FOREWORD

MAX SWERDLOW was a remarkable Canadian. I first knew him as a Director of the Frontier College, where I worked as a labourer-teacher in the early 1960s. By this time, Brother Max was the most experienced labour educator in Canada. On Frontier's Board he represented the Canadian Labour Congress and was instrumental in cementing a working relationship with corporate leaders towards a common interest — promoting human development in outlying communities throughout the country. His influence at the Frontier College was so strong that his presence remained powerful long after his departure to international assignments later that decade.

It would be difficult today to estimate how many labour educators are at work in Canada. Yet, only a few decades ago, they were small in number and Max Swerdlow was their mentor. In his words, "since none of us was a trained labour educator, we relied on each other for ideas, advice and assistance. Our inter-dependence resulted in a close knit group of colleagues and good friends." He blazed a trail and set high standards.

When I first saw the manuscript for this book, Max told me that he has often been asked "What does a labour educator do?" Brother Max: Labour Organizer and Educator was his answer. His purpose in writing was to illuminate and share his life's work in labour education. While this volume is not intended as labour history, or autobiography, or a text book, it contains elements of all three. Readers will find it at once entertaining, enlightening and inspiring. Through Max's eyes, we also gain insights into the work of others, leaders such as Claude Jodoin, Howard Conquergood, Gower Markle and Roby Kidd.

I do not know which of his many achievements gave Max Swerdlow the greatest satisfaction. But what a list of candidates! Leadership of the CLC's Education Department. Establishing the Labour College of Canada. Animation on behalf of the International Labour Organization in the Caribbean and in Asia. Establishing the principle that making love in a storeroom is not a cause for dismissal under a collective agreement.

I invite readers to join with me in celebrating the life and work of a great Canadian. Through his example, well documented here, he inspired a new generation to excel in a noble goal — creating a humane, just, and democratic society; a learning society led by learning adults.

Ian Morrison
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