desert: Being a HJM Tenant in the 1970s

Marketplace, 33. Once organized, however, unlike tenants in Toronto, HJM tenants would connect with the Montreal Citizens' Movement (MCM), a tenant-friendly political party in municipal opposition to Drapeau to sustain political legitimacy. These factors highlight the differing situation for HJM tenants in the 1970s in relation to the experience of tenants documented by Sean Purdy within Regent Park in Toronto. See Sean Purdy, "By the People, for the People: tenant organizing in Toronto's Regent Park Housing Project in the 1960s and 1970s," *Journal of Urban History* 30, no. 4 (2004): 519-548.

¹⁴⁹ "C'est quoi l'association" in 5 ans ça se fête, January 1981, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Yet throughout the 1970s tenants at Jeanne-Mance seemed to be unaffiliated bystanders to tenants' rights achievements within Quebec and Canada. Prisoners within their own world, tenants of HJM were both residents of Quebec, but living on land institutionally separate from market-rental tenants living in Montréal or public housing tenants living in SHQ housing within Montréal. In not being privy to the rules of Quebec concerning tenants—due to the fundamental relationship of how the Dozois Plan was formulated between the city of Montreal and the federal government—Quebec tenant rights, laws, and regulations of public housing tenants within the province in the 1970s began to institutionally separate from the governance conditions in HJM. In politically realizing their own specific legal definition as residents of Quebec but not *locataires* in Quebec, the tenants' association used this distinction to forge a unique place-specific and localized tenant identity that both diverged from tenants' associations across Canada, the experience of the Ottawa-based national tenants' organization, and the overall experience of Montreal and Quebec public housing tenants in the 1970s. Radicalized by the 1960s, tenants used their political connections with Montreal to forge their own distinct identity and purpose that other public housing tenants' associations within Montréal simply did not have. Focusing, therefore, on everyday issues concerning tenants in HJM became articulated and tethered within the rapidly forming political narrative that Jeanne-Mance was institutionally unique within the housing politics of Montreal.

Yet tenants at Habitations Jeanne-Mance in the early and mid 1970s also lived an inexplicable life in regards to their own rights within public housing in Canada, and the movements for public housing rights, more broadly, which had been occurring across the country. While the national tenants' movement travelled Canada and called on tenants everywhere to organize—in advocating for the changes to public housing governance structures

after the Hellyer Report in 1969—tenants within HJM did not immediately heed this call.¹⁵⁰ And this noticeably dark period in organizing also extended to HJM tenants relationship to the city-wide market-rental tenants movements and the provincial public housing tenants movements within Montréal. While widespread throughout the city, the most militant of these neighbourhood tenants’ committees were situated within Centre-Sud, the neighbourhood surrounding Jeanne-Mance, and yet Jeanne-Mance tenants were not active in these groups. In the period of rapid change and organizing from 1969 to 1974 within Montreal, Quebec, and in Canada, the early efforts of these movements did not have a direct relationship on the tenants of HJM and the formation of their own tenants’ association. Regardless of the inactivity, the political movements within the city and within Quebec were still shaping the situation in HJM. However, the constellations of these movements within the city would, once the tenants’ association was finally established, galvanize early support for the tenants, leading to small victories and setting the foundation for returning to the central governance-focused struggles of the 1960s.¹⁵¹

Finding Legitimacy in the Politics of Everyday Life

The first real attempt to address the concerns of tenants’ in Jeanne-Mance was over a short campaign to demand the City of Montreal and the CHJM to adopt the Quebec provincial

¹⁵⁰ Canadian Press. “Tenants Call for New Policies: Housing Conference Shows Rare Unity,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), May 25, 1971.

¹⁵¹ Roughly, these constellations the tenants benefited from were as follows: the sit-in housing movements in the Centre-Sud neighbourhood of Montreal in the 1970s; the rise of the MCM to challenge Drapeau in 1974 and its central focus on housing issues; and the continuing indifference of Drapeau with his championing of mega-projects like the Olympics in 1976 in relation to these housing struggles within Montreal. See Terence Moore, “School Squatters Ask for Rent Subsidies,” *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), July 21, 1976; Marcel Chouinard, “Les sans-Logis Protestent Devant l’Hôtel de Ville,” *Montréal-Matin* (Montréal, QC), July 9, 1976; “Les ‘Sinistrés Olympiques’ saïssissent les Députés de Leurs Griefs et Besoins,” *Le Devoir* (Montréal, QC), July 28, 1976; Stephen Schecter, *The Politics of Urban Liberation* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1978), 175-176. For Drapeau, his Drapeau-Niding administration, which followed the Drapeau-Saulnier years, prioritized the Olympics over housing on the grounds that the spectacle of the event was “therapy” for Montrealers. Brian McKenna and Susan Purcell, *Drapeau* (Toronto/Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1980), 345.

standard lease form and rental contract. Just three days before Jeanne-Mance tenants formed an association, the Quebec provincial law enshrining a mandatory standard lease form was adopted on January 24, 1975. Informing tenants of this policy change through mailers and conducting an internal polling of residents, the tenants' association petitioned the board of directors of the CHJM to adopt the standard lease form that had been instituted in Quebec. In only one month of political activity, the association successfully pushed for negotiations between the board, the city, and the CMHC to adopt the lease form between February and March of 1976. In a campaign focused on rental contract transparency, the tenants, in the end, got what they wanted. On June 16, 1976, the new standard lease form was officially agreed to—and came into effect—on July 1, 1976.¹⁵²

Similar to tenants across Canada in the 1970s, the struggle to alter the terms of how rent was defined and paid was still one of the defining issues of concern for the tenants' association. The late 1960s reforms of the original 1948 Carver-Hopwood rent scale, which determined rent by rent to gross family income and family size had been replaced by a rent-gear-to-income formula. In May of 1975, the tenants' association challenged the premise of this rent scale. Framing the issue of rent within the narrative of dignity to the worker and family providers, tenants were able to force a new round of negotiations concerning the rent scale in May of 1975 between the City and the CMHC.¹⁵³ While not entirely successful in removing the rent-gear-to-income scheme, the outcome of the negotiations, which lasted over two years, proved to be a catalyst for developing a tenant consciousness in solidifying the association's political

¹⁵² "Bail," in 5 ans ce fête, January 1981, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

¹⁵³ "Echelle de loyer," in 5 ans ce fête, January 1981, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

bargaining power. Their success negotiating was shown in April of 1977, when the tenants' association was able to acquire the official CMHC rent scale from the CMHC. And for the tenants within HJM, this relatively minor victory mattered. For HJM tenants who had lived through the unknown rumours of the CHJM in the 1960s, particularly during the widowers' crisis during Expo '67, this was an important victory in obtaining transparency and knowledge of how the governance of the CHJM functioned in regards to their rent. In mailing every resident of HJM the official rent scale in May of 1977, the association was able to detail the actual scales of the monthly rent for the first time. Until this moment, this basic information had remained unknown to tenants within Jeanne-Mance.¹⁵⁴

These small victories continued in campaigns over privacy and security related to the structure of the buildings of HJM. As the 1960s battles over maintenance crews spying on residents revealed, the demand for security—and its different forms within HJM—had always been a paramount concern for tenants. In the 1970s, the enduring concern over security moved to focusing on the buildings themselves. In addressing the physical demand for secure buildings from locks on the front doors of buildings to installing a telecom system for tenants in the vertical tower blocks, the association conducted a survey of 567 residences within the community to highlight and document to the CHJM and the city the level of systemic neglect within Jeanne-Mance.¹⁵⁵ Not only were the results of the tenant conducted survey sent to every tenant household, but the association mailed the flier to Emile Désorcy, the president of

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ “Securite,” in 5 ans ce fête..., January 1981, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. According to the tenants' association, 49 percent of residents surveyed within HJM noted that they had experience a break-in as a direct result of the absence of locks on the doors of the buildings. As Paul Chouinard, the leader of the grievance committee within the tenants' association told *La Presse* on June 7, 1976, the focus for the campaign came directly from the 600 senior residents who “live[d] in fear” of being robbed inside of their homes. “Ils Veulent une Protection Accrue: Près de la Moitié des Locataires ont Déjà,” *La Presse* (Montréal, QC), June 7, 1976.

CHJM on board of directors; Daniel Marsan, the administrator of CHJM; and Joseph Belander, the president of the CMHC. Like the rental application, the petition tactic worked. After a period of negotiations in March of 1976, the city and CHJM for the first time in the history of HJM placed locks on the front doors of buildings and installed an intercom system for tenants living in the towers on Rue Ontario and Boulevard de Maisonneuve.¹⁵⁶

The efforts to mobilize campaigns to physically alter their neighbourhood went beyond the buildings on the grounds of HJM. In the 1970s, the tenants' association reconnected with Left municipal politics within the city in seeking to change aspects of their neighbourhood within issues concerning public safety and security for tenants. With the establishment of the Université de Québec à Montréal (UQAM) in the early 1970s from aftermath of the McGill Français student movement, the neighbourhood of Saint Jacques had fundamentally changed. UQAM, placed directly on the old site of École Saint Jacques and Église Saint Jacques, where tenants congregated for meetings and organized in the 1960s, the university increased the local car traffic with speeding motorists within the neighbourhood. Concerned with the safety of tenants and their ability to safely cross Rue Ontario and Boulevard de Maisonneuve, tenants' association leaders began a campaign to add street lights to their district. In starting a struggle to add a street light, this seemingly banal—and otherwise common sense—advocacy planning initiative the tenants' association started also revealed the lengths city hall under Drapeau in the 1970s went to deny working class socially stigmatized neighbourhoods similar to HJM their basic dignity. The struggle for the stop light also reconnected the tenants' with the Left and the Montreal Citizens' Movement (MCM).

Connecting with the MCM: The Struggle for a Traffic Light

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

Addressing the systemic neglect by Drapeau-Niding regarding the social conditions within the city, tenants forged an alliance with the MCM, the oppositional municipal political party. How tenants became linked with the MCM was over tenants' association advocacy planning to demand changes to the neighbourhood, particularly pedestrian safety within the district. To address the issue of pedestrian mobility, the tenants' association partnered with the MCM, the successor of the FRAP, as the official Left opposition to Drapeau in the city. Developing another petition campaign to demand the city add a traffic light at the intersections of Boulevard de Maisonneuve and Rue Ontario, 456 tenants signed the petition at the annual general assembly of the tenants' association in April of 1977. Predictably, the effort by the tenants' association—and their petition—went unnoticed by the city planning department. Undeterred, however, the tenants' continued to pressure the city until the following April in 1978, when the planning department acknowledged the year long petition drive for a stop light by addressing the problem with proposing a cross-walk to be installed.

The tenants' association, however, had never asked for a cross-walk—they demanded a traffic light. Ignoring the demands of the community for a traffic light enraged HJM tenants, as the leadership of the association contended that a cross-walk did not address the fundamental concern of speeding cars from UQAM through the neighbourhood.¹⁵⁷ To challenge the city department of planning, the tenants' association in the autumn of 1976 called for a special general assembly concerning the issues of pedestrian safety. Inviting the MCM to the special assembly on November 8, 1979, the tenants' association was able to secure the support of the municipal political party. In making their concerns public with oppositional political power,

¹⁵⁷ “Feu de Circulation,” in 5 ans ce fête..., January 1981, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada..

connecting tenant leaders with elected political officials from a political party concerned with organizing a neighbourhood-based citizens' movements—at a time when the MCM was at its oppositional Left peak in the 1970s—the planning department and the city of Montreal changed its position on the pedestrian safety within the neighbourhood Saint Jacques regarding the intersection near HJM. Two weeks later, on November 27, 1978, the city of Montreal presented a new plan to the public that would incorporate a traffic light at the intersection. The traffic light was finally installed in June of 1979.¹⁵⁸

Securing the Tenants' Association and Surviving the 1970s

Across Canada, the hope that was generated for tenants' rights and tenants' associations at the beginning of the decade had begun to fade from view by 1980. From this perspective, the point for tenants' associations within public housing authorities the 1970s was to survive and avoid cooptation by local politicians or provincial managers. With earlier support from Ottawa becoming nonexistent after 1976, tenants' associations were beginning to realize that they were on their own in addressing the issue of tenants' management or tenants' power within local housing authorities.¹⁵⁹

In contrast to tenants elsewhere in Canada, the tenants' association within Jeanne-Mance successfully avoided these pitfalls other tenants' associations had been less fortunate in avoiding in the 1970s. The successful campaigns by the tenants' associations to change Habitations Jeanne-Mance and their neighbourhood within the politics of everyday life had legitimized the tenants' association as the political voice for the tenants by 1980. As a result, the tenants' association was able to successfully form and articulate its demands and win concessions from elite power at multiple scales of governance to achieve outcomes that mattered to the tenants

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ Purdy, "By the People, For the People," 536-540.

who lived in HJM. While the 1970s victories were small in scale and scope, they were successfully fought within general openness of the 1970s within the federal and provincial level as it related to tenants in public housing.

This openness from Ottawa, which other tenants' associations in Canada either took for granted or self-destructed from their own internal contradictions, began to close in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The tenants' association that had survived this period succeeded in large measure how each individual tenants' association was able sustain consensus and political legitimacy within their local associations and housing residences in the 1970s. For the tenants' association in HJM, this meant proceeding with politics steeped in the everyday life of the community within HJM, regardless of how little the actual tenant-relations between tenants and the CHJM and the city of Montreal under the administrator of Daniel Marsan had changed in the 1970s. These little victories were also a profound achievement for a tenant body that Emilé Désorcy, the president of the CHJM, still understood as a collective group of individuals too "dumb and educated" to ever form a tenants' association.¹⁶⁰ In forming a tenants' association on their own, and winning small battles framed within everyday life, tenants at Jeanne-Mance had demonstrated otherwise.

As the 1970s came to a close, the tenants' association within HJM also had public and institutional legitimacy that was not given to them from above, through provincial or federal policy initiatives, but won precisely due to direct result of their previous struggles to be recognized in the 1960s. Now officially recognized, however, their collective political power in the 1970s was only shown to be successful when used strategically on issues that did not fundamentally address the tenant-landlord relationship or the imbalance of power within the

¹⁶⁰ Sheila Arnopoulous, "St Martin's Looks Beyond Jeanne Mance," *Montreal Star* (Montreal, QC), April 20, 1969.

multiple scales of governance connected to HJM. The tenants' association, as a result, was not as militant as the generation of tenants led by Gérard Dufort and his leadership of the Comité and MSJ in directly confronting both the CHJM and the municipal political power of Drapeau-Saulnier within Montreal in the late 1960s. But the 1970s in Montreal were also not the late 1960s. In forming an official organization focused on officially representing the interests of the tenants who lived in HJM, the tenants' association spent its formative years in the 1970s developing and forementing a place-specific and unique tenant political and social base. In learning how to successfully negotiate and wage their political tenant power—albeit within defined limits—HJM tenants were for the first time able to use their collective voice to enact changes within their geography, and they did so on their own terms. Facing a shifting landscape of tenants' rights and politics within Quebec and in Canada in the 1980s, these small victories from the 1970s, and the connections that resulted from them with the MCM, would prove to be beneficial in sustaining a tenants' movement into a decade when the majority of tenants' associations had either folded or had become depoliticized.

Chapter 5

Solidifying a *Québécois* Political Bloc:

Race, Language, and Organizing against the Politics of Cooptation,

1980-1982

“Well welcome to the 1980s” – Pierre Trudeau¹⁶¹

Quebec in the early 1980s was a society in midst of major political and social shifts. Shaped by the failure of the first referendum for Quebec sovereignty in 1980, the politics within Montreal and Quebec had begun to retract the welfare state expansionist aims of the 1970s. Social housing construction, social welfare and workers’ rights, and the growing the public sector, which all had been expanded by the Parti Québécois (PQ) under René Lévesque in the mid 1970s were now, in the early 1980s, under attack from the same government that sought the support of the Left and its social movements in its rise to power a decade before.¹⁶² How this neoliberalizing of the state economic vision was able to be sustained politically was through the culmination of the Quebec nationalist political project that centred on language, race, and immigration in relation to both the Quebec state and the city of Montreal. Aiming to cement Quebec as a French-speaking and unilingual state, particularly through the Charter of French Language in 1978—known colloqually as Bill 101—Montreal was fundamentally being reshaped by the reassertion of the French language within the city and its institutions. With its primarily focus concerned with the increasingly number of racialized immigrants to Montreal, and their ‘allophone’ status—known

¹⁶¹ CBC Digital Archives. “The Electoral Ups and Downs of Pierre Trudeau.” CBC.ca. <http://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/trudeau-welcome-to-the-1980s> (Accessed June 12, 2017).

¹⁶² François Léonard and Jacques Léveillé, *Montréal—After Drapeau* (Montreal, QC: Black Rose Books, 1986).

in Quebec as people who do not speak French or English as a first language—the politics of language, race, and immigration were given new meanings in attempt to forge a multiculturalism vision within the Québécois milieu.¹⁶³

Within this backdrop regarding the politics of language and Quebec nationalism, HJM tenants, a decreasing francophone majority tenant population connected with the Quebec nationalist movement, confronted the shifting economic and language politics in the 1981 and 1982 within HJM. How the tenants' association within HJM addressed these crises and shifts would be demonstrated in the appointment by the city of Claude Lalonde as the new administrator for the CHJM in 1981. Openly demonstrating a shift in how the now Drapeau-Lamarre administration understood HJM, Lalonde was hired by the city to coopt the tenants' movement. Appointed with this task, Lalonde would begin to seek dialogue with the tenants' association in his advocacy to install a corporate-backed tenant representative through a series of public consultation efforts aimed at instituting corporate-friendly 'best practices' outcomes for the CHJM. In addressing the pivot within the CHJM, the tenants' association reacted to Lalonde's agenda by mirroring the ongoing political and social shifts within Quebec as it related to race, language, immigration, and the sovereignty movement after the failure of the first referendum. Defensively positioning itself as the sole defender of HJM tenants to counter CHJM focused public consultation approaches, the tenants' association secured its political legitimacy in the early 1980s in constructing a white Québécois francophone political bloc in claiming and solidifying HJM as French Canadian space. By incorporating the cultural and identity politics of the PQ, and the increasingly retrograde factions of the Quebec Left in the 1980s, the tenants' association embraced association policies that mirrored the "multiculturalism

¹⁶³ See Eve Haque, *Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework: Language, Race, and Belonging in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

in a bicultural framework” set forth in the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in Canada from 1963 to 1970. Implying ahistorical claims to space as “heritage” as a defensive measure to organize the diminishing francophone majority within HJM, the tenants’ association forged its own survival in the 1980s as a tenants’ association in solidifying a white Québécois political bloc, and in the process promoting their own form of Québécois multiculturalism.

In addressing the politics of language, race, and neoliberal elite governance strategies, this chapter examines how the tenants used the power of the general assembly within the tenants’ association to advocate and organize around explicit Quebec nationalist identity politics to sustain tenant political cohesion and militancy in the face of new governance challenges from the CHJM. Seeking to sustain a Québécois majority within HJM on false “heritage” claims regarding the neighbourhood of Saint Jacques, the tenants’ association in the early 1980s developed tenant institutions that would later fundamentally transform HJM. Constructed within a place-specific, ethno-nationalist political project that first sought—and would later fail—to keep HJM majority white and Québécois, the tenants’ association, in developing both a school to teach tenants how to read and write and learn French, in accordance to ‘francisation’ school initiatives occurring throughout Quebec in the 1970s and 1980s, actively shaped the direction of HJM in the decades that followed. This direction would have consequences for the tenants’ association going forward into the 1990s and 2000s. In confronting the governance power of the CHJM that sought to eliminate their political power in the 1980s, tenants within HJM politically mirrored the political discourse within Quebec in pursuing cultural identity politics that sought to permanently sustain HJM as a white Québécois space. Using the power of the general assembly, the idealized form of direct democracy within the Left in Montreal since the 1960s, white francophone tenants within

HJM incorporated a politics of multiculturalism which understood inclusion to mean the survival of a white francophone and Québécois tenant majority.

Race, Language, and the Problem of Left Organizing in Montreal in the 1980s

Language politics in Quebec has a long and complicated history. Detailing the entire historical trajectory of the politics of language, race, and its connections to Quebec nationalism and the white-settler colonial state is beyond the scope of this chapter and thesis.¹⁶⁴ This history, however, is important to the discussions on race, identity, and nationalism within the context of the tenants' movement within Habitations Jeanne-Mance in the 1980s. After the failure of the 1980 referendum, the Quebec sovereignty movement refocused its 'project' of 'the nation' to mirror the federal shifts with the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in 1963-1970, which recasted the "Two Solitudes" or "two races" national foundation myth of Canada towards a nation-state project of "multiculturalism within a bicultural framework."¹⁶⁵ The Royal Commission, which itself was a direct reaction to Quebec nationalism and the public school crisis in Saint Léonard, Quebec in 1957, when Italian immigrants began placing their children in anglophone schools, sought to reframe the racial hierarchies of Canada within the concept of two founding languages-English and French—within a multiculturalism immigration policy which still defines the present Canadian state.¹⁶⁶ Yet in the process of the PQ implementing Bill 101 in 1978, the politics on language within Quebec had shifted from the decolonization rhetoric regarding French language rights in Quebec in the 1960s to explicitly focused on legitimating

¹⁶⁴ The literature on Bill 101 is quite vast. For differing viewpoints on language and race in Quebec and Canada, see Eve Haque, *Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework: Language, Race, and Belonging in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012); Marc V. Levine, *The Reconquest of Montreal: Language Policy and Social Change in a Bilingual City* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press); Sean Mills, *The Empire Within*, 138-162; and Delicé Mugabo, "On Rocks and Hard Places: A Reflection on Antiblackness in Organizing Against Islamophobia," *Critical Ethnic Studies* 2, Fall (2016): 159-183.

¹⁶⁵ Eve Haque, *Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework*, 4-5.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 43-52.

Québécois white-settler claims in othering the so-called “allophone” community in Quebec—people who were neither “anglophone” nor “francophone,” or, in other words, the Anglo-British and French speakers in Canada, who were known until 1970 as the two founding “races” of white-settler Canada.¹⁶⁷

Yet the efforts to reassert French as the language for Quebec transcended class and the elites. As this thesis opened with a poem by Jo-Criss, a HJM tenant in the 1960s, the politics of language and empire, and the politics of decolonization and the francophone working class—which in the 1960s were explicitly coded in racial terms—still resonated within tenants as a foundation to the tenants’ movement within in HJM in the 1980s. The differences now resided in negotiating the organizing efforts and political ideologies of the past two decades within HJM—where language served as identifier for the basis of the citizens’ committees—with immigration changes in Canada in the 1970s and its relationship to the politics of who was allowed to reside within HJM as tenant. In following the work of Haque, and as the nationalist movements around language and immigrants revealed in the 1950s—language politics, race, and the meaning of nation in Quebec had always been intertwined. Following the decolonization political discourse in the 1960s, which served as the basis for Bill 101, the tenants’ association after 1980 epitomized an assertion of a white-settler mentality to territory within what can be identifiably described as “multiculturalism within a bicultural framework.”¹⁶⁸

In past sixty years, language politics in Quebec have consistently been framed in relation to the city Montreal and its region. Developed explicitly with the intent on making Montreal into a city that was unilingual and French, the implementation of Bill 101 in 1978 was aimed not only at white and English speaking residents in Montreal, but also explicitly at racialized, non-

¹⁶⁷ Levine, *The Reconquest of Montreal*, 138-147.

¹⁶⁸ Harque, *Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework*, 4-5.

anglophone immigrants to Quebec, which after the changes to the Canadian Immigration Act in 1976 became the vast majority of newly arriving immigrants to Quebec and Canada. With the politics of the 1980s, therefore, increasingly become a project in Quebec of developing French-speaking state institutions and French-speaking immigrants, the tenants' association within HJM would address these political and social shifts over the politics of race and language and incorporate these views into their own community.¹⁶⁹

The city, of course, where this racialized language project of Quebec nationalism would be most dramatically felt in the 1980s was in Montreal. In focusing on the tenants' movement in HJM, the following discussion is focused on how politics of race and language in the 1980s within Montreal was internalized by the francophone and white Québécois tenants that reaffirmed these views into their own tenant-led institutions and movements. In constructing a multicultural framework within the tenants' movement itself, which the tenants' association began to construct in the early 1980s, the tenants not only demonstrated how the political and social changes occurring within Montreal and Quebec affected HJM, but how the Left—more broadly—was still organized and politically understood its alternative political frameworks within the landscape of the bicultural linguistic divides within postwar Montreal. These frameworks and organization tactics, which included both the notion of direct democracy, participatory democracy, the general assembly, to neighbourhood based citizens' committees and the foundations of the organized political Left within the MCM, never fully challenged the inherent problematic of race within its organizational forms in the 1980s. And as shown within the tenants' association of HJM, the inability to negotiate the fundamental issue of whiteness

¹⁶⁹ In focusing on the politics of Quebec nationalism in the 1980s and how the tenants' association within HJM addressed the changing politics of race, language, and immigration, this chapter on the tenants' movement within HJM adds to the work of Eve Haque, *Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework: Language, Race, and Belonging in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

within the politics of the Left in Montreal begin to emerge as a structural organizational problem in the early 1980s.

After Marsan: Being an HJM Tenant in the 1980s

“We want your work with community residents of Jeanne-Mance to be a rewarding experience and rest assured, my dear sir, our desire for collaboration.”¹⁷⁰

–Gilberte Coulombe, president of the tenants’ association

Those short words of congratulations and offers of collaboration to Claude Lalonde, the newly appointed administrator of HJM, by Gilberte Coulombe, the president of the tenants’ association on June 17, 1981 marked a new beginning in tenant-landlord relations within the housing project. With the dismissal of Daniel Marsan and installation of Lalonde in 1981, the conditions on which tenants and the tenants’ association would interact were beginning to dramatically shift. The “collaboration” the tenants’ association sought, however, would not come from the cooperation of the new administrator.

Lalonde took office in the summer of 1981 with one primary goal: to challenge the political and social power of the tenants’ association. Appointed by city council, Lalonde, a former housing construction supervisor for a local developer was chosen by the Drapeau-Lamarre administration to coopt the tenants’ movement.¹⁷¹ To do this successfully, however, required dialogue and communication with the tenants’ association, a dramatic first for the CHJM. In taking up this task, Lalonde immediately began to speak the language of cooperation

¹⁷⁰ Correspondence from Gilberte Coulombe to Claude Lalonde, 17 June 1981, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

¹⁷¹ Correspondence from Claude Lalonde to Emile Désorcy, 9 August 1982, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

and dialogue with the tenants' association leadership—albeit from a CHJM standpoint in developing a corporate strategy behind the scenes to erode the power base of the tenants' association. As a result, the immediate and swift reversal by Lalonde of the decades long practices of the CHJM to ignore the tenants and their concerns startled the tenants' association.

The sudden emergence of Lalonde also presented the tenants' association and its leadership with its first real challenge of legitimacy. The seven-year-old tenants' association and 15-year-old tenants' movement within HJM had not experienced the dramatic highs and crashing lows experienced by tenants' associations across Canada in the 1970s. HJM tenants, in contrast, had effectively been absent during the short period in the 1970s when provincial and federal agencies funded the National Organization of Canadian Public Housing Tenants Association, promoted pilot projects on tenants' management, or tepidly advocated for an increase tenants' rights within local communities.¹⁷² Partially due to Drapeau and his continued indifference to housing issues and tenants rights in favour of big mega-projects and events such as the Olympics of 1976, housing issues and tenants' rights were not an official priority for the city. And this would be especially true for HJM, the housing project that was an official city department within city.¹⁷³ As a result of the political uniqueness of HJM—and in contrast to the rest of the 1950s era housing projects within Canada—for tenants within Jeanne-Mance the situation regarding governance issues or tenants' political representation was one of stasis the 1970s. The views of Lucien Saulnier and Léopold Rogers from the 1960s, in other words, still defined the tenant-landlord relationship between the city and HJM tenants. With the ascension of Lalonde as

¹⁷² See Canadian Press. "Tenants Call for New Policies: Housing Conference Shows Rare Unity," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), May 25, 1971.

¹⁷³ See Chapter 6 for the discussion of the 'special status' of Habitations Jeanne-Mance and public housing project in Quebec.

administrator in 1981, however, those days would be suddenly over.¹⁷⁴

The emergence of Lalonde and his willingness to sit down and propose a working committee over the summer of 1981 that sought dialogue with tenant leaders in the association led to the tenant leadership to question the purpose of a tenants' association. Taking their concerns to the membership of the tenants' association, tenant leaders in the summer of 1981 discussed and debated questions of "What would be the role of a tenants association in the 1980s?" and "Can the tenants and the administration work together?" In answering these initial questions, the purpose of tenant association legitimacy was then confronted. These two questions outlined the early 1980s because they directly spoke to the general concern and strategy of Lalonde that had become rather apparent by the end of 1981. If Lalonde was deadset on cooperation as a means of cooptation, what purpose did the association serve for the tenants, leaders privately debated, if the tenants' association worked with an administrator that sought to form a corporate-friendly tenants' political body?

If tenant leaders and the tenants' association agreed that this intrusion into the autonomous power of the tenants' association by Lalonde and his 'best practices' approach had to be confronted, the next question tenant leaders and the community more generally had to

¹⁷⁴ Jean-François Léonard and Jacques Léveillé, *Montréal—After Drapeau* (Montréal and Buffalo: Black Rose Books), 32. The hiring of Lalonde in 1981 should also be understood as a reflection of the shifting priorities of the Drapeau-Lamarre administration from 1978 to 1986. Pivoting from mega-event projects of symbolic mass consumption, as the Drapeau-Saulnier and Drapeau-Niding years had outlined, the last administration of Drapeau was emblematic of the shift towards an urban entrepreneurial governance structure. David Harvey, "From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation of Urban Governance in Late Capitalism," *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography* 71, no. 1 (1989): 3-17. As the 1980s unfolded, the policy framework for urban entrepreneurialism in Montreal rested on how Drapeau-Lamarre's economic vision of nostalgia for the small-business owner of the 1940s connected to the post-1960s economic and social landscape within Montreal. In this shifting landscape, Montreal had become a regional city in scale where the political class within Quebec embraced a politics that understood the city, and in particular the central business district, as an "international hinterland" for capital to promote the development of a localized Quebec nationalist identity. Susan Ruddick, "The Montreal Citizens' Movement: The Realpolitik of the 1990s," in *Fire in the Hearth: The Radical Politics of Place in America*, eds. Mike Davis, Steven Hiatt, Marie Kennedy, Susan Ruddick, and Micheal Sprinker, 288. London and New York: Verso, 1990).

confront was over how to sustain tenant cohesion and political legitimacy. In the summer of 1981, the tenants' association addressed these questions with a series of meetings with Lalonde. Addressing Lalonde—and increasingly adopting a political identity of a postwar, Fordist-era labour union—the tenants' positions in this informal bargaining session were rather straightforward: would Lalonde recognize tenants' association power as legitimate? And if so, would Lalonde listen and work with tenants? The results, predictably, were less than satisfactory. Lalonde, according to the tenant executives, would not work with the tenants or meet their own criteria for cooperation.¹⁷⁵ In the months that followed after the summer meetings, Lalonde's position on what cooperation would entail from the standpoint of the CHJM would become clearer to the tenant executives. And by the winter, the interests of Lalonde and the CHJM would be understood by the tenants' association to reside outside of the concerns of tenants within HJM or their tenants' association.

Showing the Corporate Hand: Elite Power Strategies used to Coopt Tenant Power

From the position of the tenants' association, merely sitting down with tenants was not conducive to cooperation. What the tenants wanted was representation and Lalonde was simply not interested. From the position of the tenants, the 1981 summer meetings with Lalonde represented an opportunity to focus on tenant democracy and the role of the tenant directors in Jeanne-Mance—who were now, by the early 1980s, two unelected representatives on the CHJM board of directors who were appointed by the city on the advice of the CHJM. The 1980s was

¹⁷⁵ "Rapport fait suite à l'assemblée générale des locataires des H.J.M.," 23 March 1982, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. From 1981 to 1985, the tenants' association-CHJM relationship visibly undertook a closed-shop Fordist era union bargaining framework. The tenants during this crucial period were formulating how to construct a base to argue for workers' control—albeit still within the corporate governance structure—while the CHJM was plotting to create a 'company union' within a corporate structure that delegitimized the independent tenant power of the association with the appointment of CHJM friendly and approved tenant representatives.

also a time to discuss the physical condition of the homes thousands of residents lived in. Built between 1959 and 1961, the apartments within HJM in 1981 had yet to be updated. Taken together, what both of these issues represented was a general lack of transparency from the CHJM in making decisions that affected tenants on an everyday level. For Lalonde, these structural and institutional issues were not his main concern. The purpose of the meetings with the tenants' association leaders in the summer of 1981 was to simply gauge the tenant leadership in order to devise strategies for coopting the tenants' movement. Singularly focused, Lalonde only had one goal: to change how Habitations Jeanne-Mance operated by coopting and eliminating all autonomous and oppositional tenant power in constructing a corporate tenant-representation structure.¹⁷⁶

Imbued with this agenda, Lalonde sought this aim by informing the elected tenant leaders of his plans for a series of "best practices" community forums that sought public consultation with tenants to address the institutional neglect within the housing project by his administrative predecessors. This plan, of course, was not benevolent. Writing to the tenant executives, Lalonde was rather upfront about the purpose of public consultation from the standpoint of the CHJM: "This formula has been successfully tested in other countries," Lalonde told the tenants' association leaders, "you will see in participating in [the] forums how much it helps to bring about change."¹⁷⁷ These forums Lalonde would pitch to the tenant leaders were CHJM directed and led consultation meetings. These forums would, whether or not the tenants' association would approve of it, occur in the winter months of 1981 and 1982. What "change" Lalonde and

¹⁷⁶ "Présentation des Prévisions Budgétaires 1983," October 1982, V.2451.4, XCD00-P7694, Présentation des prévisions budgétaires 1983/La corporation d'habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Québec, Canada.

¹⁷⁷ "Hesitations de L'Executif" in Rapport fait suite à l'assemblée générale des locataires des H.J.M, 23 March 1982, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

the CHJM sought was to challenge power within the tenants' association through division. As Lalonde explained in a letter to Désorcy, who was still the president CHJM in 1982:

Popular consultation undertaken by [CHJM] management will perhaps educate tenants in greater participation of the affairs of the housing complex. Community forums and other forms of consultation will allow us to identify the real challenges that all residents wish to raise.¹⁷⁸

How Lalonde sought to achieve this goal was to be both publicly accessible to tenants and publicly paternalistic in confronting the tenants' association power within HJM. In order to develop conditions to produce a crisis of legitimacy within the tenants' association, Lalonde, in contrast to Marsan and Rogers, consistently replied to tenant concerns with letters and routinely made his presence visible at tenants' association general assemblies. Of course, Lalonde had strategic reasons for approaching tenants in this way. In the same letter to Désorcy on October 13, 1981, Lalonde explained what 'openness' meant to him as the administrator of Jeanne-Mance after experiencing a tenants' association general assembly. "About sixty people attended representing 50 tenants," he said to Désorcy. "We can only see the low participation of the tenants that legitimate the [tenants' association] that aims to represent them well with the corporation of HJM."¹⁷⁹

In strategically employing false CHJM openness and visibility to critique the democratic vehicle of the tenants' representation in identifying *who* was present at their general assemblies, Lalonde believed the tenants' association could be coopted through actively delegitimizing its power on the grounds that the association did not represent the collective voice of the entire community. In reframing the traditional public line from previous administrators such as Rogers

¹⁷⁸ Correspondence from Claude Lalonde to Emile Désorcy, 13 October 1982, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

and Marsan, Lalonde not only chided the tenants' association but decided the best way to outmaneuver their power was to demonstrate the benevolence of the CHJM. One of the ways Lalonde sought to achieve this aim was by consistently highlighting the tenants to community activists ratio at each general assembly. Aiming to produce a counter-narrative to the increasingly powerful tenants' association and their longstanding relationship with known political actors and activists on the Left and within Montreal—as shown in previous chapters—the maneuver represented a shift in CHJM tactics in addressing tenant power within HJM. Departing from the Rogers and Marsan, who used the position to deny the politicized tenants represented the community, Lalonde went further in crafting a CHJM narrative of outside interference infiltrating the affairs of tenants within HJM. For Lalonde, the best approach in confronting this made up issue of the outsider was to immediately propose public consultations. In proposing the community forums as an official event where the board of directors of the CHJM could, for the first time, meet with tenants on a one-on-one basis, the tenants' association might have, from Lalonde's point of view, confronted an immediate crisis of legitimacy on the grounds that the association was not interested in the affairs of the people it was supposed to represent.¹⁸⁰

In proposing the community forums, the tenants' association was confronted with a decision that potentially challenged its future as the representative voice of the entire community. Concerned over what the forums meant to the existence of the tenants' association, the leaders of the association in the summer and early fall of 1981 met privately and discussed the political positioning the tenants association would take regarding the community forums. If the tenants'

¹⁸⁰ “La Corporation d’Habitations Jeanne-Mance Présentation des Prévisions Budgétaires 1983,” 9 August 1982, V.2451.4, XCD00-P7694, Présentation des prévisions budgétaires 1983/La corporation d’habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Québec, Canada.

association officially approved of the forums and became an official sponsor to the event, the signal this positioning would send to the tenants' body, the tenant leaders feared, would be one of cooperation between tenants and the new leadership of their landlord. The tenant leadership of the association knew otherwise than to accept those terms of engagement. On October 28, 1981, in a statement to tenants within the HJM, the board of directors for the association wrote that they had felt "handcuffed" by Lalonde and the CHJM for not considering the tenants' associations concerns in the summer-long correspondence between the two parties.¹⁸¹ In not taking the tenants seriously, the board argued, officially participating in the forums as an association would delegitimize the inherent purpose of the tenants' association.

Making it clear that while the association would not be sponsoring or approving of the event, the tenant leadership encouraged tenants to participate in the forums that sought 'consensus' in identifying structural and institutional problems within Jeanne-Mance. For the tenants leadership, if the tenants participated and realized the CHJM had not actually changed under Lalonde, the tactics used by the new administrator to break the tenants' association would be considerably weakened. In order to strengthen the tenants' association position and legitimacy, however, the leadership of the association had to publicly outline their concerns to both the CHJM and the residents the association claimed to represent.

This outline was sent to tenants on November 12, 1981 by Gilberte Coulombe, the president of the tenants' association in a letter to Claude Lalonde, detailing tenant concerns under its 1980-1981 "balance sheet." Expressed in the politics of everyday life, the tenants' association sought changes in basic essentials regarding security, park space, car parking, lease contractual

¹⁸¹ "L'Ingerence de l'Administration dans l'action de l'Association" in Plan de Travail et Consultations, Rapport fait suite à l'assemblée générale des locataires des H.J.M, 23 March 1982, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada..

issues, locks on individual apartment doors, and changes to CHJM regulations. In framing their concerns within the politics of the everyday life of tenants, the tenants' association used these issues as leverage against the new openness in relations that the appointment of Claude Lalonde had supposedly brought to tenant-landlord relations within the HJM.¹⁸² Sent to every tenant within Jeanne-Mance, tenants were encouraged to participate in the community forums, but the message the executive sent to its residents was that the association would officially not acknowledge the forums or publicly participate on the grounds that the CHJM did not have the best interests of the tenants at heart. Clearly outlining that the tenants' association had to be autonomous from the CHJM and that Lalonde did not listen to the concerns of the association, the decision to not officially take part in the forums would change the course of the tenants' history within Habitations Jeanne-Mance.

The Community Forums: An Attempt to Coopt

As mentioned, the explicit purpose of the community forums for Lalonde was to connect CHJM governance actors with tenants in a small focus group setting to circumvent the autonomous tenant power of the tenants' association. Starting with the first forum on October 15, 1981 and ending with the general assembly of the entire community on December 15, 1981, the seven forums between HJM tenants and their landlord in a closed session meeting represented the first attempt to both address and acknowledge the structural problems within HJM by the CHJM. Meeting with tenants for the first time, individual buildings highlighted the contradictions of each community, and outlined particular tasks the CHJM should then take in meeting the goals proposed by the tenants in attendance.

¹⁸² "Bilan 1980-81," date unknown, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Structured within a “vision, contradictions, [and] proposal” format, these public consultation meetings marked the peak of Lalonde’s influence within HJM. Hoping that tenants would come to understand the CHJM on friendlier terms, tenants proceeded to complain about isolation, institutional neglect, and the absence of security—both real and imagined—within HJM. While each forum and building had its own political positions, out of the 215 people within the 2,052 people within HJM who took part, one consistent theme was that of tenant-landlord relations and governance. Regardless of building, tenants concluded “uncertain admin-tenant relations,” “inconsistent admission policy,” “ignorance of tenants needs,” “unacknowledged tenant planning participation,” and “irregular lease conditions and enforcement” as the highest priorities for the tenants who took part in the forums.¹⁸³ The consistency of the tenant-landlord relationship as the defining central issue for tenants in the 1980s, of course, was a problem Lalonde was unable to fully address as the administrator.

For Lalonde, the consistency of the tenant-landlord relationship being understood as the underlining issue within HJM became an unmovable impediment to the task of coopting tenant power within the housing project. If Lalonde wanted to gain political power within HJM in promoting a benevolent CHJM, the public consultative community forums of ‘best practices’ clearly did not work as he had planned. If the plan for Lalonde was to use the forums to uncover complaints by the non-politicized tenants and turn those concerns into a narrative aimed at the same non-political tenants that only the CHJM had their best interests, Lalonde had failed in this mission. Regardless of whether the forum attendee was a politicized tenant who attended the general assemblies of the tenants’ association or a non-political tenant who did not, the vast

¹⁸³ “Rapport de L’Assemblée Communautaire Habitations Jeanne-Mance,” p. 2, 15 December 1981, V. 2451.10, XCD00-P7706, Consultation Communautaire: Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1981, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

majority of tenants who took part in the forums were united in their concerns that the CHJM was not trustworthy.

The tenant participation rate for the forums also proved this to be the case for Lalonde and the CHJM. While the forums had a tenant on every floor from every building take part in the forums, with an average of 27 people per forum, the interest within this corporate exercise was not very enthusiastic. If Lalonde had learned anything from this consultation, it was that tenants were overwhelmingly alienated from their governance structures. Furthermore, with only a small minority of tenants showing up to the forums, from the CHJM's viewpoint, the tenants who could conceivably be identified as 'corporation friendly' were rather diminutive in numbers in relation to the tenants' association. How the inability for Lalonde to conceivably coopt the tenants' association would become more pronounced in the following winter months after the community forums, when the tenants' association organized its general assembly to discuss the events of the preceding weeks in charting a new course within the tenants' association.

Forging a *Québécois* Political Bloc: Identity Politics and the Recolonization of HJM

Reemerging after the forums in February of 1982, the board of directors for the tenants' association began to outline a new mandate and ultimatum for Lalonde and the CHJM. In summarizing the year to the tenants, the board contended that a new relationship between Lalonde and the association had failed to materialize. Reiterating the commonalities of Lalonde with Marsan and Rogers, the elected leaders outlined how Lalonde represented a continuity in the one fundamental and crucial aspect to tenants' lives within HJM: landlord domination. Similiar to his predecessors, Lalonde was dismissive of the legitimacy of the tenants' association as a tenant expression of power within the community and, therefore, any issue regarding governance or daily life from the expression of the tenants' association would not be heard or

acknowledged. In confronting Lalonde and his agenda, the board of directors declared that it was the tenant leadership—which was democratically elected from within the tenants’ association—that spoke on behalf of tenants and not the administration with its handpicked tenant representatives on the CHJM board of directors. Refusing to acknowledge the tenant representatives on the board of directors of the CHJM, an achievement from the earlier struggle for recognition in the 1960s, the tenants’ association clarified their position on tenant representation. From the perspective of the tenant leaders, only the association had the power to elect representatives on the CHJM board of directors.¹⁸⁴

In repositioning the struggle for recognition from the 1960s for the 1980s, the tenants’ leadership contended that it did not want an “open war” with Lalonde. Whether or not their would be an ‘open war,’ the tenant leaders outlined an agenda derived from a series of association workshops that sought to proclaim tenant association legitimacy and build upon a political project of reform in reaffirming the purpose of the association to organize against the strategies of the CHJM that now openly sought to delegitimize its tenant power.¹⁸⁵ While some of the policy and political positions developed by the tenants through these workshops and general assembly were ambitious, such as the creation of a tenants’ grievance officer from within the tenants’ association, these positions also revealed how French speaking and white Quebec born tenants both reflected upon and understood HJM in relation to their society within Quebec in the 1980s. What these positions reflected represented a shift within how the tenants who went to general assemblies understood themselves as a community in relation to the tenants’

¹⁸⁴ “Reaffirm le pourquoi de l’association” in Rapport fait suite à l’assemblée générale des locataires des H.J.M, 23 March 1982, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada..

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

association and HJM. What these ideas reflected, in other words, were part of a concerted effort by white Québécois tenants to construct a political bloc focused on preserving both a white Québécois identity within HJM while cementing white Québécois political power within the tenants' association. The measures proposed both reflected the real threat of cooptation of the tenants' movement by the CHJM and a reassertion of white-settler politics in Quebec during a period when HJM had begun to demographically racialize due to how tenants were selected for occupancy within the housing project in tandem with the changes to the Immigration Act in 1976 within Canada.¹⁸⁶

Immigration and identity, therefore, became a rather paramount issue for the tenants' association. One of the proposals that reflected this question of identity was from debates over *who* was allowed to live in Jeanne-Mance and *how* that power would be understood as a governance policy within the CHJM. For the tenants' association, these two concerns arose after Lalonde proposed that a tenant should be placed on the tenant-selection committee, the official body that selected prospective residents from the pool of applicants on the HJM waiting list. Both the CHJM and the board of directors on the tenants' association were in agreement on this direction, albeit with one caveat. On the question of *how* the tenant would be selected for the selection committee, the association, having come to the view that Lalonde was once again out to coopt the tenants, used this opportunity to demand that the tenants' general assembly officially decide through its own democratic processes exactly who was allowed to be the tenants' representative on the CHJM selection committee. Reason for this was rather simple. From the view expressed by the association all tenants in management positions had to be democratically

¹⁸⁶ Haque, *Multiculturalism Within a Bilingual Framework*, 136. For a discussion on race, immigration and Bill 101 changed the racial composition of the French school system in the early 1980s, see Levine, *The Reconquest of Montreal*, 142-145

elected by the will of the tenants' through their general assemblies, or else the tenants within those positions could not reflect the views of the community. If this would not be the case, the association would proceed with a boycott on any decision or move to place tenants in management positions within the CHJM without consent of the association.¹⁸⁷ Outlining the terms of *how* the tenants' representative would speak for tenants in management positions, the question for the tenants now turned to how that power would be democratically expressed through policy positions from within the tenants' association in regards to who could live within the community.

Regarding the question of *how* tenant power would be expressed, the tenants' association board of directors set-up a series of workshops to devise policy positions to be voted on by the tenants' body within their general assembly in the early months of 1982. Finalized on March 23, 1982, one of the positions unanimously approved sought an exclusionary Quebec nationalist inspired quota policy aimed at stemming the increase of racialized, non-white immigrant "allophones" into Jeanne-Mance. Arguing for a policy of "social balance" the tenants' association demanded that non-French Canadian future tenants be limited to 25 percent of the total population—which the tenants understood to be in 1982 as a community that was 75 percent white Québécois and francophone.¹⁸⁸ Mirroring the actual 1981 census figures, which showed for the first time an actual decline in the overall white francophone population within HJM, the defensive position was legitimated on the political grounds that Jeanne-Mance must be

¹⁸⁷ "Le Role des locataires-administrateurs" in Rapport fait suite à l'assemblée générale des locataires des H.J.M, 23 March 1982, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

¹⁸⁸ "Presentation des suggestions apportées par le conseil et les locataires consultés" in Rapport fait suite à l'assemblée générale des locataires des H.J.M, 23 March 1982, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

sustained as a place in accordance to its “French Canadian heritage.” Such heritage, the tenants’ claimed, required the selection committee to institute a cap on prospective immigrant tenants at 25 percent of the total resident population in order to avoid the “internationalization” of the Jeanne-Mance.¹⁸⁹

Unanimously approving the position, the tenants’ reiterated how their official position was not racist. “[We are not] against tenants who come from other countries...we find it rewarding,” said the official statement from the tenants’ association during its general assembly. Claiming to embrace multiculturalism, the focus on the policy position for the tenants demonstrated how the association understood HJM to be a white Québécois community. “We want to keep a French Canadian character to our environment.” said the official statement by the tenants’ association from its general assembly. Such environment, according to the official proclamation, was the demand to “keep our neighbourhood” with “its French Canadian identity.”¹⁹⁰

The official position regarding the selection committee by the tenants’ association position should not come as a surprise. The majority of the tenants’ at Habitations Jeanne-Mance

¹⁸⁹ This was an obvious ahistorical claim. Being situated in the immigration corridor of Montreal—and within the former red light district—census figures of tract 0060, which is a tract only confined to the boundaries of HJM, reveal the neighbourhood had only become ‘French Canadian’ between the Census of 1961 and 1971. Only with the completion of Habitations Jeanne-Mance, in other words, did the neighbourhood become French Canadian character. Statistics Canada. *1971 Census*. Using CHASS [distributor]. <http://0-datacentre.chass.utoronto.ca.mercury.concordia.ca/census/1971/index.html>

¹⁹⁰ “Des Ethnies:” in Rapport fait suite à l’assemblée générale des locataires des H.J.M, 23 March 1982, V.2451.9, Pièce P7705-Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Fonds Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. The general assembly proclamation was also developed during the so-called “Boat People” crisis of Vietnam refugees arriving to Canada. CBC Digital Archives. “Boat People: A Refugee Crisis.” CBC.ca. <http://www.cbc.ca/archives/topic/boat-people-a-refugee-crisis>. (Accessed June 13, 2017). The local census tract composites for Habitations Jeanne-Mance in census tract 060 for Montreal, also collaborates with the refugee crisis and in general rise in the Vietnamese population. The Canadian Census of 1986 documented 55 residents who spoke Vietnamese as their ‘home language,’ an increase from zero in 1971. Statistics Canada. *1986 Census*. Using CHASS [distributor]. <http://0-datacentre.chass.utoronto.ca.mercury.concordia.ca/census/1986/index.html>

from 1959 to 1981 consisted of French speaking Quebec residents who shared a common language, class background, and cultural identity. This identity, fundamental to the increase in activism by tenants leaders served as the common cause in forming a tenants' consciousness in the late 1960s. Reflecting upon this historical legacy and contradictions of Quebec nationalist, anarchist, libertarian socialist, and anti-capitalist politics in the 1960s and 1970s within Montreal, the official position of the tenants' association marked the fruition of the politics within the earlier foundation to the tenants' movement. In sustaining tenants cohesion in 1982, however, employing and incorporating the politics of Quebec nationalism served as a useful vehicle to incorporate the tenants' struggle in the 1980s within an openly cultural identity political position that sought to demark HJM as a space and place of white Québécois residents.

The Politics of Recolonizing Jeanne-Mance

Whatever the personal views expressed by the tenants at the general assembly, for the neighbourhood in which Jeanne-Mance was situated, framing the identity HJM and the neighbourhood the housing project was situated in as a historically white Québécois space, was rather ahistorical. HJM sits within a neighbourhood that was traditionally known as the gateway for immigrants into the city.¹⁹¹ The area between the streets of Saint Denis, Sherbrooke, and Saint Laurent within the Foubourg districts of the industrial city between 1840 and 1920 was considered the home of German, English, Finnish, and Hungarian Montrealers. To further this point, according to the 1961 census, the year Jeanne-Mance officially finished being constructed, the census tract of HJM was a majority English-speaking working class neighbourhood.¹⁹² In

¹⁹¹ Robert Lewis, *Manufacturing Montreal: The Making of an Industrial Landscape* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press), 64.

¹⁹² For the following Canadian Census statistics from 1961 to 1981, I used the Census data from Canadian Census tract 0060, the census tract for HJM. Considering the proposals in the general assembly concerned 'French heritage' claims and immigration and race over the tenant selection committee, I used Census data on language spoken as a

other words, this multifaceted geography—of what was then known as the red light district—was only altered and became a predominantly francophone speaking and white Québécois space with the construction of Jeanne-Mance.¹⁹³ Consumed by the politics of the time, white Québécois speaking tenants within HJM had built and sustained a political movement in the 1980s on a fictitious heritage narrative.

Yet the purpose quota position represented the historical continuation of how tenants within HJM had been organized in the 1960s. Framing the selection committee position within the organizing principles of Conseil des ouvriers (CO) and the Montreal Council of Social Agencies (MSS) from fifteen years before, the tenants' association policy in 1982 reflected the continuation of the ideology that had been grounded in the principles of participatory democracy and social animation. The social workers and activists who organized working class neighbourhoods in the 1960s had worked within a framework of race as language and religious identity. As explained in Chapter 2, the CO and MSS organized their citizens' committees within working class neighbourhoods by class, religion, and language. Still framing Montreal within a 'two races' historical geography binary from the Progressive Era that defined the organizing practices during the 1960s, the Left and its focus on neighbourhood and autonomous citizens'

first language, religion, ethnicity, and place of birth as identifiers. For the Canadian Census of 1961, the year HJM was completed, census tract 060, which encompasses only the area known as HJM, had a total population of 2,228. In terms of language, 1,028 people responded with English as their 'mother tongue,' or 46 percent of the census tract, while French was spoken by 754 people, or 34 percent. 19 percent of the population spoke neither French nor English as their first language. Out of this group, the most dominant non-official language were German, Finnish, and Italian. Statistics Canada. *1961 Census*. Using CHASS [distributor].

<http://0-datacentre.chass.utoronto.ca.mercury.concordia.ca/census/1961/index.html> [Accessed June 20, 2017.]

¹⁹³ The 1971 Canadian Census statistics for the Census tract of 060 for 'mother tongue' in regards language demonstrated a massive increase in francophone speakers, a sudden rise in Chinese speakers, and a dramatic drop in English speakers. French was identified as the first language, spoken by 1,495 residents, or 64 percent. Chinese was second with 250 speakers, or 11 percent, and English was third with 220 speakers, or 9 percent. After English, the next language spoken the most was Spanish with 80 speakers, or 9 percent of the total population. Statistics Canada. *1971 Census*. Using CHASS [distributor].

<http://0-datacentre.chass.utoronto.ca.mercury.concordia.ca/census/1971/index.html>

power in the 1980s still continued to organize and imagine their politics within the ‘two races’ frameworks of the CO, MSS, and the citizens’ committee movements of the late 1960s. As community and social activist Dimitrios Roussopoulos echoed in 1973, the organizing efforts of the MCM in the 1970s and the ideal of citizens’ power at the neighbourhood level in Montreal since the 1960s, had rested and stemmed on the belief of “the self-organisation of block-based communes which integrate radical lifes styles and work styles within relatively homogeneous communities.”¹⁹⁴

In 1980s, the class-centric position on neighbourhood power—and its particular adherence to general assemblies—would increasingly become a problematic organizing philosophy within Montreal. Within a politics that continued on the premise of a social geography framed within a Montreal from the 1940s to 1960s, the shrinking majority francophone Québécois tenants within HJM who first had begun to understand their identity in the 1960s within the nationalist and anti-capitalist politics of the Left—as demonstrated by early tenant leader Gérard Dufort—had now morphed into advocating for the identity politics of the neoliberalizing socio-economic politics of the PQ in the 1980s. Imbued with the cultural identity politics of neo-nationalism, the now *Québécois* tenant leaders and tenants’ association now had a politicized identity that could both mobilize resistance against the CHJM while also serve as the genesis for tenant led institutional politics and policies. In understanding their identity collectively, the white francophone tenants would use these energies for maximizing their political aims as the dominant political bloc within the tenants’ association in the 1980s. And the fruits of these ambitions, regardless of their inherent contradictions, proved to be rather successful in building an alternative Jeanne-Mance from below.

¹⁹⁴ Dimitrios I. Roussopoulos, *Dissidence: Essays Against the Mainstream* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1992), 154.

One of the successes for the tenants was achieving an assimilationsist policy directed at immigrants within HJM and the French language. Believing strongly with the goals and aims of Bill 101—which sought to define Quebec as French speaking and unilingual—the tenants’ association in the early 1980s developed its own French language school for the increasingly non-white, immigrant, and non-francophone tenant population. Using public schools to advance the promotion of the ‘francisation’ of Montreal—particularly in regards to non-francophone immigrants—was central to the development of the Charter in 1978. As René Lévesque wrote in 1982 regarding bilingualism, immigrants, and bilinugalism in Quebec:

In its own way, each bilingual sign says to an immigrant: ‘There are two languages here, English and French; you can choose the one you want.’ It says to the Anglophone: No need to learn French, everything is translated.” This is not the message we want to convey. It seems vital to us that all take notice of the French character of our society.”¹⁹⁵

How the Quebec state sought to reassert the French language within Quebec was through public schooling. The origins of what became Bill 101 that redefined Quebec as a unilingual French-speaking province, began in the late 1950s with protests over Italian immigrants in Saint Léonard, a growing postwar suburb of Montreal, placing their children in anglophone public schools. The debates, protests—and at times violence—that stemmed from the outcry by nationalist local leaders framed the politics of language in the 1960s and 1970s. Positioned in relation to a secularizing state within the context of the Quiet Revolution, and the decolonization political discourse in the 1960s and 1970s, the decades long political movement over language was cemented within the rearticulation of the frameworks of the Canadian settler-state in the discussion over language in the 1960s in the Royal Commission of Bilingualism and Biculturalism. Shedding the longheld white-settler narrative of Canada founded by “two races,”

¹⁹⁵ As quoted in Levine, *The Reconquest of Montreal*, 175.

the Commission in 1970 rearticulated this narrative as “two cultures” within two languages: English and French.¹⁹⁶

Yet even this “two cultures” discourse had predated conclusions of the Royal Commission. In the 1960s and even into the 1970s, the identity of white francophones in Quebec were understood in racial terms. Transcending class divides, the politics of language united white francophone speaking residents in Quebec in relation to the politics of nationalism. Whereas the Anglo-British capitalist class of Montreal dominated Quebec, economically and socially, or whether the debates around language turned towards everyday life and the public sphere on signage, the aims of Quebec nationalist movement was predicated on making Montreal a francophone space. In the process of this remaking of Montreal with its focus on immigrants and public schooling was used to reassert French as the dominate language within Quebec, and reiterate territorial and cultural claims to Quebec as a nation. The result of this convergence was both a movement that sought to reassert French as the language of Quebec in the desire to make Montreal a unilingual city, and also a continuation of the Canadian white-settler racial hierarchy of ordering where Quebec and Canada proceeded with “multiculturalism in a bicultural framework.” In the case of HJM in the 1980s this meant reasserting a false-historical claim to place as a uniquely French Canadian space while leading tenants’ association dominated by white francophones that while impressively articulated class-focused politics and sought to alter tenant-landlord relations within Jeanne-Mance, also sought assimilationist cultural politics aimed at non-white immigrants within HJM under the guise of multiculturalism.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ Haque, *Multiculturalism in a Bilingual Framework*, 4; 36.

¹⁹⁷ The one interview conducted for this thesis demonstrated the success the tenants’ association had in practicing Quebec notions of multiculturalism. The interviewee, a former president of the tenants’ association, is a non-white “allophone” who outside of the individual’s ‘mother tongue’ could speak French. Interview with tenant by Stephanie Morán, September, 16, 2014.

For working class and low-income tenants francophone tenants in HJM in 1981, Bill 101 also had its own meanings to the tenants' movement due to their relationship with the decolonization movements on the Left in the 1960s. Like other activists that Mills describes in his book on the politics of the Left in the 1960s within Montreal, French speaking and Quebec-born tenants in HJM reflected the contradiction of the racialized and colonized political discourse that organized francophone working class Quebecers in the 1960s. Stripped of its decolonizing discourse, the positions the tenants' association took in the early 1980s expressed the political and social contradictions of the Left in the 1960s in developing a 'francisation' school program for newly-immigrant tenants within HJM to learn and speak French.¹⁹⁸ Incorporating the politics behind the Charter of the French Language and the project of 'francisation' for a unilingual and French-speaking Quebec into their own lives, the tenants' association developed their own unique institutions in relation to the politics of Quebec and the national question on Quebec sovereignty in the 1980s. With a community of Québécois tenants who had lived in HJM since the 1960s, the evolution of this pivot also reflected the greater movement away from the class-based politics and organizing aims in the 1960s and 1970s, and an open embrace of the cultural identity politics associated with the PQ in the 1980s. Reformist and tepidly connected to the labour movement in the 1970s, and openly hostile to labour and the welfare state in the 1980s, the PQ was still able to define the politics of the Left in Quebec in the 1980s due to its legacy and unquestioned political and social position as the party of the

For how the same situation which occurred in the early 1980s continues into the present on the Left within Quebec, see Delicé Mugabo, "On Rocks and Hard Places: A Reflection on Antiracism in Organizing Against Islamophobia," *Critical Ethnic Studies* 2, no. 2 (Fall 2016): 160-162.

¹⁹⁸ Mills, *The Empire Within*, 141-143; Pierre Hamel and Berthe Marcotte, *Association des Locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance 1974-1999* (Montréal: l'Association des locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance), 52. The school was established with the aims of three goals: teaching tenants how to read, write, and speak French. According to a former tenant leader, the creation of the school, which the CHJM has now coopted as an institution the authority created, was the tenant associations' proudest achievement. Interviewed with tenant by Stephanie Morán, September, 16, 2014.

Québécois. And that legacy, which still defines politics and the Québécois identity today within Quebec, was Bill 101.¹⁹⁹

The overtly Québécois political bloc was also successful outside of Jeanne-Mance. Connected with the opposition political parties within the city since the late 1960s, the tenants' association renewed and entrenched its connection to the MCM in the early 1980s.²⁰⁰ Being extremely political tenants' association, HJM tenants were also part of citywide struggles for social housing and the defense of social housing tenants' rights in becoming an early and influential member of the Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain (FRAPRU), the social housing rights organization that had formed in 1979 from within the neighbourhood tenants' associations within Centre-Sud.²⁰¹ Over time, as the power of the tenants' association increased within the city, HJM tenants would begin to take on official spokesperson roles within FRAPRU in advocating on behalf of tenants within the city. Framed within a collectively politicized Québécois identity, the tenants' association of HJM was laying the groundwork to become a powerful force within Montreal in the 1980s.

Living in the Aftermath: Lost Opportunities and New Directions

If the early struggles in the 1960s were focused on the right to exist and be recognized as human beings—and not individuals who had to be reeducated—the early 1980s were framed within the defense of the identity behind the original uprising. Tenants in the late 1960s and 1970s had achieved recognition and token representation on the board of directors of CHJM with

¹⁹⁹ See Delicé Mugabo, "On Rocks and Hard Places: A Reflection on Antiblackness in Organizing Against Islamophobia," *Critical Ethnic Studies* 2, no. 2 (Fall 2016): 160-162.

²⁰⁰ This connection from the late 1970s and into the 1980s centred on the relationship between the tenants' association and John Gardiner, who spoke to the concerns of the tenants' association on issues ranging from city planning to housing rights within HJM. Correspondence from John Gardiner to Yvon Lamarre, 26 May 1983, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

²⁰¹ Karen Herland, *People, Potholes, and City Politics* (Montréal and New York: Black Rose Books, 1992), 70.

two tenant representatives. Tenants had also received, thanks in large part to their struggles and other tenant struggles across Canada in the late 1960s, the acknowledgement by elite power to form independent tenants' associations and become legally recognized.²⁰² Now tenants had the ability to express themselves, to challenge power, and had the ability to form either their own programs and initiatives or connect with outside local movements within a social and economic political project. And on these respective fronts, HJM tenants were broadly successful due to their unique connections to the Left, their position as the first public housing tenants in Quebec, and later, as the early 1980s demonstrated, due to their ethno-cultural identity.

It was through the histories of race and linguistic organizing within the Left in which this political bloc would form in relation to shifting policy terrains in the 1980s. How the tenants fought these currents reflected the politicized historical Québécois identity of the tenants and the historical legacy of their own unique conditions from the politics of the 1960s and 1970s. Reflecting the greater shifts within the French speaking population within Quebec in the early 1980s, the tenants articulation of an exclusionary tenant selection positioned informed by racially informed linguistic claims to place in regards to the increasing immigration and composition of non-white residents within HJM demonstrated that when the tenants' association faced a crisis of legitimacy by the CHJM under Claude Lalonde in the 1980s, the tenants' association and its majority French-speaking Québécois tenant body would embrace a nationalist cultural position to sustain cohesiveness and collective power in order to wage political battles with the administration. In confronting Lalonde and the CHJM over governance issues concerning institutional representation, the shift towards identity politics in the 1980s was an expression of

²⁰² See Robert Hellyer, *Report of The Federal Task Force on Housing and Urban Development* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1969), 55; Canadian Council on Social Development, *Who Should Manage Public Housing? Report of Workshop held at Pointe-Claire, Quebec June 19-21, 1970* (Ottawa: Canadian Council of Social Development, 1970).

the tenant alternative demonstrated the maturation of the tenants' movement and reflected the political and social shifts occurring within Quebec after the failure of the first referendum in 1980. For the tenants, these shifting priorities in the 1980s represented an evolution of the specific conditions that gave rise to the tenants' movement within HJM in the 1960s. In not articulating a break from this historical trajectory on the Left within Montreal, the pivot by the tenants' association towards Québécois identity politics legitimated its continuation into the 1980s.

Taken as a whole, the early 1980s within the history of Habitations Jeanne-Mance was a time of shifting political and social terrains—both within the institutional structures of the CHJM and within the tenants' movement. With the appointment of Claude Lalonde as the administrator, the CHJM and the city had set out to coopt the tenants' movement through a series of 'best practices' strategies developed by elite policy-makers from the 1970s that sought to curtail and subsume the politics of participatory democracy and tenants' rights within public housing projects in Canada. Aimed to implement strategy that sought to divide tenant power, cohesion, and legitimacy within the tenant population, the city of Montreal underestimated the the power of the tenants' association within the tenant community. In part due to dismissing tenants as capable political actors from the beginning of the project in 1959, Claude Lalonde and the city had, in many respects, missed their window of opportunity to tenant-bust HJM in the 1970s.

The articulation, however, of a now admamently political and antagonistic tenants' association in the 1980s came at a particular cost to the tenants' association. The shared lived experiences that had connected the French speaking and Quebec born tenants with the Left in the 1960s in Montreal had now become a project centred on ethno-nationalist cultural identity politics in the early 1980s. While tenants from all ethnic and racial backgrounds who were

involved within the politics of Jeanne-Mance within this era inhibited a particular “love” for the community with a deep connection to HJM as a place, and a strong political commitment to organizing against the CHJM and for tenants across Montreal and Quebec, the base of that love, for the French speaking and Quebec born tenants who had, in most cases, experienced HJM in the 1960s, was still framed within the contours of the nationalist 1971 CSN ‘master of their own home’ manifesto by union leader Marcel Pepin.²⁰³ HJM, for these tenants, was always going to be a francophone Québécois space and history. With the buildings themselves acting as the modality in which these tenants experienced their nationalist feelings and practiced their politics, the tenants’ association in the early 1980s had to finally begun to think about addressing the one issue that could unite the majority of tenants within HJM: challenging the relationship the tenants had with their two landlords, the CHJM and the city of Montreal.

²⁰³ Anonymous. Interview by Stephanie Morán, September, 16, 2014. The former president of the tenants’ association contended the feeling was generational and about “love” for HJM. For this tenant, the post-1999 tenants did not have the same feeling, particularly in the 2000s.

Chapter 6

Firing the Landlord:

Solidarité Jeanne-Mance and the Movement for Institutional Change, 1983-1991

“The municipal administration is, at one and the same time, rule-maker, owner, administrator, manager and judge.”²⁰⁴ –Berthe Marcotte

In the mid 1980s Jeanne-Mance tenants finally confronted the governance structure that had dominated their lives and in the process altered the history of HJM. In a movement aimed at overthrowing the CHJM and altering their relationship with the city of Montreal, the tenants’ association between 1983 and 1985 embarked on a campaign to fundamentally transform their relationship to the governance structures of the CHJM and the city. Reconnecting with the renewed community group activism of the 1980s in the city, tenants joined Centre-Sud housing and social activists to form Solidarité Jeanne-Mance (SJM), community political action committee to address tenants’ representation on the board of directors within the CHJM. In taking on the governance structures of HJM, the SJM articulated a tenants’ management position unique to HJM. Campaigning for tenants’ democracy in the midst of a city-wide debate over public consultation, the efforts by the tenants and the SJM would lead to the firing of Claude Lalonde, the administrator of HJM, and to fundamental changes in how the CHJM operated in the late 1980s and 1990s.

Emerging within the shifting political and economic restructuring landscape of the 1980s and 1990s, the confrontation between the SJM and the tenants’ association and the city of Montreal was fundamental to how tenants and activists in the 1990s were also able to stop ‘social

²⁰⁴ David Wimhurst, “How not to Run Public Housing,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Jan. 18, 1984.

mix' redevelopment and demolition plans for HJM.²⁰⁵ In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the city of Montreal and the CHJM began to study how to redevelop HJM through a plan to partially demolish the housing stock. Due to the tenants' own militancy and organization to remove Lalonde from power in 1985, however, the tenants were successful in mounting a campaign to stop redevelopment plans from moving beyond the initial planning stages. As a result of the tenants—and not elite actors—to govern from below, the historical consequences of HJM as a public housing outlier within the narrative of 1950s public housing became cemented in the early 1990s. In this final struggle for tenant democracy in the mid 1980s, the tenants' association of HJM fundamentally transformed the historical trajectory of the housing project in governing from below.

In this final chapter, I examine how the tenants' movement at HJM, and its central focus on organizing against the governance structure of Habitations Jeanne-Mance, was both confronted and altered by tenant activism during an era when tenants' movements across North America were no longer politically militant or existent.²⁰⁶ Unlike the common view of tenants' move-

²⁰⁵ While this chapter charts the HJM tenants' movement in 1984 to 1985 with its campaign for tenants' management, the tenants' and community-led efforts were waged in relation to the ongoing political shifts within Montreal since the 1976 Olympics. For the political economy and politics of the Left history of Montreal from after the 1976 Olympics to the end of Drapeau-Lamarre administration which saw the rise of the centre-left MCM in the 1980s, see Jean-François Léonard and Jacques Léveillé, *Montréal—After Drapeau* (Montreal, QC: Black Rose Books, 1986); Susan Ruddick, "The Montreal Citizens' Movement: the real politik of the 1990s?," in *Fire in the Hearth: The Radical Politics of Place in America*, ed. Mike Davis (London and New York: Verso, 1990), pp. 287-316. The backdrop to SJM campaign in 1984 and 1985 was waged within the politics of "public consultation" and the continued paternalism of Drapeau in regards to the planning policies and decisions within the city. Explicitly connected to—and concerned with—a by-law to define the limits to Chinatown in 1984 and 1985, the tenants' struggle was empowered by this opening within the local political class as both the MCM and Drapeau-Lamarre agreed on the controversial by-law to limit the growth of Chinatown. In continuing with the focus on race and politics from chapter 5, the by-law and the rise of the SJM continued to entrench the politics of structural racism within the city and neighbourhood regarding Chinese Montrealers in continuing the ongoing and racialized politics on the Left in regards to who was allowed to speak and be politically recognized within the city. For a look into Chinatown in the 1970s and early 1980s, see Kwok B. Chan, "Ethnic Urban Space, Urban Displacement and Forced Relocation: The Case of Chinatown in Montreal," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 18, no. 2 (1986): 65-78; Kwok Bun Chan, *Smoke and Fire: The Chinese in Montreal* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1991).

²⁰⁶ The common view—albeit a United States centric one—understands public housing tenants' movements in relation to the welfare state of the Great Society period of the United States in the 1960s. For Drier, the reliance on state-funding in the 1960s led to movements "fail[ing] to build on its success" in the 1970s. Peter Drier, "The Tenants' Movement in the United States," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 8, no. 2 (1984):

ments and public housing policy studies in the 1980s, the tenants' association of HJM in the middle of the 1980s was at its most powerful within the neoliberalizing 1980s. This strength and the association's focus on confronting the governance structure of HJM and the city of Montreal with community social activists directly resulted in the present condition of HJM as a public housing project. In confronting the governance structure of the CHJM through an attempt to democratize HJM, tenants collective political power had reached an apex during a period within North American housing policy where the focus from elite governance structures had shifted towards demolition, privatization, and the 'social mix' of existing public housing projects.

The Elite Narrative Strikes Back: Confronting Tenant Association Busting Strategies

For Claude Lalonde, the administrator of HJM, the community forums in the winter of 1981 had undoubtedly failed to achieve the CHJM's political aims to crush the tenants' association. By 1983, Lalonde would proceed with a new plan to address the fundamental road block from the CHJM's viewpoint in eliminating political threats to its power, on the one hand, and solidify the unequal power-relationship of the original Dozois Plan, on the other. To address this contradiction of the existence of an autonomous tenant association within a governance structure that was designed to eliminate independent tenant power and voices, Lalonde moved beyond the 'best practices' approach as demonstrated with the community forums in the winter of 1981 to outright delegitimization of the tenants' association in creating a tenants committee representative to sit on the board of directors within the CHJM. Requiring every tenant to acknowledge the legitimacy of this tenant representative who was selected by the CHJM with a clause in tenant

259, 255-279. While this view can be levied on the Canadian experience of public housing tenants in the 1970s with the national tenants' organization being primarily funded through CMHC grants in the 1970s, tenants' movements in Canada continued to wield power well into the 1980s—particularly on issues pertaining to tenants' management questions. To date, however, there is no written literature on tenants' movements and their efforts to achieve tenants' management in the 1980s within Canada. This is rather unfortunate. From 1983 to 1985 in Toronto, the Dundas and Sherbourne tenants' association also pursued a similar project. Their history, unfortunately, has not been written.

rental contracts, the CHJM had begun a new phase in confronting the political power of the tenant association in 1983.

The move by Lalonde was not an outlier to how elites and local public housing authorities in Canada had understood tenant power after the Hellyer Report in 1969. In openly pivoting towards tenant-busting tactics in delegitimizing the tenants' association through the rental contract, Lalonde was following similar tactics to splinter public housing tenants' movements within Canada in the 1970s.²⁰⁷ For what amounted to a strategy for 'company unionism' within the context of public housing projects, the point of these elite maneuvers was to render the 'tenant problem,' which for housing authorities was the outcome of the recognition struggles of the 1960s and the legal formation of tenants' associations in the 1970s, obsolete in the 1980s. If tenants within HJM could be depoliticized, the CHJM, following the increasingly neoliberalizing policy directions by the CMHC, the city of Montreal, and the provincial housing authorities across Canada in the 1980s, could then proceed with renovation projects that sought to displace tenants through the partial privatization of HJM in developing 'social mix' redevelopment projects as the decade progressed. In depoliticizing the HJM tenants association, the housing authority and the city of Montreal could also return to a reconstruction of the original framework of the Dozois Plan, where tenants were subordinate actors to the power of the CHJM.

How the CHJM sought to confront the 'tenant problem' within HJM after 1983 was through the creation of a tenant committee member who sat on the board of directors. Hand-picked by the administration, the creation of the position was the first offensive maneuver to confront tenant power and return the governance structure back to its original 1957 premise that had banned collective tenant power through association. If this plan to subvert tenant power succeed-

²⁰⁷ See Sean Purdy, "By the People, for the People: Tenant Organizing in Toronto's Regent Park Housing Project in the 1960s and 1970s," *Journal of Urban History* 30, no. 4 (2004): 519-548.

ed, the CHJM would be in a stronger position to proceed to continue neglecting the overall housing conditions of HJM—which had never been renovated since the project fully opened in 1961—to the point where public opinion would perceive to understand HJM as a failure, and thereby allow for its partial demolition or redevelopment.

This strategy by the CHJM was happening elsewhere in Canada in the 1980s as the CMHC, along with local and provincial housing authorities, particularly during the Mulroney administration, began to consider partial privatization or ‘social mix’ redevelopment pilot projects on public housing stock.²⁰⁸ In response to these tactics from the landlords of HJM, the tenants’ association from 1983 to 1985 openly contested this institutional maneuvering and began the association’s final struggle for democratization and political rights within Jeanne-Mance.

How the tenants’ association used these tactics was due to the maturation of their political connections gained from organizing since the late 1960s. The through using the power of the media to explain their positions and institutional governance situation to Montrealers directly in the 1980s, the tenants’ association used the press as form of direct action in confronting both the CHJM and the administration of Drapeau-Lamarre. This tactic, occurring under the tenant leadership of Denise Lacasse, was fundamental in both countering the narrative of HJM and confronting the political class of Montreal. In being allowed to speak publicly, tenant leaders used the press to express how tenants felt about their daily lives, and did so in often-antagonistic rhetoric. One of the first uses of this strategy was on a CKAC radio program in 1984. Referring to Claude Lalonde as a “dictator” during the radio program interview, Lacasse outlined the de-

²⁰⁸ CMHC, *Evaluation of the public housing program* (CMHC: Ottawa, 1990). The reviews of the public housing stock in Canada were initiated by the Trudeau government. By the time the review conducted by CMHC of public housing stock in Canada in April of 1990 was released, the report was just one of many reports undertaken in the 1980s that had become rather commonplace by federal and provincial state ministries since the 1980s. See Jeanne M. Wolfe, “Canadian Housing Policy in the Nineties,” *Housing Studies* 13, no. 1 (1998): 121-133.

mands of the tenants in addressing the governance structure of HJM and how their daily living conditions were shaped by not only the CHJM, but the city of Montreal through the guidelines outlined in Dozois Plan.²⁰⁹

In understanding the press as a form of direct action, the strategy pursued by Lacasse and the tenants' association worked to their utmost advantage. Baiting the CHJM to respond to their criticisms, Lalonde and the CHJM were immediately put on the defensive by the Montreal media. Enticing Lalonde to respond publicly to tenant demands, Lalonde tried to counter the tenant narrative with the traditional position expressed by the CHJM and the ruling Civic Party of Mayor Jean Drapeau as it related to how the city ran HJM. As Lalonde told *The Gazette* in 1984, "the tenants association has difficulty with the administration... its attitude is one of aggression and attack. According to them we are always wrong."²¹⁰ In still believing the tenants association represented a minority faction within HJM, Lalonde continued the elite public narrative that was started by former CHJM administrators Rogers and Marsan in the 1960s and 1970s. By the mid 1980s, however, this elite governance political strategy was met with a skeptical local Montreal media landscape open to again questioning—much like in the late 1960s—the conditions of HJM and its connections to the Drapeau regime. As a result, the position used by Lalonde and the CHJM was increasingly met with hostile public reactions. How and why this was the case was primarily due to the politics of paternalism exhibited by Drapeau in the 1980s and the presence of the MCM as the oppositional political party in waiting to succeed him in power. With tenants inserting their cause into this fracturing political landscape, the tenants association of HJM suc-

²⁰⁹ "Montreal CKAC L'Informateur," March 15, 1984, V.2451.8, XCD00-P7704, Solidarité Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985 / Montréal (Québec), Centre de documentation: Publications internes et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Quebec, Canada.

²¹⁰ David Wimhurst, "How not to Run Public Housing," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Jan. 18, 1984.

cessfully used the shifting politics of Montreal to their advantage in advancing their own political and social narrative on HJM.

While confronting the governance issue within HJM had always required both political strength and mobilization beyond the confines of the housing project, any attempt to challenge the tenant-landlord relationship also required perfect political timing. As the 1960s struggle for recognition demonstrated, attempts to address the structural relationship between tenants and their landlords required connections to more prominent political forces within the Montreal and in Quebec. These were, as the earlier chapters demonstrated, mediated through the burgeoning Quebec nationalist, socialist, and working class *groupe populaire* neighbourhood movements within Montreal. As the tenants association began to plot its rebutal to the now openly antagonist Lalonde and the CHJM in the mid 1980s, the association politically found itself, much like the late 1960s, within a briefly renewed period for the community group, grass-roots centred Left within the working class districts adjacent to the central business district of downtown Montreal.²¹¹ The resurgence of popular power and the citizens movements within the context of the 1980s, first connected to the MCM—and later confronting the MCM once in power—became the political connection the tenants required in order to proceed with a struggle to address the unequal and undemocratic governance structure within HJM. Contradicting the increasingly neoliberal political and cultural shifts within North America, Canada and Quebec, these movements the tenants were now entangled within produced a different historical geography within policy outcome histories for Montreal in the 1990s.²¹²

²¹¹ See Jean-Marc Pottle, *La communauté perdu: etite histoire des militantisme* (Montréal: VLB Éditeur, 1987), 62-66.

²¹² See Jean-Francois Léonard and Jacques Lèveillé, *Montréal—After Drapeau* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1986).

Part of the reason for this different trajectory was due to the connections HJM tenants and community activists had with the MCM. Visibly connecting the cause of tenants' management and the democratization of HJM within a city-wide municipal political project—originally premised on the notion of community power—led MCM politicians to advocate on the behalf of tenants within city hall throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Working in tandem with John Gardiner, MCM councillor for Ville-Marie, the downtown district of Montreal, would prove to be temporarily beneficial while the MCM was in opposition within the city to Drapeau in the 1980s. Present at tenant meetings and press conferences, Gardiner would tie the participatory democracy cause of the MCM—and later belief in public consultation—to the struggle for tenants in HJM. “Residents, through their association,” Gardiner argued in 1983, “have a golden opportunity to give to the [board of directors] credibility and seriousness it deserves.”²¹³ Taking advantage of this political coalition, HJM tenants were able to publicly tie the absence of tenants' rights within Jeanne-Mance to the politics of Jean Drapeau and Yvon Lamarre, the chairman of the executive committee within the city. The timing of this convergence could not have occurred at a more opportune time for the tenants' movement within HJM.

How tenants were able to achieve their concrete demands of democratizing the governance structure of HJM, highlight the ongoing institutional neglect of the community, and demand investment into the housing project, occurred under the leadership of Denise Lacasse within the tenants' association. Under Lacasse, the tenants' association between 1983 and 1985 connected the growing calls and movements for political change within the city. And in the process, under the leadership of Lacasse, saw the tenants' association solidify its own political

²¹³ Yvon Laparde, “Selon le RCM Coupures de Services et Irrégularités aux Habitations Jeanne-Mance,” *Journal de Montréal* (Montréal, QC), May 31, 1983.

power within HJM in educating tenants on recognizing the special status of HJM as a public housing project within Montreal.

Confronting the “Special Status” of Habitations Jeanne-Mance

In the fall of 1983, the tenants’ association of Jeanne-Mance publicly acknowledged the structural deficit within HJM that allowed their lives to be dominated by the city of Montreal. In a policy position paper that was released to the tenants within HJM, the tenants’ association outlined why gains in tenants’ rights within Quebec were not implemented or concerned the social and political conditions within HJM. Unlike every other tenant in Quebec, the tenants’ within Habitations Jeanne-Mance lived within a legal geography of exception both within the province and in Montreal.²¹⁴ As residents within Jeanne-Mance, the rights and governance structure of the CHJM was outlined not by the provincial government, but through the policies and definitions of the Dozois Plan of 1957.²¹⁵ The Plan, as it was then known, ceded social and political power to the management of the CHJM as outlined in agreement between the city of Montreal and the CMHC. The outcome of this relationship resulted in the CMHC proceeding in the decades that followed as an absentee financial backer, with the city of Montreal serving as the absentee landlord. This was the case because, under the terms of the Dozois Plan, the day to day activities and statutes concerning HJM were legally the responsibility of the Corporation of Habitations Jeanne-Mance. But structural change to the CHJM itself, as the struggles for tenant recognition in the 1960s demonstrated, were the direct responsibility of the city government and

²¹⁴ Correspondence from Gilles Vallières to Yvon Lamarre, 24 October 1983, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

²¹⁵ HJM preexists every other public or social housing project in Quebec. Unaffiliated with the SHQ, which was created in 1968, the enshrined rights for public housing tenants in the Quebec civil code only correspond to SHQ associated buildings.

city council—as HJM was officially defined as a city department. Changes to the governance structure of HJM, therefore, were a municipal political issue.

With Drapeau-Lamarre still in power in the 1980s, the policy differences between the SHQ and the province in relation to HJM and city had changed considerably since the 1960s. As tenants’ movements across the city and in the province began to make tangible material gains in the 1970s, the ‘special status’ of Jeanne-Mance in relation to other public housing tenants within Quebec and Montreal began to magnify. Increasingly viewing the SHQ tenant policies as slightly more favourable, the public position by the tenants in the early 1980s related these perceived gains in tenant rights to the continued neglect of tenant conditions by Drapeau-Lamarre. The tenants association, of course, understood this as structural condition within power relationship of domination and not as some kind of special privilege. “This particular situation is not one of privileges,” the tenants association wrote in 1983, “[but] rather a form of discrimination that the board of the [tenants] association also wants to terminate.”²¹⁶

The question for the tenants association in 1983 was how to best articulate their demands for the “termination” of the CHJM governance structure. Turning to tenants’ management, an idea from an era that had already passed within the context of Canadian housing policy in the 1970s, tenant leaders in the mid 1980s within HJM used this democratic ideal as postional leverage to address the power imbalance between tenants and the CHJM that were cemented into the foundations of the Dozois Plan. If overhauling the CHJM was the required outcome of two

²¹⁶ Correspondence from Gilles Vallières to Yvon Lamarre, 24 October 1983, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada

decades of tenant activism within HJM, the tenants' association would need develop a political response to directly attain the demand for tenants democracy, and construct an appropriate and alternative governance structure to replace the CHJM in the process.

The tenants association reached this conclusion on April 29, 1983. Filing an official complaint to the city in demanding the CHJM board of directors elections for the two tenant representatives be universally elected by the tenants from within the tenants association, the tenants had begun their campaign to alter the governance structure of HJM. Demanding universal suffrage which would “automatically be accepted by [city] council,” the tenants association was arguing for democracy within HJM.²¹⁷ In demanding democratic legitimacy, the tenant association reiterated how the CHJM only partially recognized the legitimacy of the tenants' association. In confronting both the CHJM and the city, the tenants association understood the continuation of the Dozois Plan in relation to the perceived gains by tenants from the struggle for recognition in the 1960s. All that had changed, the tenants had begun to realize, was that the city had merely afforded them recognition but without the actual governance power. In 1983, the tenants were finally prepared to demand both.

To govern from below in demanding tenants be given actual political power to determine their own affairs became the defining moment of the 1980s within HJM. How tenants sought to challenge the lasting struggle to alter the governance of their community, which had defined their lives from the beginning, led the tenants association under Denise Lacasse to formally establish an outside tenant-community coalition through the association's yearly general assembly in March of 1984. Reconnecting to the earliest struggles this generation of tenants and their leaders faced in the 1960s, tenants returned to the power of politicizing their concerns within a com-

²¹⁷ Executive of Solidarité Jeanne-Mance, “Des élections truquées,” *La Presse* (Montréal, QC), April 29, 1983.

munity-wide political action committee. Demanding structural and institutional changes within Jeanne-Mance—and public housing in Quebec more broadly—the formation of Solidarité Jeanne-Mance by and from within the tenants association would mark the return of the politics of confrontation with the city as demonstrated in the late 1960s.

Founding of Solidarité Jeanne-Mance

On March 7, 1984, the tenants association approved the creation of Solidarité Jeanne-Mance (SJM). After the assembly, SJM and its eight executive members immediately went to work on how to strategize and achieve the political aims the political action committee was founded on. These aims included changing the governance structure of the Dozois Plan and restructuring the CHJM governance structure for tenants' democratic control by reconfiguring tenants as the majority of representatives on CHJM board of directors. In focusing on the structure of Jeanne-Mance, SJM sought to alter the tenant-landlord relations within the community as a tenant-city hall struggle in advocating for what the tenants referred to as a “new contract” between the city and the tenants.²¹⁸

The mandate of SJM, a community-led group, had to be conceived and understood in relation to the tenants association. To effectively distance itself from the association—and in turn create enough enthusiasm within the tenants body in building a credible political bloc—SJM sought to reassure tenants that its creation was not a replacement of the actual tenants association. The association would, according to a communique put forward by SJM, continue to represent tenants as it related to the lease contract and defend issues of everyday life within the

²¹⁸ “Solidarité Jeanne-Mance Communiqué no1,” 28 March 1984, V.2451.8, XCD00-P7704, Solidarité Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985 / Montréal (Québec), Centre de documentation: Publications internes et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Quebec, Canada.

community.²¹⁹ Structured in the beginning as a working group for tenants, the first SJM meetings between March 7th and June 20th were focused on developing an organizational structure and outlining the goals of the committee as it related to the mandate given to SJM by general assembly of the tenants association. Consisting of eight board members, from Gardiner of the MCM, to priests and workers affiliated with Société de Ozanam, an organizing arm of Société de Saint Vincent de Saint Paul, and Paul Legros of CACTUS, a community drug and rehabilitation activist in Centre-Sud, were tasked to develop a political strategy to fulfill the mandate of SJM.²²⁰

This working group status allowed members of the committee to meet with activists and individuals within Montreal who had knowledge of other governance structures of the SHQ public housing projects within the city, study of the documents and institutional history of Habitations Jeanne-Mance, and develop strategies to promote governance structure change within HJM. Created from within the tenants association and backed with their support, the focus for the SJM turned to how to organize enough tenants to legitimate its political aims.

Plotting to Overthrow: The Campaign to Fire the Corporation

This history of the past two decades of struggle came to fruition during the first meeting of SJM on June 20, 1984, when the committee determined their first course of direct political action would be to start a postcard campaign aimed at informing tenants about the deficit of democracy within the CHJM. The plan, which saw the organization raise money for SJM and

²¹⁹ "Solidarité Jeanne-Mance Communiqué no 9 Questions... Responses...", date unknown, V.2451.8, XCD00-P7704, Solidarité Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985 / Montréal (Québec), Centre de documentation: Publications internes et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Quebec, Canada.. SJM would be a political action committee of eight members. Formed on March 7, 1984, the first meeting of SJM occurred on March 19, 1984.

²²⁰ Including Gardiner of the MCM and Paul Legros of CACTUS, other board members included Bernard Pepin, Ghislaine Poirier, and Gérard Bouchard of Société de Ozanam, an organization affiliated with Société de Saint Vincent de Saint Paul. Bouchard was president of Ozanam. Poirier was also politically connected to the MCM at the district level of Saint Jacques.

send the printed materials to Jean Drapeau and Yvon Lamarre, the chairman of the executive committee, proved to be the catalyst for the movement. At the time of the meeting in June, these early efforts from SJM had led to a membership of over 550 tenants.²²¹ Organizing through the tactics honed in the 1970s by the tenants association, SJM returned to the 1960s politics of confrontation in the 1980s as the central leverage tactic in demanding structural and institutional changes within Jeanne-Mance. In returning to the politics of the 1960s, the SJM reframed the struggle for ‘democratization’ of HJM as confronting the relationship between ‘the tenants’ and ‘city hall’ in how the political elite within the city had dominated the lives of tenants since the construction of HJM.

How this political strategy was fundamental to understanding how structural and institutional change did not arise from petitions to the board of directors of the CHJM, but through public confrontation with city hall. As the SJM began to outline in its formative months in 1984, with the innocuous idea of simply asking for a meeting between Yvon Lamarre and Claude Lalonde, SJM leaders used their political clout to utilize the power to air grievances and demands through the local media. Backed by the organizing successes within HJM and articulating their demands in the op-ed pages of *La Presse* or *Le Devoir*, the SJM fought a two front campaign that worked to grow both a political base within HJM and support across the city. And the approach the SJM used to gain leverage was rather astounding. By April 9, 1984, SJM

²²¹ Correspondence from Solange Gaudreau, Donald Dufort, Claire Faucher, Gilles Vallières, Berthe Marcotte, Denise Lacasse, Rollande Prieur, John Gardiner, Louis Bériau, Gérard Bouchard, Ghislaine Poirier, Pierre Legros, Bernard Pépin, Thomas McKeown of Solidarité Jeanne-Mance to Claude Lalonde, directeur général Corporation d’Habitations Jeanne-Mance, 14 March 1984, V.2451.8, XCD00-P7704, Solidarité Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985 / Montréal (Québec), Centre de documentation: Publications internes et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Quebec, Canada. Their goal was to raise 300 dollars and the organization raised 313. The number of members rose to above 400 in less than ten days since the general assembly of the tenants association that created SJM. The simple mailer, a legacy of the organizing tactics learned by community activists and tenant leaders in the 1960s struggles for recognition, effectively worked nearly twenty years later as an organizing tactic to raise awareness and grow membership.

had claimed over 600 tenant members. Using this groundswell to demonstrate a “clear expression of dissatisfaction due to administrative measures have over Habitations Jeanne-Mance,”²²² the tenants association and the SJM, in going public with their grievances, confronted Lalonde and the CHJM’s aims to delegitimize the SJM and the tenants.

In purposefully going around the CHJM to fundamentally democratize it, the CHJM predictably responded with an organized effort to belittle the SJM and its political aims in an effort to break the growing collective organizing power of the tenants’ association and SJM to rally tenants to the cause of complete institutional reform. By July 4, 1984 these activities of the CHJM to politically break the SJM had reached a boiling point:

Nous croyons qu’il est temps que disparaisse le mythe qui laisse croire que des citoyens regroupés et travaillant à l’amélioration de leurs conditions de vie sont des citoyens négatifs, révolutionnaires et semeurs de discorde. Il serait préférable de reconnaître qu’ils sont des citoyens responsables et dignes de respect du seul fait qu’ils se prononcent sur leur devenir par la voie la plus démocratique du’il soit, celle de l’association.²²³

In reply to Pepin and the SJM, Lalonde contended of six reports of the SJM literature and their postcards, buttons, and signs had caused “violent, verbal reactions” within a “language that causes doubt and hatred.” Addressing this ‘violent’ politics, Lalonde dismissed the demands of the SJM waged in the media and encouraged tenants to address their complaints to the board of directors within the CHJM.²²⁴

²²² The definitive mandate by SJM to proceed with changing the official status of the CHJM was solidified with the growth of 600 tenants becoming members by April 9, 1984.

²²³ Correspondence from Bernard Pépin to Emile Désorcy, 9 April 1984, V.2451.8, XCD00-P7704, Solidarité Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985 / Montréal (Québec), Centre de documentation: Publications internes et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Quebec, Canada.

²²⁴ Letter was BCC’d to Drapeau.

Refusing to have a “public debate” with the SJM, Lalonde understood that legitimizing the power of the SJM would signal the demise of the political power of the CHJM. In a letter to Lamarre and Drapeau on July 18, 1984, Lalonde contended the SJM had a vendetta against the governance practices of the CHJM. Referring to the SJM’s strategy as a “protest and vilification campaign against the corporation of Jeanne-Mance,” Lalonde contended the SJM did not reflect the views of the majority of the tenants. To explain this, Lalonde highlighted how the leaders, most of whom, according to Lalonde, had a grievance or “conviction” against the CHJM, were not tenants but social activists. In returning to an earlier theme expressed by Lalonde when appointed to the position of the HJM administrator in 1981, Lalonde used the composition of the executive of SJM as political positioning.²²⁵

The problem for Lalonde and the CHJM, however, was that 1984 was not 1967. While Drapeau was still mayor, the Lalonde-Lamarre administrative era had a different approach to social housing and tenants groups. Lamarre, a politician from a small-business family in the neighbourhood of Saint Henri, spent much of the 1980s focused on social housing development in coordination with local tenant committees. Starting in 1984, Lamarre had also put forward a plan to work with tenant groups in the city and listen to their demands within a CHJM focused consultation practice under the guise of city-led public housing advocacy. In this respect, the letter by Lalonde on July 18 would be more of a plea than a demand to reinforce CHJM power over the increasing militancy of the tenants. Reminiscent of Rogers’ letter to Saulnier in 1966 over the formation of the Comité, Lalonde, an administrator who had been hired by the CHJM

²²⁵ Correspondence from Claude Lalonde to Jean Drapeau and members of the Comité exécutif, 18 July 1984, V.2451.8, XCD00-P7704, Solidarité Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985 / Montréal (Québec), Centre de documentation: Publications internes et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Quebec, Canada. Out of the 14 members on the executive, seven were tenants.

and the city to coopt the tenants association had failed in his stated mandate. With Lamarre open to conversation with the representatives of the SJM, the letter would mark the end of the CHJM and its unchecked power within HJM—as it had historically understood by city hall—under the Drapeau mayoralship.²²⁶

Yet for the SJM, the month of July was critical in achieving its stated mandate in working towards and developing a coherent and alternative governance structure for HJM that reflected the political power of tenant democracy and tenants' management. To fully approach developing their own policy on the issue of governance, the SJM sought to involve institutional actors across Montreal, Quebec, and Canada into the campaign for a meeting with Lamarre, the CHJM, and the SHQ. On July 20, 1984, Bernard Pépin and the SJM sent a letter Emile Désorcy, president of the CHJM, in reiterating their demands and asking for a meeting. Outlining their vision, as per its mandate, the SJM revealed it had discussions with non-for-profit social housing and local public housing directors and managers in the city in order to learn about their governance structures within Montreal and in Quebec.²²⁷

With attempts by SJM to start a dialogue with the CHJM, the committee sought to develop a political platform through the working committee that could then be explored and implemented with sit-down discussions with the CHJM, city hall, and provincial and federal housing political bodies. In short, what the tenants association mandated in creating the SJM was

²²⁶ Ibid. The actual reason for this willingness to meet with the tenants stemmed from the continued fallout over Drapeau-Lamarre's continued paternalism towards working city residents. Primarily understood within the politics of "public consultation" which had become the media and political buzzword of the 1980s, the sudden reversal by Drapeau-Lamarre in acknowledging HJM tenants within this entire confrontation was directly a result of political defensiveness. It seems the MCM, who only talked about public consultation in the mid-1980s, was using the moment to for their own political leverage within the city.

²²⁷ Correspondence from Bernard Pépin to Emile Désorcy, 20 July 1984, V.2451.8, XCD00-P7704, Solidarité Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985 / Montréal (Québec), Centre de documentation: Publications internes et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Quebec, Canada.

to develop a political project outlining the tenants' own unique version of what it meant to be a resident of Habitations Jeanne-Mance and who should have control over deciding the future of the community. From the beginning of this movement in 1966 to finality of the expression that the SJM represented in its creation from within the tenants association in 1984, was the common and lasting view of tenants' democracy with the demand that HJM should be a community governed by those who lived there.²²⁸

Yet the problem the SJM had to address and confront was mostly due the politics of time and space. In openly demanding tenants' management in the mid 1980s, the tenants and the SJM were demanding political rights within a landscape that no longer took collective tenant concerns seriously, particularly if it involved, as it did with SJM and HJM tenants, a complete and radical overhaul of the CHJM. In being out of step with institutional and political history in Canada and North America, the tenants and SJM were overconfident in understanding their political leverage, particularly when it involved the SHQ and CMHC. With every letter the SJM sent to the CHJM or city hall, the political positions were also sent to the office of Paul Angers, the president of the CMHC, and to the head of the SHQ. These letters would go unreturned, and this indifference increasingly bothered the leadership of the SJM. If tenants actually believed the SHQ and the CMHC would listen to the concerns of one public housing project, it was a rather naive understanding of the public housing landscape within Canada and in Quebec. Public housing and tenants' rights were a cause of the 1960s and 1970s—and not the 1980s. Presumably

²²⁸ The policies being developed in spring and summer months of 1984 were a direct confrontation of the consultation ideology put in place by the Lalonde and the corporation in 1982 and 1983 that sought to eliminate the tenants political power and militancy through the creation of tenant director—a position friendly to the corporation whose role would be to coopt the purpose of the tenants association in speaking on the behalf of tenants.

understanding this issue of one housing project as a localized matter, the indifference by provincial and federal authorities should not have surprised the tenants.

Yet the tenants persisted. In a follow up letter on July 23, 1984 to an earlier letter on June 7, the SJM again sent a letter to Angers to reiterate why the SJM believed it was important for the CMHC and Angers, specifically, to join in with the proposed meeting with Lamarre and the CHJM in discussing the governance statutes of the Dozois Plan. The effort to include Angers and his refusal to acknowledge—or join the conversation—was in part due to the changing socio-political reality that had been occurring within Canadian society and the CMHC since 1976, and the tenants’ naivety on their political leverage to force structural change.

In the mid 1980s, the CMHC increasingly began to be more concerned with ‘revitalizing’ social housing projects through site-specific pilot projects across Canada.²²⁹ The CMHC was not, therefore, particularly interested in tenants’ rights, and neither were the final months of the Trudeau, Turner, or soon to be Mulroney federal governments in 1984. After eliminating funding to the National Organization of Canadian Public Housing Tenants in 1976, and rewriting of the Charity Act in 1982 with the guidance of Montreal’s Centraide in an attempt to depoliticize tenants association in freezing their funding source, the late 1970s and early 1980s were not tenant-friendly times for public housing tenant activists.²³⁰

²²⁹ See Wolfe, “Canadian Housing Policy in the Nineties,” 124. As Wolfe noted, the shift within federal housing policy towards a more neoliberal direction first began at the end of the Trudeau government in 1983 and 1984 with CMHC reevaluation studies. The reevaluation of all social housing stock in Canada would conclude in 1990. CMHC, *Reevaluation of the public housing program* (CMHC: Ottawa, 1990).

²³⁰ Gilles Paquin, “Centraide Demande la Révision de la Loi sur les Organismes de Charité,” *La Presse* (Montréal, QC), June 4, 1982. Invoking class-solidarity with tenants’ movements in Montreal, the tenants’ association used its power in the press and within its organization to denounce the measure. Le Conseil de l’Association des locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance, “Non au chantage,” *La Presse* (Montréal, QC), July 19, 1983; “Votre Association se tient debout devant Centraide,” September 1983, V.2451.9, XCD00-P7705, Association des locataires habitations Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985/ Association des locataires des habitations Jeanne-Mance, Centre de documentation: Publications et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

The most profound difference, however, between the 1960s and 1984 was the development of public housing projects and social housing movements in Montreal and Quebec. From 1959 to 1968, tenants at Jeanne-Mance were the only public housing tenants within Montreal and within the province of Quebec. In the 1960s, the tenants' political views, demands, and living conditions could be almost taken for granted by tenant leaders as leverage in confronting CHJM or Drapeau-Saulnier. In 1984, however, this was no longer the case. The tenants were now merely a collective of voices within a deindustrializing urban city core; in which the governance politics of the 1980s were continually waged between the 'position' of the city of Montreal in relation to its wealthier suburban regions, or how the early city-led gentrification policies of Drapeau-Lamarre were plans that did not consult the residents the city had sought to displace.²³¹ While tenant rights and the condition of market-rental tenants within Montreal were openly addressed and discussed within the politics of the 1980s, tenants at HJM were only beginning to be only addressed in relation to the absence of new public housing construction or social housing cooperatives. In being one of many voiceless residents within the final years of Drapeau-Lamarre administration, the tenants were marginalized within a disinvested landscape.²³²

²³¹ Léonard and Léveillé, *Montréal--After Drapeau*, 32; 58-61. or Authors, the shift occurred due to the rescaling of governance power within the region of Montreal with population and capital flight to the outlying suburbs; the shift in Drapeau-Lamarre to focus on gentrifying neighbourhoods and promoting global capital investment within an entrepreneurial governance structure; and the rise of Jean Doré within the MCM as it functionally became a middle class party in 1982. At the core of these shifts, however, remained Drapeau's continued paternalism and indifference to marginalized neighbourhoods in Montreal, and with the MCM no longer a viable alternative to Drapeau, the MCM under Doré, spoke to both the capitalist class, middle class, and working class in promoting "public consultation" as the antidote to Drapeau paternalism. Instead the façade of the latter to address the former revealed itself during the Chinatown protests over the by-law changes to limit the growth of Chinatown in 1984 and 1985. Kwok B. Chan, "Ethnic Urban Space, Urban Displacement and Forced Relocation: The Case of Chinatown in Montreal," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 18, no. 2 (1986): 65-78.

²³² The bleakness of the 1980s did produce lasting social activist networks. In the 1980s tenants were empowered by their collective presence within the growing social housing activists and renters within FRAPRU—an organization that partly arose from the frustration of residents in ignored east-end districts and their continued struggle within the city to be politically heard by the Jean Drapeau and within the province.

Regardless of the tenants prospects of achieving political success at higher scales of governance with the CMHC and SHQ, the SJM and the tenants association were successful in achieving their main objective of what the organization understood as cementing its legitimacy with Lamarre. On August 17, 1984, representatives of the board of directors for SJM, Lamarre, and CHJM officials sat down in the chairman's office in city hall. Attended by Michel Garceau and Lousi Beriau of Solidarity Jeanne-Mance, and Emile Désorcy and Claude Lalonde of the CHJM, the meeting was relatively successful for the SJM in that it secured their legitimacy and outlined the future directions of their concerns. For Désorcy and Lalonde, however, the meeting must have been understood as professional capitulation. In the months leading up the meeting, Lamarre's openness to having a meeting and a roundtable—a tactic Lamarre would later use with tenant groups in Saint Henri in 1985—had differed in the strategy used to Désorcy and Lalonde and their now long-standing contention of delegitimizing SJM through internal belittlement and CHJM stonewalling. In simply agreeing to have a meeting, Lamarre had broken with tradition set by Lucien Saulnier regarding tenants and their activism within HJM in 1967. Lamarre, on the other hand, might have simply believed the SJM was cooptable. In the course of the meeting, Lamarre proposed a future round table discussion between himself and the SJM, the tenants association, Loisoirs Saint Jacques, the CHJM, and his staff. With the desired roundtable to follow on September 24, 1984, SJM believed it was nearing a breakthrough.

In securing the roundtable discussion the one question remaining for the SJM, from their point of view, was how to persuade its case to the general public and to city hall on proceeding with its political project of the democratic renewal for HJM. Tenants in 1984 believed this route was only achievable through negotiation and bargaining. Framed as a working group meeting between the Lamarre, CHJM, SJM, the tenants association, other tenants groups the round table

was not the breakthrough the SJM had envisioned. Plagued by differences between the tenants groups, the meeting in September focused more on tenant internal disagreements than plans to alter the tenant-landlord relations with the city of Montreal. Lamarre, however, felt pleased by the meeting. Agreeing with the tenants overall message of institutional reform without explicitly arguing for what that entailed—as the SJM had yet to proceed in crafting a coherent message of what it wanted—Lamarre appointed a member of his staff to oversee the case. All parties at the table agreed another meeting should take place to discuss specifics related to addressing the governance issue within HJM.

Yet no such meeting would ever occur. The tenants association and SJM spent the winter months of 1984 and 1985 in the dark concerning the governance issue at HJM from Lamarre. Thinking progress was being made, the SJM and the tenants association spent the next months planning and devising their own policy proposal for tenants' management. By the spring of 1985, when the tenants were ready to reveal their plans—and nearly one year since forming the SJM—the tenants association and SJM had lost patients with the situation.²³³ Publicly taking their grievances to the press, P  pin and the tenants association outlined what the association believed was a betrayal in directly confronting Lamarre for neglecting the concerns of tenants and the governance structure at HJM.²³⁴

Unbeknownst to the tenants, however, Lamarre was setting the groundwork to fire Lalonde and D  socrcy and the board of directors within the CHJM. In the wake of the mass-firing, Lamarre replaced the board of the CHJM with Office municipal d'habitation de Montr  al (OMHM) officials, led by Normand Daoust, president of OMHM, who would be installed as the

²³³ Correspondence from Denise Lacasse to Yvon Lamarre, 20 March 1985, V.2451.8, XCD00-P7704, Solidarit   Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985 / Montr  al (Qu  bec), Centre de documentation: Publications internes et externes, Archives de ville de Montr  al, Montr  al, Quebec, Canada.

²³⁴ Bernard P  pin, "La Ville a Court-Circuit   la D  marche des R  sidents," *La Cri  e* (Montr  al, QC), May 29, 1985.

new director general of the CHJM. The move, which officially occurred during the final CHJM board of directors meeting for Lalonde on May 16, 1985, did not sit well with tenant leaders. Incensed that neither the SJM nor the tenants association was briefed on the situation by Lamarre—and the city’s complete indifference with continuing talks agreed to with SJM and the tenants association concerning actual tenants’ management—Pépin and the tenants association took to the press and aired their grievances. “Need we recall that the principles advanced by Solidarité Jeanne Mance in demanding an autonomous corporation... mainly composed of residents... universally elected by residents,”²³⁵ said Bernard Pépin, secretary of SJM. In publicly articulating the tenants’ position for the first time, which came through workshops and informative discussions with social housing managers and activists across Montreal and Quebec, the association in the spring of 1985 was prepared to unveil their own governance proposal.²³⁶ Keeping intact the board of directors of the CHJM, the proposal by the tenants association included a majority of tenants on the board of directors—and thereby have a majority on the board and control over the daily operations within HJM—which would be positions directly elected from within tenants association at their annual general assembly.²³⁷

The only problem, of course, was that the time on this proposal had run its course. In focusing on meeting with Lamarre and the CHJM before explicitly having a coherent and detailed plan of action, the tenants had lost leverage to fully change the HJM governance structure. Regardless of the timing, the relations between the city and the tenants had now moved into a

²³⁵ Bernard Pépin, “La Ville a Court-Circuité la Démarche des Résidants,” *La Criée* (Montréal, QC), May 29, 1985.

²³⁶ “Presentation de la Proposition,” V.2451.8, XCD00-P7704, Solidarité Jeanne-Mance: Mai 1985 / Montréal (Québec), Centre de documentation: Publications internes et externes, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Quebec, Canada. The official SJM proposal called for a governance structure of 11 board of directors with a voting majority of six members of the executive comprised of universally elected tenants from within the HJM tenant community.

²³⁷ Procès-Verbal, 16 May, 1985. P072-D2, Fonds Corporation d’Habitations Jeanne-Mance, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

new phase—which the tenants association alone had created the conditions for in the first place. With Lamarre firing Lalonde and installing Daoust, the tenants were given both a compromise and a new opportunity to render the CHJM more democratic.

The path ahead, then, was to wage a campaign for the institutional democratization of HJM. Outlining what would define the tenants' movement on governance for the next six years, Pépin reiterated that the demand was the “re-democratization” of the governance structure in its totality—albeit now according to the definition outlined by Lamarre, where the CHJM structure would still be intact. In somewhat of a final plea to the city of Montreal, in the waning days of the Drapeau years, Pépin summed up both the inability to alter the power relations within Jeanne-Mance, the general public mood, and direction the Left would take in the following years under the MCM.

Is this the best or the only solution that the City has chosen to consider? We are entitled to doubt that the City has sought to explore a different path since the last administrative action, as of June 1981 had initiated a series of changes comply with all policies OMHM, changes have also raised regularly the discontent of many residents - the first concerned. Is this the best solution or the necessary step to a plan already decided by the City since 1981?²³⁸

The words expressed by Pépin not only reflected the absence of originality by elite governance actors within HJM in the final years of Drapeau, but also within the opportunist politics of the MCM. With John Gardiner consistently within the orbit of the tenants association and activists within SJM, and with SJM activists in positions of MCM power at the local neighbourhood MCM association level in the mid 1980s, the MCM, once in power after the 1986 municipal election, never fully embraced the cause for tenants' management at HJM.²³⁹ With

²³⁸ Bernard Pépin, “La Ville a Court-Circuité la Démarche des Résidants,” *La Crie* (Montréal, QC), May 29, 1985.

²³⁹ Ghislain Poirier, a member of SJM, was coordinator of Saint Jacques district for the MCM until 1988. “#38 Nouveau Coordonateur Danielle Arpin Ancien Ghislaine Poirier,” in District de Saint Jacques, 1988, P086-E-24, Arrondissement Plateau-Mont-Royal/Centre-Sud.-1984-2000, Association locales -1974-2001, Fond

Gardiner now the chairman of the executive committee after 1986, the issues addressed by SJM—which Gardiner was an executive member—went untouched during the entirety of the MCM administration.²⁴⁰

What had changed were the politics of HJM. In understanding the problem of governance within HJM as fundamental tenant-city political fight, the tenants association had now, in some respects, successfully overcome the governance issue as it related to demanding governance power to listen to the tenants concerns. Convinced the cause for social justice would be found within having tenants take control of their lives and community, the tenants association began to look inward towards institutional reform in immediately forming a “democratization of Habitations Jeanne-Mance” working committee within the CHJM that sought universal elections for the two tenants representatives on the CHJM board of directors. With activists of the SJM period appointed to the board of directors from 1985 to 1991—during the MCM years—the first meeting of the CHJM in 1991 saw the tenants association successfully finish their struggle for

Rassemblement des citoyens et citoyennes de Montréal (RCM), Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada. By the spring of 1985, whatever the relationship Gardiner had with the tenants’ association, it had become an opportunistic one. Responding to his own words on the Chinatown by-law, passed by MCM and Drapeau on October 22, 1984, Gardiner reportedly said “It’s also not my job—it’s the city that should inform people” on his neglect to inform his own constituents in Chinatown of the by-law changes limiting the growth of the community and neighbourhood. The community, instead, found out about the by-law five weeks later in the press. Editorial, “Chinatown shafted (again),” *Montreal Gazette*, January 29, 1985. Contending the MCM voted for the measure because the zoning by-law was spatially vast—from Rue Bluary to Rue Saginuit in Saint Jacques—Gardiner defended decision by invoking the tenants of HJM: “because it protected the few residential areas remaining, created new ones out of parking lots and empty spaces where none exists, and consolidated the commercial activity of the area.” John Gardiner, “No conspiracy in restrictive zoning,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Feb. 12, 1985.

²⁴⁰ As Ruddick noted, the MCM by 1982 had embraced a policy shift where its purpose as a party was to “democratize” the Drapeau-Lamarre policies of the 1980s through public consultation. “The current form of participatory democracy has emerged in part because it is simply better suited to the exigencies of contemporary restructuring, as the form and style of Drapeau’s political machine was suited to the growth strategies of a previous era,” Ruddick, “The Montreal Citizens’ Movement: the real politik of the 1990s?,” 290. This shift would become apparent to activists in the late 1980s. After the Overdale affair in 1988, when the MCM evicted low-income tenants and demolished a neighbourhood for an eventual failed condominium project near Lucien L’Allier metro, the working class city centre neighbourhood activists within the MCM coalition, were no longer on friendly terms with Gardiner in particular. As former MCM member Jeremy Searle said to the *Gazette* in 1990, “Gardiner is somebody who sold his soul for the short-term political fix.” Marian Scott, “City under siege; Opponents criticize MCM’s development plans,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Oct. 27, 1990. [Republished as “John Gardiner: from wild-eyed radical to developers’ ally,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Sept. 22, 2015].

democratization. Starting in 1991, the two tenant representatives on the board of directors within the CHJM would officially be elected by universal suffrage from within the tenants community.²⁴¹ While not originally what the tenants had envisioned in 1985, tenants of this generation from 1959 to 1991 could now finally say they had both political recognition and a political right to Jeanne-Mance.

²⁴¹ "Assemblée des Administrateurs," in Procès-verbaux. 1985-1994, 20 February 1991, P072-D2, Fonds Corporation d'Habitations Jeanne-Mance, Archives de ville de Montréal, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Conclusion

Tenants Matter

The year of 1994 is an appropriate moment in time to end the history of this tenants movement within Habitations Jeanne-Mance. Fresh off their successive and decades long demand to address the democratic imbalance of the governance structure within the Corporation of Habitations Jeanne-Mance, the tenants association had in the process fundamentally altered the history of HJM as a public housing project. In organizing within the neoliberalizing 1980s in articulating a struggle centred on the tenants relationship to their governance which led to the firing of Claude Lalonde in 1985, the early 1990s also marked a time when the city under the MCM—mirroring the trajectory of privatizing and demolishing public housing stock across North America—had alternative plans for HJM as a housing project.²⁴² The result of the shifting priorities of the MCM in the late 1980s and 1990s would come to first with the remodelling HJM that finally began in the late 1980s, after years of tenant activism, and second with the CHJM and the city of Montreal initiating early, exploratory studies on how partially demolish and socially-mix parts of HJM in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

How the CHJM came to a pro-demolition position started in the late 1980s was due to

²⁴² The upgrades to the HJM can only be understood in relation to the governance challenges in the 1980s. Without the central tension between tenants and their landlord, the later success in 1987 with the upgrades to HJM housing stock would not have occurred. Even in demanding upgrades, achieving renewal, and changing the terms in how governance within Montreal began to understand HJM, the tenants still faced egregious conditions and threats of eviction in the late 1980s and 1990s while under the threat of demolition and displacement. Marian Scott, “Tenants go a month without heat,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC) Oct, 27, 1987. See Jeff Crump, “Deconcentration by demolition: public housing, poverty, and urban policy,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20, no. 5 (2002): 581-596 for the North American standard example of HOPE VI era policies enacted during the Clinton administration in the 1990s. In Canada, social housing as a national strategy or concern from Ottawa ended in 1993. But this date, however, was not the beginning of the neoliberal moment. The CMHC in the 1980s had already begun a series of pilot studies on public housing projects across the country while provincial and federal governments enacted swift cuts to social housing development. See Jeanne Wolfe, “Canadian Housing Policy in the Nineties,” *Housing Studies* 13, no. 1 (1998): 121-133.

the changes in priorities from the MCM. Under the MCM, the city connected with Montreal-born architect Marvin Charney develop studies on how to gentrify the neighbourhood of Saint Jacques—now referred for rebranding purposes as the Foubourg Saint Laurent—in 1989. Rendering the landscape with methapors of displacement, the MCM begun a series of urban housing policies in the late 1980s that had spatialized the planning directions enacted earlier during the waning years of the Drapeau-Lamarre administration. Focused on redevelopment of deindustrialized quarters of the city and reimaging Saint Jacques as a district of middle class, condo projects ‘socially mixing’ with the low-income tenants and residents who had lived in the neighbourhood for decades, the MCM and the Montreal media, in particular, began to render HJM and its outlying neighbourhood within the warscape imaginary of the trenches of World War I. Tenants and the low-income residents from Saint Denis to Chinatown were now living in a “no man’s land.”²⁴³

Continuing with this image of HJM residents trapped within in the killing fields of France, the CHJM in the late 1980s began to finally upgrade the apartments within HJM. Long sought by tenants since the Community Forums of 1981, tenants were finally having their living issues addressed for the first time. In 1989, however, the CHJM articulated a different position

²⁴³ The term “no man’s land” was used by journalist Mariane Favreau of *La Presse* to describe Saint Jacques and Charney’s plans for the “reconstruction” of Faubourg Saint Laurent on March 30, 1990. Mariane Favreau, “Un architecte propose de redonner vie au Faubourg St-Laurent malgré l’autoroute Ville-Marie,” *La Presse* (Montréal, QC) March 30, 1990. Whether intentional or not, the war-metaphor encapsulated the shifting political and neoliberalizing trajectories in late 1980s and early 1990s Montreal and Quebec. On March 29, the day before the announcement to gentrify Saint Jacques, a major student strike between Montreal police, CEGEP administrators, and striking students led to police violence. Using HJM as a site of war maneuvering, the riot squad of Montreal kettled and attacked 200 students who had peacefully occuppied Rue Sanguinet in front of CEGEP Vieux-Montréal and HJM on the sixth day of the students’ strike against tuition fee increases by the Bourassa government. Charging the sitting students with billy clubs, two students were sent to the emergency room with head and neck injuries. A few students retaliated to the police maneuver by ramming a car into police paddy wagons. Over 30 strikers were arrested. Lynn Moore and Harvey Shepard, “Riot squad moves on demonstrators,” *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC) March 29, 1990. For more on the Quebec student strike in 1990, see Shawn Katz, *Generation Rising: The Time of the 2012 Québec Student Spring* (Black Point, NS and Winnipeg, MB: Fernwood Publishing, 2015), 17-19; Benoit Lacoursière, *Le Mouvement Étudiant au Québec de 1983 à 2006* (Montréal: Sabotart, 2007).

that addressed the city's own neglect of the housing project. While simulatenously spending millions in upgrades for tenants and their homes, the CHJM addressed the issue of vacant housing apartments along Rue Sanguinet as a catalyst for studying the partial demolition and privatization of HJM. Connecting to the Charney vision of the Foubourg which was endorsed by the MCM and the later incorporated into the city's first Master Plan in 1992 for the district of Ville-Marie, the CHJM began to think about reimagining HJM with the MCM policy positions on gentrifying the neighbourhood.²⁴⁴

Except these studies never materialized beyond planning documents. Plans for the redevelopment of HJM, which would have demolished the row housing apartments along Sagiunet, were contested by tenants at every level of political representation within CHJM and within the city. From the tenants and former SJM activists now residing on the board of directors, the tenants association, and its connections with FRAPRU, which in the 1990s was led by the president of the tenants association, used the press to speak out about the studies the MCM was conducting and the plans it sought to initiate, put enough public pressure on John Gardiner and the MCM that the city backed down for its proposals. In an era of neoliberalization and demolition of public housing stock through social mix displacement policies, tenants had once again raised the alarm and used their collective political power to govern from below.²⁴⁵ As

²⁴⁴ Christophe Caron, "It's Time to Restore the Vitality of Eastern Downtown," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC) Dec. 20, 1986. For one of the first mentions of "integration" of Saint Jacques and HJM into the neighbourhood see Kate Sutherland, "City Planners take a Broom to Clean-Sweep Repairs," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC) March 7, 1987. Announcing the city's plans for gentrifying Saint Jacques, then reimagined as the Faubourg Saint Laurent, Melvin Charney, the architect commissioned with the plans that became integral to the Master Plan for the borough of Ville-Marie in 1992—and the CHJM plans to socially mix HJM in 1989—demanded the city and province address the "urban scar" of the east end in "covering up" the Ville Marie expressway. "The goal of our work is to underline the potential for development in this area," said Charney during the press conference. "This plan could act as a catalyst for the area." To this date, the province has official air rights over the highway. Lewis Harris, "Cover Up 'Urban Scar' Autoroute, Architect Urges City in Plan," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC) March 30, 1990.

²⁴⁵ Paul Wells, "Low Income Residents in Danger: Groups; But Gardiner Denies that Development will Elminate any Homes," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC) April 23, 1991; Georges Lamon, "Gardiner assure que les Locataires

a result of decades long tenant activism and political power, Habitations Jeanne-Mance became oldest public housing project still standing in Canada after the demolition of Regent Park began in Toronto in 2005. While the history of Toronto and Montreal are entirely different, the current policies concerned with gentrifying the neighbourhood of Saint Jacques are not. As condo towers continually to rise up within the neighbourhood now rebranded as Quartier des Spectacles, HJM remains untouched in its original form as a housing project. Now a visible outlier to the known history of public housing projects of the postwar era, the reason for present day juxtaposition is due to the result of tenants who for decades fought their landlord and the city in which they lived. At the time of this writing in 2017, the present condition Habitations Jeanne-Mance as a housing project and its lasting mark it has made on the Montreal urban landscape is a reflection of those who have lived and organized against their landlords within the city in which they lived.

How people can and have governed from below to alter their material and institutional conditions is the fundamental question of this thesis. Understood within public housing tenants' movements and their relationship to elite class power and governance, I have sought to demonstrate how tenants within one housing project were able to fundamentally transform their own existence and institutional political power in remaking their community over a series of protracted and class based struggles that spanned well over three decades. From the original uprising over recognition that led to two tenant representatives on the board of directors with the help of social agency actors in the 1960s, to tenants finally speaking for themselves on their own terms in the 1970s with the formation of the tenants association of HJM, and the final campaign

des Habitations Jeanne-Mance seront Consultés: Certains d'entre eux Craignent d'être Évincés au Profit des Étudiants de l'UQAM," *La Presse* (Montréal, QC) April 23, 1991. The plan studied by the CHJM in 1989 and the Charney study called for 125 units of HJM to be demolished to fit the guidelines of social mixing low-income neighbourhoods. For HJM, these plans were connected to the desire by UQAM to build art galleries and student dormitories for university students.

in the 1980s to reimagine the CHJM within their own organic vision of tenants' management and tenant democracy—the tenants of HJM continually demonstrated, time and again, the power of collective action from below in confronting elite power and governance.

While the tenants may have never achieved everything their struggles exposed, they fundamentally transformed the historical trajectory of Habitations Jeanne-Mance. This transformation, of course, extended beyond the property boundaries of the housing project. Tenants throughout the 1960s to the 1990s learned how to politically organize outside of HJM—both within their neighbourhood and in the city of Montreal—and in the process became prominent city-wide political actors who waged housing campaigns under the premise of class solidarity as public housing tenants. In being active within the history of the Left within Montreal from the 1960s to the 1990s, the history of social, welfare, and housing rights activism within those decades both flowed through and emanated from Habitations Jeanne-Mance.

Taken together, the legacy of these struggles and the position the tenants waged politically for decades in fighting for their rights is the image of “success” Mayor Gerald Tremblay invoked in announcing a new round of funding for HJM in 2011. It was not, however, the result of elite power or actors and their upper class, top-down politics and policies that made HJM a successful housing project. The history of the tenants' movement within Jeanne-Mance undeniably suggests otherwise. From the two universally elected tenant representatives on the board of directors of the CHJM, Loisirs Saint Jacques, the HJM community gardens and recycling program, or to the reading and writing and French school program—these institutions and movements did not arise from the benevolence of the elites, from within the CHJM, CMHC,

or a Montreal city politician.²⁴⁶ These efforts came directly from the resolve of tenants and their ability to successfully incorporate the politics of Montreal and Quebec into their own daily lives.

Yet 1994 is also an important milestone within the overall tenants' movement within HJM and the politics of Montreal and Quebec. In Montreal, the MCM, the embodiment and legacy of the political movements of the 1960s and 1970s, was voted out of power during the municipal election. In 1994 the PQ also returned to power within Quebec on a campaign to hold a second referendum on sovereignty in the following year. With the second referendum failing on October 30, 1995 due to what Quebec Premier Jacques Parizeau referred to "money and ethnic votes" Quebec, and Quebec nationalism, was again about to pivot. Such a pivot for HJM tenants arrived the following year in their mailbox as 1996 marked the year of the Canadian Census. As tenants filled out their forms, all three of these developments that had occurred in the three previous years would have a lasting impact on Quebec, Montreal, and the tenants' movement within HJM.

For the tenants at HJM, the second referendum occurred during a moment of transition within the housing project. With the failure of the second referendum on Quebec sovereignty in 1995, the leftover political and social energies from the 1960s had officially come to an end within HJM. After October, 30, 1995, the politics of Quebec and its questions regarding the meaning of the Quebec nation became framed within cultural identity politics of exclusion. It was now completely shorn of the Leftist class politics of the 1960s. The tenants association, following the previous shifts in the 1960s and 1980s, took up these questions regarding the

²⁴⁶ According to the tenants' association history written by Pierre Hamel and Berthe Marcotte, the policies and institutions the tenants' association from 1974 to 1999 considered their greatest achievements were the creation of the school and its "alphabétisation" and "francisation" programs to teach tenants reading, writing, and French; the creation of eco-quartier district and recycling program; the establishment of a tenants' newspaper; a drop-in daycare program; and a cooperative food purchasing program. See Hamel and Marcotte, *l'Association des locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance, 1974-1999* (Montréal: l'Association des locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance, 1999), 52-53.

national question differently after the second referendum in 1995. Still rooted within the networks of FRAPRU, and increasingly the provincial tenants association of public housing tenants in Quebec, the now institutionalized tenants association began to organize around intercultural activities within HJM centred on a Québécois and francophone version of multiculturalism.²⁴⁷

How tenants sought this path of intercultural inclusion stemmed in large part to the outcome of the Canadian census in 1996. In the census taken months after the defeat of the second referendum, the Canadian Census revealed that French speakers had lost, for the first time in HJM existence, their status as the majority first-language of tenants within the housing project.²⁴⁸ Now primarily a racialized immigrant community from countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, the demographics of HJM—and the leadership of the tenants association—was rapidly changing. Responding to these changes within the population, the tenants association in the 1990s began to focus on organizing within HJM through intercultural events in an attempt to forge a social and political base within the evergrowing and diverse community.²⁴⁹ Using the

²⁴⁷ Hamel and Marcotte, *l'Association des locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance*, 60-62.

²⁴⁸ In the 1996 Census, Habitations Jeanne-Mance, known as Census tract 0060 within the Montreal Census Division, officially became a majority non-francophone speaking space. Out of 1,660 responses, 200 people spoke English, 745 spoke French, and 670 spoke a non-official language. Regarding knowledge of the two official languages, 225 spoke only English, 890 spoke only French, 430 spoke both English and French, and 120 spoke neither English or French. In regards to first official language spoken at home, French speakers still dominated with 1,100 residents. For English and non-official languages spoken as the first language, the responses were 325 for English, 120 for English and French, and 110 for neither English or French. Statistics Canada. *1996 Census*. Using CHASS [distributor].

<http://0-datacentre.chass.utoronto.ca.mercury.concordia.ca/cgi-bin/census/2006/displayCensusCT.cgi> [Accessed May 12, 2017.]

²⁴⁹ Hamel and Marcotte, *Association des locataires des Habitations Jeanne-Mance*, 61-62. The victories in the 1980s over governance led to the institutionalization of the movement in the 1990s. While the unequal tenant-landlord relationship remained, the association in the 1990s shifted towards multicultural focused organizing in tandem with outside of HJM political activities through FRAPRU. Tenant and social issues within HJM in the 1990s also shifted. In the 1990s, HJM became a major location for gang-related crack-cocaine distribution with gangs using HJM as a set-up location. The same also applied to sex-work with prostitution. Lastly, HJM was also a site for gun violence, with a random murder of a tenant by an out of province drifter who had crossed the street to on the way to a local *depanneur* in 1990. On October 3, 2002, these concerns culminated in a major “1,000 rocks” crack-bust within HJM. Sean Gordon, “We Beat Crack, Cops said in the 1990s. Guess What? Yesterday’s Bust unlikely to Interrupt Supply

tenants association as the community organization which could best connect tenants to tenants, regardless of their linguistic, racial, and cultural divides, the tenants association underwent a period of community organizing grounded within intercultural awareness.

The results and success of this new direction worked in developing new tenant leaders, particularly those who were not white Québécois tenants. For these leaders, the failed efforts to continue the association into the 2010s was understood purely as a generational divide. Having achieved major changes to how the governance structure operated within HJM, the tenants association had become an institutionalized actor within an aging and declining tenants' movement that was unable to contend with the generational divides of newer generations of tenants who had different needs or simply thought about HJM differently. As the battles of the 1980s and 1990s receded from memory, these newer tenants, according to a former president of the tenants association, a Guatemalan-born tenant who arrived in the early 1990s, was one of the reasons the tenants association became less relevant for tenants within HJM in the 2000s.²⁵⁰

Yet in this post 1994 landscape, the tenants association at HJM continued its links with the reorganization of the Left within Montreal and Quebec after the failure of the second referendum. Connecting with the Union of Progressives in the late 1990s, one of the post 1994 referendum political parties that became the forerunner to Québec Solidaire, the tenants association remained active in Left politics within the Montreal and in Quebec.²⁵¹ The continued

for very long as Highly Addictive, Profitable Drug will Draw new Players to Violence-Laced Trade," *Montreal Gazette* (Montreal, QC), Oct. 3, 2002.

²⁵⁰ The other reason was simply due to the impossibility of the tenant population diversity within HJM. According to the former tenant leader, what caused the tenants association to decline in the 2000s was due to old age of the 1980s political actors and the generational divide of tenants after the late 1990s. For tenants who arrived in the early 1990s, there was a strong sense of place-based solidarity within the community, which the former president of the tenants' association referred to as "love" for HJM. Anonymous. Interview by Stephanie Morán, September 16, 2014.

²⁵¹ Québec Solidaire, a democratic socialist political party in the province of Quebec, best represents the political lineage and expression outlined in the 1970s by the CSN and Marcel Pepin, particularly Pepin's later embrace of a socialist party to the left of the PQ within electoral politics in Quebec in the 1980s. See Mouvement Socialiste, "For

insistence on having connections with the Left in Montreal and Quebec by tenant leaders and tenant activists well into the 2000s represented one of the lasting foundational convictions and continuing legacies of the 1960s that was instilled within the HJM tenants body. This alone is an impressive achievement.

The tenants association, however, would not last. Collapsing sometime in the 2000s an enduring question during the research for this thesis has been concerned with how to renew the tenants association. In the interview process for this thesis, leaders from the the 1980s and 1990s repeatedly believed in conversation off and on the record that the reformation of a tenants association was not currently possible. Questioned as to why this was the case, the resounding answer was due to the generational divide and the demographic and racial multiplicity of the residential population within HJM—which currently has an international residential population whose birthplace of origin is from 70 different countries. In other words, a coherent and sustainable political bloc within HJM to successfully mount a reconstruction of the association does not currently exist. This does not mean, however, that one could not form in the future.

In thinking about the historical impact tenants within HJM have had on not only tenant activism and housing within Montreal, but in shaping the contours of the Left more broadly within the city, the renewal of the tenants association within HJM should be considered a high-priority for the Left. As this thesis has sought to demonstrate, present-day city-wide tenants' movements within Montreal were strengthened and led in the past by tenants within HJM from the 1960s to the 1990s. If a renewal of the city-wide, neighbourhood-based tenant activism witnessed from the 1960s to the 1990s is to reemerge within this city, such a movement would

a Socialist Quebec,” in *Old Passions New Visions: Social Movements and Political Activism in Quebec*, ed. Marc Raboy, trans. Robert Chodos (Toronto, ON: Between The Lines, 1986), 170-196.

unequivocally require a strong tenant presence emanating from within HJM, the now oldest public housing project in Canada.

While the housing and social conditions tenants waged in 1960s to 1990s are presently not the same within HJM, the central thread that connected these various movements was the fundamental relationship between tenants and their landlords, a relationship that still has not changed. In this respect, a renewed tenants' movement within Habitations Jeanne-Mance is needed now more than ever.

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