BRINGING BACK THE RIGHT:
TRADITIONAL FAMILY VALUES AND THE
COUNTERMOVEMENT POLITICS OF THE
FAMILY COALITION PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

by

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the characteristic features and problems of a party/movement as they pertain to the Family Coalition Party of British Columbia (FCP). The FCP is a minor provincial political party in British Columbia that was founded in 1991 to provide a formal political voice for pro-life and pro-family supporters in the province. After years of frustrated activism within the pro-life and pro-family movements and ineffectual political representation, the founders of the FCP sought to establish a political access point that could provide a more direct route to the province's political decision-making process. The result was the formation of the Family Coalition Party, a conservative political organization that supports social policies which are resolutely pro-life and promote a vision for the restoration of what is understood as the traditional family. The primary goal of the party is the advancement and implementation of such policies, with electoral success pursued as a secondary goal. This agenda renders the FCP an organization that uses a political party form to perform social movement work or functions. In this regard, the FCP exhibits the hybrid duality of a party/movement in the tradition of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and the Green Parties of Canada and Germany.

In developing a sociopolitical and ideological profile of the Family Coalition Party and its politics of the family, its historical roots are traced back to the conservative political writings of Edmund Burke and brought forward to the current era of late twentieth century neoconservatism. The pro-family movement (PFM), of which the FCP is a part, is examined comparatively in the United States, where it exists in its most mature form under the auspices of such Christian Right organizations as the Christian
Coalition, and in British Columbia, where the movement remains in a state of relative political infancy and organizational disunity. Despite the disparities in organizational maturation, the movements in both countries share a high degree of ideological resonance concerning their opposition to feminism, abortion, euthanasia, and reproductive technologies, and their support for increased parental control in education, programmes that will promote the traditional family, and a minimalist state.

To understand the duality of the Family Coalition Party as a party/movement, it is first analyzed as a social movement organization (SMO) and then as a minor party in Canadian politics. Using contemporary social movement theory, the Family Coalition Party is found to exhibit the same traits and problems as those typically characteristic of the New Social Movements, despite the ideological disparities between the two. To this end, the FCP can be understood as a sub-type of New Social Movement, a Resurgence Movement, as it attempts to simultaneously resist one type of social change while promoting another by working to re-establish a diminishing set of normative cultural beliefs. As a minor political party of protest, the FCP, with reference to relevant political science research, is seen to embody the motivations, features and difficulties of minor parties as evidenced in the Social Credit League, the CCF, and the Green Party. In this regard the emergence of the FCP is symptomatic of a cadre party system that fails to adequately represent issues important to an aggrieved segment of the population and also experiences the institutional obstacles of the Westminster parliamentary model of political representation.

In examining the FCP as a party/movement, four ways of analytically relating political parties and social movements are reviewed before a fusionist perspective is
used to identify the characteristic features and problems of party/movements. Three sources of tension (organizational, institutional and cultural) are subsequently identified. These tensions are one of two types: they are either difficulties unique to party/movements, created by the deliberate fusing of party form with movement function; otherwise, they are problems common to every SMO or minor political party striving to achieve political legitimacy and potency. For party/movements, the challenge of resolving this latter set of problems is exacerbated beyond the level of difficulty experienced by single identity organizations precisely because of their dual identity. The experience of other party/movements, such as the CCF and the Green Parties of Canada and Germany, suggests that their specific tensions make it difficult to maintain a dual identity, with a drift towards either political institutionalization or dissolution likely, if not inevitable. While the Family Coalition Party is presently maintaining its party/movement nature, its future as such is in doubt unless the tensions of fusion that it now faces are effectively managed.
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While researching and writing a doctoral dissertation is in many respects an isolating act, its production, from the first inception of an idea through to the concluding words, is anything but an individual enterprise. In my case, the collective efforts of a number of people have made the completion of this dissertation a reality, and I would like to thank them here. It will be an inadequate effort I'm afraid, but at least in part I hope the depth of my appreciation for their help and support over the last several years comes through. First, I would like to extend thanks to my committee, Bob Ratner, David Schweitzer and Brian Elliott, whose quiet confidence in my abilities and feedback at critical times were both comforting and invaluable. Their enthusiasm for the project and their help in keeping the path to completion smooth made the work not only manageable, but enjoyable. I would also be seriously remiss if I did not mention Professor Yun-shik Chang, who was responsible for introducing me to the sociological world and, as I once mentioned to him, 'getting me into this whole mess'; for this I will be forever grateful. My thanks also go to Kathleen and Mark Toth, the founders of the Family Coalition Party of BC, who agreed not only to my studying their organization but who were more than helpful in making available to me information about the party that made this analysis possible.

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Dedication

For
my love, Sue
and
my father, Kenneth Ross MacKenzie

without whom this work would not have been possible.
Chapter 1

Introduction

Mobilizing political support around matters of social and moral conscience is a tricky business. Social contracts in turn of the millennium western democracies are increasingly being reconfigured by concerns over the primacy of the economic rather than the social or cultural. Canada, Britain, and the United States exhibit patterns of almost obsessive attention to indicators reflecting the health of their respective economies. Figures on the deficit, unemployment, inflation, interest rates, trade surpluses and deficits, gross domestic and national products are fixated upon as these nations attempt to come to grips with a globalizing pattern of capitalist accumulation. This climate focuses people’s attention inward and towards personal and familial indices of monetary and material well being. Concerns over job security, personal debt, and long term financial security come to dominate a family’s ideological and political belief system. Matters of social and moral responsibility become secondary and get pushed to the margins of familial attention; few people have the time to worry about problems of social order and moral health in society when their livelihood stands in tenuous balance. Additionally, if these issues are rooted in a staunchly religious or conservative social ethos they are quickly compartmentalized and labeled as properly belonging in the sphere of personal choice. Emotionally charged issues like abortion, euthanasia and the active promotion of the traditional nuclear family are seen to have no place in the political policies of a liberal democratic society or its political parties.
Nonetheless, in some quarters rigorous mobilization is occurring around these very issues. The 1990s has so far been a decade of increasing religious conservative activism under the umbrella of the pro-family movement (PFM), which is promoting an agenda of traditional family values that includes opposition to abortion and euthanasia, support for the return of the single income patriarchal family, parental choice and control in education, reduction of the Keynesian welfare state, and promotion of free market neoconservative economics. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the 1996 US Presidential election. Led by US evangelist Pat Buchanan's Christian Coalition, pro-family forces engaged in a flurry of activity, targeting Ross Perot's Reform Party and in particular the Republican Party and its presidential nominees. At issue for them was the future of the traditional nuclear family, one in which the married man is the income earner while his wife stays at home caring for their children. For the Christian Coalition, government legislation that promotes abortion, gay rights, and equal employment opportunities for women, as well as imposing heavy tax burdens on the family and interfering in its private workings, all undermine the sanctity of the traditional family. These actions allegedly threaten the very future of America itself, for as the family goes, so goes society, and from their cultural vista, religious conservatives see the traditional family as under attack and falling into an ever-deepening 'crisis.'

This is a message that is slowly generating support for the Christian Coalition's platform in the United States. In the November 1994 congressional elections, only one of the Coalition's hand picked candidates, Oliver North of the now infamous Iran-Contra scandal, failed to win a seat, and as Bob Dole's chief strategist warned during the Presidential campaign, "without having significant support of the Christian right, a
Republican cannot win the nomination or the general election.”\(^2\) In its most pure form, the pro-family vision calls for economic and social stability through a program of biblically informed, morally constructed policies which would help reduce social pathologies such as youth crime, teen pregnancy, and unemployment. At its tactically most vulgar, it promotes a current vision of modern society as selfish, hedonistic, godless, man-hating and lesbian loving. Some Pat Buchanan supporters at the 1996 Republican National Convention were sporting T-shirts reading “Intolerance is a beautiful thing.”\(^3\)

In Canada, pro-family forces are nowhere near the movement juggernaut the Christian Coalition is becoming in the U.S. The movement in Canada is presently a composite of scattered organizations, all working towards their respective goals and sharing a common world view but lacking any cohesive unity. National organizations like Campaign Life, the National Citizen’s Coalition, REAL Women, and provincial organizations like BC’s Citizen’s Research Institute, BC Pro-life, the Catholic Civil Rights League, and Westcoast Women for Family Life all share a common vision supporting the traditional family, pro-life issues, free market economic policies, and reduction of government interference and taxes, but, to date, have kept their activism, for the most part, insular. There are, however, signs of a slow growing cross-border influence on the Canadian pro-family movement with the establishment of Focus on the Family, James Dobson’s multi-million dollar pro-family organization, and the Christian Coalition in BC. One distinctive feature of the pro-family movement in Canada has been the creation of federal and provincial political parties by pro-family activists who engage in direct political party action on behalf of their cause. Federally, the Christian
Heritage Party was formed in 1987 on an overtly Christian, pro-family platform, while in Ontario (1987) and BC (1991), independent efforts brought the Family Coalition Party to life as a pro-family party discreetly espousing a Christian world view.

**Some Background on the Family Coalition Party**

This dissertation is specifically concerned with the mobilization efforts of the Family Coalition Party of BC (FCP). This party represents the first effort in British Columbia to provide the Pro-family movement with an avenue for direct political action and representation. Socioculturally, the FCP reflects a religious conservative ideology highly commensurate with that of US Pro-family organizations, and its activists share a number of psycho-social similarities in their world-views and motivations for political action. Structurally however, Canadian political culture is less porous than its American counterpart, making movement success within mainstream politics and political parties a more difficult achievement than in the United States. The strength of the Canadian Parliamentary system, with its concentration of party power being restricted predominantly in the hands of party leaders and executives, is such that influencing parties or individual politicians is far more difficult and onerous than the lobbying efforts aimed at a relatively permeable American state. Unable to make substantial inroads to the political process through existing mainstream parties, Canadian pro-family activists have resorted to the creation of their own political parties in an attempt to create a political path whereby they can influence an otherwise unresponsive Canadian state.

The FCP is just this, a party of last resort for long time pro-family activists who have become frustrated and discouraged with years of work within existing political
parties that have produced few tangible successes. This strategic initiative gives the party a distinctive party/movement character. Similar to other minor parties such as the Progressives and the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (the CCF, later the New Democratic Party) in Canadian political history, the FCP is more interested in engaging in political education than it is in winning political power. Like these party/movements, as well as all social movements, the Family Coalition Party is seeking to effect social change it views as favourable for the betterment of society and believes that generating awareness through education is vital to achieving these goals. Concomitantly, there is an understanding that consciousness-raising must be accompanied with access to the institutions of political power and the formal mechanisms of policy decision-making. Years of failed efforts to gain such access led the founders of the Family Coalition Party to the conclusion that in the face of a strong Canadian state such political opportunities must be constructed and this demanded the structural form of a political party.

This form/function dichotomy of a party/movement such as the FCP creates a number of unique tensions beyond those that accompany any social movement or minor political party. Mobilizing resources, gaining public recognition and legitimacy for the organization and its goals, and developing professional expertise are problems that all movements and minor political parties face. A party/movement such as the FCP however, must contend with a number of other challenges, including convincing what might be considered its natural constituency that form need not dictate function. That is, an organization with a party form can readily engage in activities more commonly associated with social movements, and at times, such a form can provide
unique engagement opportunities for the entire movement that another organizational form may not be in a position to offer. Also, mobilizing support (financial and human) for their organization during off-election years becomes a greater challenge than that of being simply a movement because of the impression of parties being largely effective only during times of elections. Even gaining support during election years is a more difficult task than that faced by mainstream parties because of the tendency for party/movements like the FCP to be viewed as 'single' issue because of their movement function. Finally, developing effective strategies for gaining media attention is problematic for a party/movement. Activities deemed 'appropriate' for a movement (such as demonstrations) for instance, may not be considered as such for a political party and therefore not newsworthy, but conversely, standard electoral rhetoric may not solicit media attention for the party/movement because it fails to sharply differentiate such an organization from mainstream parties.\(^5\)

Despite these challenges, the activists within the FCP are firmly committed to its party/movement nature, which they realize may never lead them to a legislative seat in Victoria. Their acceptance of this may seem paradoxical given the FCP’s party form, until it is understood that they are working primarily towards achieving social change, not the acquisition of political power for its own sake. They quite simply are not motivated by dreams of strutting the corridors of legislative power. Like most pro-family activists, they are driven by a sense of moral obligation and mission, what Max Weber referred to as a ‘sense of life task’ (Harrison, 1995). Theirs is a task of reconstruction, one that seeks to return BC and Canada to its Christian heritage with its respect for life and family, in an attempt to stem the allegedly destructive forces of
liberal individualism and modernity. The value placed on community, family and religion in the FCP ideology suggests a pining for the mechanical solidarity that Durkheim described as characteristic of traditional societies (Giddens, 1972), and a desire to see the Canadian conscience collective return to its religious roots. The FCP's is also not a masked agenda. Unlike the New Right in the US which can be accused of using the family as a screen for an austere neoconservative economic program, the FCP's platform is openly pro-family. While the agenda includes a belief in free market economics, it is first and foremost a party based on social not economic reformation. Currently, for instance, the party still has no full economic policy. An element of 'status frustration' does however, seem to play a role in the party's motivation. Since most of its members are social and economic conservatives, it would seem that changes occurring within BC and Canada cannot help but alarm religious conservatives like those of the FCP.6 Recent legislative changes in BC allowing gays to adopt, the forming of a new Ministry for Children and Families, the effects of federal legislation on abortion rights and divorce, as well as the general trend toward secularization in Canadian society, makes the religious conservatives hold on their historically privileged status seem increasingly fragile.

Concerning Methodology

The methodological approach used for this research combined the ethnographic strategy of field observation (although not participant observation) and that of an interview sample survey which involved conducting a series of in-depth interviews. By combining these strategies into this field study of the Family Coalition Party, it was
possible to generate a source of data that provided a rich knowledge base about the party and thus the opportunity for gaining a detailed understanding of the FCP and its associated movement. Data for the dissertation was gathered over an eighteen month period beginning in September 1995 from a variety of primary sources. Archival material, various party and public meetings, as well as formal and informal interviews with party founders, executives, candidates and general members have been used to construct this stock of knowledge on the party. Interviews were also conducted with directors of Pro-life and Pro-family organizations to gain insight into their organizations and their knowledge of the FCP with the aim of providing context and supplemental information to the study. Beyond the secondary source media references which have been collected during this time or obtained through party archives, a literature search uncovered no other historical or analytical work on the Family Coalition Party of British Columbia.

After an initial conversation and meeting with the party's founders, Kathleen and Mark Toth, permission was granted to allow attendance and observation at any FCP meeting or function. There was no opposition from the Toths or the party executive to participating in the study, and in fact, such a prospect seemed to be of considerable interest to the party because, as Mrs. Toth commented, "no one's really interested in us". It is likely that the novelty of being the subject of a research project, coupled with having their party history documented, contributed significantly to the ease of access that was experienced during this study. This access included attendance at three Annual General Meetings, numerous executive meetings as well as meetings called for extraordinary reasons. During the 1996 provincial election, six all-candidate
meetings were attended for four candidates and three all-candidate debates on local
cable stations were reviewed. Geography, meetings scheduled simultaneously in
different ridings, and FCP candidates not being invited to participate in all-candidate
forums, all limited this attendance total. Attendance at FCP meetings was continued
throughout the interview and writing phases of the dissertation.

A total of 74 interviews were conducted between July and November 1996. These included 56 interviews with members of the FCP (the primary sample group), 17 interviews with directors of Pro-family and Pro-life organizations, and an interview with ex-Premier William Vander Zalm. The primary sample group of 56 comprises just over 6% of the total FCP membership. From this primary group, a sub-sample of executives and election candidates was drawn and a set of specialized interviews were conducted with them. These two groups consisted of thirteen 1996 election candidate and ten executive members respectively. The small size of the party requires its members to play multiple roles, so there is an unavoidable overlap of these sub-samples. All executive and candidate interviewees received the “General Membership Interview” as well as the sub-sample interview pertaining to their role on the executive committee and/or as an election candidate. In seven cases this necessitated an interviewee completing the “General Membership Interview,” the “Election Candidate Interview Section” as well as the “Executive Member Interview Section.” Duplicate questions in the interview schedules were noted and duly omitted as they arose during the interview. In some cases, this situation made it impossible to complete the interview in a single session. All affected interviewees graciously agreed to a second interview.
In total, three main sample interview schedules were developed and two sub-sample schedules. As noted, the sub-sample schedules were for FCP executive members and election candidates. These interview sections focused on party development, resources, strategies and election experiences. The main sample schedules were for the general members of the FCP and the directors of provincial Pro-life and Pro-family organizations. A separate interview schedule was developed for Mr. Vander Zalm to focus on his time and unique role with the FCP. Interviews ranged in duration from 90 minutes for the Pro-life and Pro-family directors to two hours for the FCP membership interviews and Mr. Vander Zalm's interview. The interviews were designed to elicit respondents' views and knowledge about the Family Coalition Party, the Pro-life and Pro-family movements in BC, Canada and the US, the issues of concern for these movements, the role and function of social movements and political parties in general and within BC, the relationship between social movements and political parties, the general social and political climate in BC, and the future of Pro-life/family politics in the province. Although separate, all three main interview schedules shared these common themes, and posed similar questions. Their differences were a product of perspective and function. Pro-life and Pro-family directors for instance, were asked specifically about their organization's membership, structure and mandate within the movement. Questions to them about the FCP assumed they would have a more detached, less informed perspective than those posed to FCP members or executives.

The main FCP interview sample was developed with the help of the party's founder, Kathleen Toth; inclusion was based upon three criteria: intimate knowledge of the party and its history, activism on behalf of the party, and membership in the party.
Following this logic, a total of sixty-five letters were sent out requesting interviews. Fifty-six of these letters met with a positive response and nine respondents declined to be interviewed. Within this primary sample of fifty-six, four party founders completed oral history interviews as well as the other pertinent schedules. Of the sixteen members on the 1995-96 board of directors, ten were selected according to their level of activism and tenure within the party. All fourteen election candidates, like all potential respondents, were sent letters requesting interviews. Thirteen agreed, with the fourteenth declining because of illness. The remainder of this sample was selected to geographically correlate with the electoral ridings of these thirteen candidates. Candidates were used in this sense as markers to establish the combined criteria of party activity and provincial distribution of FCP membership for the rest of the sample. An attempt was made to have this part of the sample include recent and long term members, as well as gender and age differences. As a result of this strategy, interviews were conducted throughout the Lower Mainland, the Fraser Valley, Hope, the Nelson-Creston region and Southern, Northern and mid-Vancouver Island. Kelowna and Prince George, the only other areas with significant numbers of FCP members, were not visited because there were no candidates running in the election and there has been no party activity in those regions for the past three years. Mr. Vander Zalm, an FCP member for three years, was interviewed because of the important role he has played in the development of the party and the intimate knowledge he has regarding the relationship between the formation of the FCP and the collapse of the Social Credit Party of British Columbia.
The interview sample of Pro-life and Pro-family directors was developed by identifying the key organizations in these movements within the province. Letters were sent out to eighteen potential respondents, thirteen who were current directors and five who were past directors. Seventeen agreed to interviews and one past-President declined. The organizations identified were Vancouver Right to Life, BC Pro-life, Birthright, North Shore Pro-life, Citizen’s Research Institute, Focus on the Family, Catholic Civil Rights League, Christian Coalition, REAL Women, Campaign Life Coalition, Westcoast Women for Family Life, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, and Respect Life.

The design of all the interview schedules in this study used a combination of open and closed questions similar to that prescribed by other researchers (Lazarfeld, 1944; Foddy, 1993; Gorden, 1980). Although standardized, the schedules were executed in a semi-structured way that gave primary respect to the interview situation and the respondent’s knowledge of the subject under question. This combination of question formulation and execution reflects an appreciation of the interview as a dynamic and interactive process which is influenced by the numerous socio-psychological factors inherent in the interviewer-respondent relationship. If Lazarfeld is correct and “research progress consists in the art of doing things which at first seem incompatible,” then minimizing the friction created by the incompatible pursuit of objective data collection within the respondent’s common sense understanding of the interview and the everyday, necessarily becomes the interviewer’s art (Lazarfeld, 1944:50). Cicourel (1964) and Kuhn (1962) see this as the skill of balancing control and rapport during the interview, what Kuhn considers “necessary, though paradoxical requisites if the social
act is to go as the social worker defines it. The interview will fall apart without control and will be meaningless without rapport” (1962:203). Whether or not this friction was satisfactorily negated through balancing these two elements of the interview relationship is difficult to assess other than to recall that coffee cups were refilled and respondents’ answers were thoughtful and at times spirited. Respondents’ also showed a willingness and sincerity to share with the interviewer a level of detail in their responses that contributed to the rich flavour of the research findings. Quotes from these interviews that appear in the dissertation were selected to capture the political and cultural spirit of the FCP membership in as much ethnographic detail as possible. The selective attribution of names to these quotes was guided by two factors. First, the names that do appear are individual’s who have been, or continue to be, central figures in the FCP’s development as a party/movement. It was felt that the importance of these individual’s to the party necessitated their identification. Second, it was felt that there was no need to attribute names to quotes that were used only to illustrate a general point of argument.

In developing the questions and conducting the interviews, active attempts were made to learn and develop the skills of this art. Questions were structured to be less than twenty words, and their vernacular tried to reflect a balance between interviewer expertise and respondent understanding, so the degree of their complexity was carefully monitored. None of the questions were of a particularly sensitive or personal nature so the effect of question threat was not considered. When questions were asked, wording was adjusted to accommodate the respondent’s comfort level and flow of the interview. Using Kahn and Cannell’s (1957) advice, where possible the vocabulary of the
respondent was adopted to increase the base of common language between the interviewer and respondent. Probes were used frequently during the interview to both elucidate previous answers and pursue related but tangential points of interest. Predominantly, probes came in the form of direct questions rather than techniques like pausing or offering neutral commentary which are recommended by some researchers using the interview format (Kahn and Cannell, 1957; Gorden, 1980).

In setting up the interview situation, Gorden's (1980) advice was heeded and times and places were arranged at the convenience and for the comfort of the respondent in an attempt to reduce ego-threat and increase interviewee response freedom. It was also intended to limit the impact of what Cicourel has termed the artificial circumstances of the interview and thereby sustain at least some ecological validity to the experience (Cicourel, 1982). For the most part, this involved going to interviewee's homes, but interviews were also conducted in coffee shops, parks, school yards, places of employment, shopping malls and in one instance a camper van parked on a small town's main street. At the outset of the interview care was taken to respect the importance of the opening interaction and its role in establishing the social atmosphere in which both control and rapport would be achieved. To reverse Goffman's term, a 'managed impression' was brought by the interviewer to the situation which met the expectations of conduct and expertise brought by the respondent. Establishing personal credibility, the purpose of the research, and the roles within the interview, became easier as the sample was worked through. This was likely a product of two factors. First, many of the respondents knew each other and it became apparent that forthcoming interviewees had spoken to those who had completed their
Second, Mr. and Mrs. Toth are deeply respected by the FCP membership and the Pro-life/Pro-family community and their validation of the research gave the interview process a comforting credibility for the respondents. The interview experiences themselves seemed to increase that credibility because at several meetings individuals inquired about the research in a manner that reflected an interest in being interviewed. Respondent motivation during the interview was generally not an issue. Respondents for the most part gave thoughtful and articulate answers. Care was taken however, to encourage those respondents who felt they had nothing to offer, and where a question clearly became too difficult for them, it was dropped so as not to jeopardize the rapport and atmosphere of the interview, although attempts to rephrase the question later on in the interview were made. Interviewees were also reminded of the unique perspective their answers contributed to the research, and when the interview ended they were thanked for their time and the quality of interview they gave.

Interview responses were coded and analyzed for general trends and relationships. Claims of statistical significance will not be offered given the relatively small sample nor will claims of Truth given the disputatious and contested subject matter. "Most", "few", "majority", "by and large", are the terms best utilized to understand the complexities of this religious conservative party and its political culture. Reifying and reducing the Christian Right movement to uniform points of view precludes (for instance) the equally valid, albeit minority opinion, that supports gay marriages. Over-generalizing can obscure the rich complexity of the party's social nature and diminish the knowledge that can be gained from these interviews and this study.
Focus and Layout

This dissertation is an effort to understand the political, moral, and social ideologies that drive the pro-family movement efforts of the Family Coalition Party. More importantly, it sets out to analyze the FCP's dual character of social movement and political party, and the unique challenges it faces as a party/movement in the political climate of contemporary British Columbia. Studies such as this one, of small political party organizations, are important for a number of reasons. First, despite their size and politically marginal status, the existence of small political parties signals the presence of social and political discontent within democratic societies such as Canada. They make conspicuous the presence of an aggrieved population, one that does not feel their issues are being adequately represented in the polity, and research into these organizations can help create an understanding of how such a population attempts to have its political voice heard. Second, organizations like the Family Coalition Party, with their grassroots origins and emphasis on direct citizen involvement, help inject a life-spirit into the democratic process, so that by studying these minor organizations the inadequacies of democratic systems can be identified for the purposes of remedial action. Third, political organizations like the FCP - that embody the function of a social movement within a political party form - appear to be few in number and to have a finite lifespan. In this regard, opportunities to study party/movements for their organizational character must be seized upon when they are available, and in order to study them in a relatively pristine ideological stage, this must be done while they remain small and politically marginal. Finally, these small party/movements may well represent the 'tip of a political iceberg' in which case they could be the early
manifestation of a much broader base of social discontent within society. In this case, to ignore minor organizations like the FCP may be to miss a signal that foretells the emergence of a wider social movement.

Chapter Two tackles the first of these tasks as the various ideological strands that inform the Pro-family movement in the United States and Canada are unknotted. What emerges is a movement whose belief in the sanctity of the traditional family has deep roots in the conservative tradition of Edmund Burke and a movement best characterized as Christian, conservative and exhibiting issue heterodoxy. Since a range of terms from conservative to New Christian Right are often associated with the Pro-family movement, understanding their historical development and popular use will be helpful in properly understanding the movement’s conservative tradition. Canadian conservatism has also been heavily influenced by the American and British conservative traditions, so an appreciation of the trajectories of these relationships will provide a more solid foundation from which to understand the Canadian Pro-family movement. American and Canadian Pro-family activism in the areas of abortion, euthanasia, reproductive technologies, gay rights, anti-feminism, and the public education system are then examined for the alleged influence of these ‘progressive’ struggles on the weakening of the traditional family. Finally, the Pro-family arguments that the traditional family is natural, universal, and in ‘crisis’ because of the rise of secular humanism are explored.

From this base, Chapter Three details the history of the Family Coalition Party, from the genesis of an idea around a kitchen table in Victoria in 1991, through its two provincial election campaigns and various movement activities, to the crossroads at
which it currently stands. Examining the party’s policies and its members’ beliefs, what becomes apparent is that the FCP is a Pro-family movement highly commensurate with the political, social and economic ideals of the US Pro-family movement and other similar movements in Canada. Organizationally, however, the FCP remains in a stage of infancy relative to the US movement. Scarce financial resources, limited party expertise, and difficulty mobilizing help between and during election years are all restricting this party/movement from working effectively towards its goals.

Chapter Four offers a critical evaluation of the FCP as a social movement. Although not immediately apparent because of its political party form, by separating its form from its function, the Family Coalition Party’s efforts can be recognized as those of a social movement. Specifically, it can be understood as a sub-type of the New Social Movements (NSM), a resurgence movement that is attempting to promote social change while at the same time resisting the changes being brought about by the efforts of NSM’s such as the ecological, gay and feminist movements. The Pro-family movement industry in British Columbia is also described in this chapter, and the activities, roles and mobilization efforts of the various national and provincial organizations are examined. Particular attention is paid here to the relationships that exist between these organizations and the Family Coalition Party as well as the role these organizations see the FCP as playing for the Pro-family movement. Finally, the framing, mobilization, and political opportunity efforts of the Family Coalition Party are evaluated for their strengths and weaknesses.

Chapter Five is concerned with the FCP as an institutionalized political party in British Columbia. Regardless of its functional activities as a social movement, the party
form of the FCP imposes upon its executives all the constraints and challenges faced by other minor political parties in Canada. This chapter first explores the nature of representative politics in Canada and the chronic crisis of representation that besets typically large, mainstream political parties in the country. This failure of cadre parties to satisfactorily represent the issues of Canadian citizens has given rise to the long history of minor political party activism in Canada, from the federal Progressives of the 1920s, through to provincial parties such as the Greens and the Family Coalition Party in British Columbia. The various types of minor parties are then examined with particular attention being paid to the problems they face operating under a Westminster parliamentary system. The Family Coalition Party is confronted with these problems because, like other minor parties, they have a small and scattered constituency, a lack of political expertise, a narrow issue focus, and must wage election campaigns under a majoritarian, first past-the-post election system that favours large parties or those with strongholds of regional support.

After these independent analyses of the FCP as a social movement and a political party, the sixth chapter explores the organization as a party/movement in the tradition of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in Canada and the Green Parties in Canada and Germany. Fusing party form with movement function presents the FCP with a series of tensions that they must resolve if they are to become politically sustainable. A set of unique problems that must be deftly managed are discussed, among them the fight to resist the forces of political institutionalization and the manner in which the FCP's act of political fusion compounds and exacerbates difficulties faced by all small movement organizations and political parties.
In the concluding chapter, an assessment of the Family Coalition Party’s potential in the current sociopolitical and economic climate of British Columbia is offered, relative to the experiences of other party/movements. Some directions for future research are also suggested that could further clarify our understanding of the unique nature party/movements. To begin however, it is first necessary to untangle the various ideological and political beliefs that are commonly associated with the pro-family movement, so that the sociohistorical foundations of the Family Coalition Party can be properly understood.
Chapter 2
Making Sense of the Pro-Family Movement:
Political Roots, Religious Ideals and Moral Issues

The politics of British Columbia’s Family Coalition Party is a historical amalgam resulting from the confluence of various political, nationalistic and ideological trajectories whose point of intersection has emerged under the banner of the pro-family movement. Most readily identified with the activism of the Christian Coalition in the United States, the pro-family movement has nonetheless been manifest in Canada for some years. The roots of the Canadian pro-family are embedded in a political tradition of American and British conservative thought traceable back to the work of Edmund Burke. As can happen though, lineages of political and social ideologies which comprise the foundations of a movement often become tangled and at times lost with the passage of time as social and economic forces transform old political articulations into new ones. For instance, currently in liberal democracies such as Canada, the United States and Britain, the conservative tradition which informs the pro-family movement is typically referred to as a neoconservative or New Right ideology. Accurate or not, to describe the Family Coalition Party as an example of this pro-family political genre does little to capture the depth of its political foundations or the breadth of the sociocultural milieu from which it draws strength.

The purpose of this chapter is to untangle the sociopolitical legacy of the pro-family movement so that the FCP’s Canadian variant can be properly understood as a mix of British and American conservative influence, traditional conservative concern for the family, Christian morality, and neoconservative economics. First, the historical
roots of the Canadian conservative tradition of which the FCP is a part will be examined. Beginning with the work of Edmund Burke, the first part of the chapter traces the development of American and British conservative thought to the emergence of neoconservatism in the United States. The differences between neoconservatism and New Right populism are then examined as are the various experiments with neoconservative politics in Canada. It is on the shoulders of this political strain of conservatism (in particular New Right populism) that American pro-family forces built their movement, the rise and mobilization of which is examined in the second part of the chapter. Here, the pro-family political activism of the New Christian Right in America and the Canadian Christian Right are explored in relation to their positions on abortion, euthanasia, reproductive technologies, gay rights, feminism, and the public education system. The last part of the chapter examines critically the central claim of the movement - that modern families are in an economic and moral 'crisis'. By laying this groundwork on which subsequent chapters can be built, the full sociohistorical and political context of the Family Coalition Party of British Columbia can be appreciated. In this postmodern era of identity politics and New Social Movement's, the FCP is a party/movement that is carrying on a lengthy conservative tradition that regards protecting and promoting the sanctity of the traditional family as vital to achieving a healthy, stable society.
The "Stupid Party": Old and New

Whatever reasons prompted John Stuart Mill to regard the British Conservative Party as stupid (Kirk, 1982), the charge of inflexibility could surely not have been among them. As a committed Liberal living today, even Mill would have to recognize conservative parties in liberal democratic societies for their ability to adapt and survive. The current wave of conservatism in Western democracies is manifest under the banner of neoconservatism (with and without hyphenation) or modern conservatism or contemporary conservatism or the New Right or the New Christian Right or simply conservatism. This multitude of descriptors presents a difficulty in analyzing conservative politics because both popular and scholarly usage drift among these terms with some degree of acceptability. The immediate task at hand then is one of historical tracing and clarification because the interchangeability of these terms masks some important albeit at times subtle distinctions between these conservative referents. Finding a starting point is a simple matter.

Consensus as to the origins of modern conservative thought is so close to unanimous that the writings of Edmund Burke as its point of genesis is considered virtually axiomatic. With the publication in 1790 of Burke's Reflections on the Recent Revolution in France, the foundations were in large part laid for all subsequent conservative thought in the Western world. The source of Burke's opposition to the French Revolution in this work lies in his convictions regarding the importance of social stability and continuity. Massive social upheaval and disruption unhinged society from its history and tradition, which for Burke could only lead to its collapse. While he
recognized the inevitability of alterations in the social and political fabric of society, Burke endorsed the slow gentle processes of reform over the radical, nature altering idea of change:

"change ... alters the substance of the objects themselves, and gets rid of all their essential good as well as the accidental evil annexed to them. Change is novelty ... Reform is not a change in the substance or primary modification of the objects, but a direct application of a remedy to the grievance complained of." (Burke, quoted in Honderich, 1990: 5).

This opposition to change stemmed from Burke's rather Hobbesian view of human nature and his accompanying lack of faith in human reason to improve social and political institutions which were the laboured products of past generations. Family, church, monarchy, social hierarchy, private property and representative rather than popular government were for Burke the institutions critical to the emergence of a citizenry's goodness and morality. Political rule founded on such institutions and authorities of tradition offered no place for equality of persons in Burke's mind, for there is a natural deference to those with social standing and breeding. The propertied aristocrats, Burke assumed, were the people vested with the wisdom and knowledge to govern and represent a society's citizens. This political representation was properly broad-minded though, aimed at the general social good rather than the narrow interests of one's own constituency.

Burke's is foremost a political philosophy of collective tradition which stresses institutional control and order over the individual: families, not individuals are the basic units of society; Nationalism presides over constituent interests; Continuity and social order are favoured over novel political experience and rampant individualism. That this philosophical orientation generates a natural tension between the individual
and society is easily observed. The eminent American conservative scholar Russell Kirk claimed the importance of Burke’s work lay in just such an understanding, one that “understood a tension must be maintained between claims of freedom and claims of order” (Kirk, 1982:1). This tension is a natural essence of conservatism which characterizes its often contradictory complexities. Kendall and Carey (1964) develop their concept of Burke’s conservatism through an analysis of the variables which deny conservatism a homogeneous definition and offer a synopsis of six major issues affected by this tension. It is worth listing these issues because they, perhaps more than any other matters, best demonstrate the character of conservatism: First, within politics exists the principle of consent and the principle of morality with the tension between popular agreement and objective standards of value. Second is the tension created between the principle of equality and that of hierarchy in which the former distributes political power equally while the latter “assigns a greater share ... to those who are most capable of providing wise and good government”. Third, there is the principle of the “rights of man” versus the principle of convention, or universal right of access versus socially and historically determined access to society’s goods and opportunities. Fourth is the tension developed between the democracy of the living and the democracy of the dead a situation of conservation of a country’s laws and institutions versus their reconfiguring for the current generation. Fifth, the principle of redistribution opposes the principle of property or inheritance because as Burke remarked, “the characteristic essence of property ... is to be unequal”. Finally, there is the issue of atheism or relativism and true religion, which demands that any person with political power recognize the accountability of their actions to a single God. Representation of the masses, equality and opportunity,
tradition, reform, the sanctity of private property, and faith in the divine are the core issues around which modern conservatism was born and despite varying degrees of historical and cultural metamorphosis, continues.¹

Two centuries later, the core remains solid. One of Britain’s leading conservative scholars, Roger Scruton, remarks in *The Meaning of Conservatism* that

"Society exists through authority, and the recognition of this authority requires the allegiance to a bond that is not contractual but transcendent, in the manner of the family tie. Such allegiance requires tradition and custom through which to find enactment. But tradition is no static thing. It is the active achievement of continuity; it can be restored, rescued and amended as grace and opportunity allow" (Scruton, 1989: 45).

Regarding property and also the individual’s relationship to society’s institutions, he says:

"In politics, the conservative attitude seeks above all for government, and regards no citizen as possessed of a natural right that transcends his obligation to be ruled ... [and] ... any political view which regards the state as protector of society must also demand the continuance of property. Moreover, a view which recognizes a title in custom and usage will find nothing wrong with the inheritance and accumulation of wealth" (Scruton, 1989: 16).

Noel O’Sullivan suggests that this, ultimately, is the politics of freedom, of compassion - a recipe for social and political order capable of maximizing individual liberty and potential. It is also a politics necessitated by the harsh, demanding nature of unbridled freedom, one that is willingly adopted by people for protection - one best described by Dostoevsky’s parable of the Grand Inquisitor (O’Sullivan, 1989: 169).

Having made safe passage into the modern democratic age, Burke’s traditional conservative philosophy has nonetheless undergone reformation of its outer shell. Conservative traditions exist throughout western Europe as well as North America, each exhibiting their own cultural and historical peculiarities as they forge ahead through history and the process of reform. The modern conservative age of Britain and
that of the United States, both which emerged after 1945 (Willetts, 1992; Girvin, 1988),
do however, share some striking familiarities. Although it is American, Robert Nisbet's
portrayal of conservatism can serve to characterize the ideal in both countries:

"Belief in strong but unobtrusive government; an implicit decentralization of
administration that directly followed a historically developed autonomy of all the major
institutions - family, local community, church, school, business enterprise, and so on; an
instinctive preference for the same institutions as the principal shelters of individuals in
time of crisis or need - these rather than offices of the central government; a strong
conviction in the superiority of common sense and experience in governmental matters
over the kind of rationalist intelligence favored by professors and bureaucrats; and
finally, almost uppermost, a skepticism of all social reform and a positive hatred of
redistributionist schemes involving taxation, tariff, or currency manipulation, or, for
that matter, anything in the way of mandated equality" (Nisbet, 1981: 129).

Despite this corollary, it is nonetheless important to acknowledge the different
ideological meanings and usages that the terms conservative and liberal have in Britain
and the US. Their differing lineages arise from the discrepant social and economic
developmental histories of the two countries. Lipset (1988) points out that the United
States did not develop as a postfeudal society and as a result, has politically developed
an antistatist, populist and meritocratic ideology that more closely resembles European
liberalism than conservatism:

"Liberalism in its original meaning involves an antistatist philosophy, opposition to
mercantilism and the alliance of throne and altar, support for economic and political
freedoms, laissez-faire and civil liberties ... equality of opportunity and respect,
regardless of status ... Tories have stood for a strong state, an established church,
mercantilism, communitarianism, and noblesse oblige - the values of a hierarchical
manorial society" (Lipset, 1988:29)

Lipset argues that it is the strong antistatist sentiment in the US which has
prevented the emergence of any serious form of socialism. This stands in opposition to
Canada and Britain both of which have traditionally maintained for the state a more
prominent and valued role, and which have strong socialist political traditions. The
closest the US has come to a socialist platform was with Roosevelt’s New Deal, which for a time limited and partly defined the American conservative agenda. Through the 1950s and a good part of the 1960s both Britain and the US were committed to an agenda of full employment, Keynesian welfare policies, and an interventionist state. This political climate forced conservatives in both countries to accept a definition of themselves constructed largely by their opponents (Girvin, 1988).

Conservatives during this period found themselves searching unsuccessfully for solid issues upon which they could reconfigure their agendas to fit the changing political and economic culture. The Republican Eisenhower administration of 1952 and 1956 found itself committed to the reduction of public debt and inflation, but unable to implement policies towards these goals because of the increasing support for liberalism among the electorate (Girvin, 1988). In Britain meanwhile, consensus politics dominated the postwar landscape, with both the Labour and Conservative parties committed to a “mixed economy and welfare state” (Peele, 1988: 15). The 1951 Conservative government was locked into a collectivist agenda left by the previous Atlee administration in the form of the National Health Service, nationalized industries, and full employment policies (Peele, 1988).

Cracks in the social-democratic hegemon however, began to appear in the mid 1960s, the beginning of a protracted economic and political crisis for the Left which has now lasted close to thirty years. Over the next fifteen years, growing government bureaucracies and intervention, inflation, national deficits, crime, unemployment, abortion, divorce rates, single parenthood and a host of other social problems generated a deep concern among people and provided conservative parties the opportunity they
had been awaiting for over the past decade. In the US, conservatives were unwittingly abetted by domestic student protests over the Vietnam war, the gains made by a number of social movements, including gays, feminists, environmentalists (all popularized as radical leftists), concern over communism, and the Democratic party’s embrace of the counter-culture politics of the New Left (Girvin, 1988). A longing for a return to the “good old days” began to emerge as conservative minded people grew dubious about the impact liberal values were having on their society and neighbourhoods. Conservative politics became attractive both economically and socially because its

“greatest strength is its possession by historic right of such values as localism, decentralization, family, neighbourhood, mutual aid, and belief in growth of business on the one hand and of religion on the other” (Nisbet, 1981:140).

Across the Atlantic, concern was developing over Britain's increasingly fragile impression of itself as a political and economic world leader. Problems similar to those in the United States had befallen the Empire and blame was quickly attached to the power and privilege the trade unions enjoyed, Keynesianism and the “ratchet effect”. Sir Keith Joseph, founder of the Centre for Policy Studies, identified this “ratchet effect” by suggesting that “Labour governments advanced socialism each time they had the opportunity of office but Conservatives never really reversed Labour initiatives” (Peele, 1988: 17). In a search for solutions to this crisis, attention was drawn to the intellectual revival of the Right in America and the strategies being proffered as solutions to what were perceived as similar problems. What subsequently developed was a relationship that would closely link the political ideologies of Britain and the United States as they ushered in a new dawn of conservative thought, neoconservatism.
Mugged by Reality: Neoconservatism and the New Right

There are conservatives such as Roger Scruton and Michael Oakeshott who describe conservatism as a state of being or essence rather than concrete political doctrine. Scruton sees as many potential forms of conservatism as there are social orders (Scruton, 1984). Oakeshott describes conservative conduct as a disposition, one that centres upon

"a propensity to use and enjoy what is available rather than to wish for or to look for something else; to delight in what is present rather than what was or what may be ... there is no mere idolizing of what is past and gone. What is esteemed is the present; and it is esteemed not on account of its connections with a remote antiquity ... but on account of its familiarity" (Oakeshott, 1997: 87).

The dramatic emergence of neoconservative thought and New Right populism since the late 1970s though, suggests an attitude far more invasive than Oakeshott’s benign description. Neoconservative intellectuals and New Right activists are interested in change, in dramatic alteration to the economic, state and civil makeup of liberal democracies through deliberate and substantive policy initiatives. As Ted Honderich correctly argues in his critique of conservatism, Margaret Thatcher’s Conservative party in 1979 was vigorously pursuing a “politics of alteration”, far more than the British Labour party (Honderich, 1990). First and foremost this “politics of alteration” was an exercise in economic pragmatics. To restore Britain to its former glory demanded a drastic shift away from forms of Keynesianism and towards a new accumulation strategy based on classic liberal free market principles, in particular those of F. A. Hayek and of the Chicago School’s Milton Friedman; Burke’s ghost lingered, he
had been a follower of Adam Smith’s belief in the liberating potential of the market (Willetts, 1992). The British experience with neoconservativism was directly connected with the work of a group Michael Harrington dubbed the “neoconservatives”. This group of notable social scientists and intellectuals, including the likes of Robert Nisbet, Seymour Martin Lipset, Patrick Moynihan, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Irving Kristol, Daniel Bell, Nathan Glazer and James Q. Wilson, had defected from their social democratic roots in a move that was to have profound implications for the politics of the Right.

The neoconservatives gave the American Right what it had always lacked, intellectual credibility. As Seymour Martin Lipset describes it (1988), the neoconservative’s split from the American Socialist party was due to the New Left’s increasing radical posturing over major social issues such as the Vietnam War. The neoconservatives, staunchly anti-Communist, ultimately found kindred spirits for their foreign policy with Republicans and traditional conservatives. By most accounts, they continued to support Keynesian welfare policies and were on the liberal side of social issues (Lipset, 1988; Gottfried & Fleming, 1988). The ‘Godfather’ of neoconservatism, Irving Kristol claimed that

“neo-conservatism is not at all hostile to the idea of a welfare state, but it is critical of the Great Society version of this welfare state ... it is opposed to the paternalistic state” (Kristol, quoted in Etzioni, 1977: 436).

The neoconservatives were in a sense crusaders for policy, far more interested in being practitioners than academic ideologues (Dorrien, 1993; Diamond, 1995). The optimism and urgency they brought to their efforts was the result of the confluence of a number of issues confronting American society. Secularization, inter-generational shifts in ideological beliefs, the student revolts of the sixties, the New Left critique of America
as a fascist state, the failure of the Great Society, and broadly speaking, modernization all proved sources of motivation for neoconservatives. As Habermas points out, the neoconservatives were concerned more with the culturally determined, rather than economic, aetiologies to the problems of legitimation faced by the American political system (Habermas, 1989:25). The solution they promoted were however largely economic and based on a profound shift towards the principles of the free market.

In an attempt to capture the disposition of neoconservatism, Dorrien has described it as

“an intellectual movement originated by former leftists that promotes militant anticommunism, capitalist economics, a minimal welfare state, the rule of traditional elites, and a return to traditional cultural values” (Dorrien, 1993: 8).

It is a definition which arguably more properly suits the label neo-liberal, one which the neoconservatives themselves prefer (Ashford,1981). Embedded in the notion of “traditional cultural values” is the importance neoconservatives place on such mediating structures as family, neighbourhood, church, voluntary association and a concern over their erosion at the hands of liberal social policy makers. It is these structures which, it is argued, properly anchor the individual in society, provide the innovative flexibility to respond to changing social dynamics in a way not possible via institutional bureaucracies, and offer workable starting points for public policy (Ashford, 1981: 365). The social and economic salvation of America depended as much on the restoration of these structures to their past prominence as it did on the revitalization of a laissez-faire economy.

What neoconservatism lacked in this pursuit was broad based mass appeal; it had never developed as a mass phenomenon (Lipset, 1988; Gottfried & Fleming, 1988;
Habermas, 1989). It did however, share common stock with the emergent New Right populism. From the late 1970s onward, neoconservatism gradually became equated with the New Right, a perhaps inevitable trajectory given their similar ideological dispositions (Diamond, 1995; Dorrien, 1993). Lipset claims that neoconservatism has ceased to exist, a defensible truth if it is viewed as a historical fact, but like all political ideologies, neoconservatism is in perpetual flux and has underdone a degree of transformation. Neoconservative thought has left its past and is moving on.

There is of course, no clear point in time indicating where the influence of the original neoconservatives began to wane and the popular activism of the new Right began to surge. The "isms" of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan have been identified as the high water marks for neoconservative influence (Girvin, 1988) while simultaneously being equated with projects of the New Right (Honderich, 1990); Both appear to be defensible positions given the prominence of the neoconservatives influence with both administration and the origins of the New Right traceable back to the mid 1970s. In attempting to construct a profile of the New Right, scholars have created the image of a conservative political gumbo, with heterodoxy as a defining feature. Diamond sees the New Right as a fusion of "moral traditionalism, economic libertarianism and militaristic anticommunism" (Diamond, 1995: 179). Gottfried and Fleming claim analysts view it as a "collection of general-purpose political organizations" like the Moral Majority, the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress, the Heritage Foundation and the National Conservative Political Action Committee (Gottfried & Fleming, 1988: 77). Eatwell (1989) has identified four strains of New Right politics: libertarian, laissez-faire, traditionalist and mythical.
Emerging in the mid 1970s the New Right, led by Catholic activists such as Paul Weyrich and Connaught Marshner and backed financially by corporate magnates such as Joseph Coors, differed from the neoconservatives in that they "learned how to emphasize themes that are more populist than conservative: the fear and resentment of the Eastern "establishment," defense of family and conventional morals, popular control over schools and churches. They also display a greater willingness to use single-issue campaigns such as the Panama Canal treaty or abortion, as the basis of external fund-raising" (Gottfried & Fleming, 1988: 78).

This latest manifestation of conservative politics, while maintaining the core ideals of the Burkean tradition, has become more interested in change than reform. These conservatives are no longer being defined by their opponents, or setting a reactive agenda. They are deliberately activist, strategic and populist in an approach that defends individualism, the market, and meritocracy, and attempts to tap into the mass support of what Girvin terms "lower status opinion" (1988: 10,177). Their opposition to the New Social Movements (NSM), including feminism, gay rights, environmentalism, as well as pro-choice and reproductive technology advocates entails a natural alliance with traditionalist movements that fall under such banners as pro-family and pro-life. Arguably though, the largest source of support and motivation has come from the well-spring of Christian activism that has been spilling into the political realm for the last decade, although this is more evident in the American context than it is in the British one (Gottfried & Fleming, 1988; Levitas, 1986).

While its popular appeal is the New Right's greatest asset to political viability, it also renders it vulnerable to extremism. Alan Crawford, in his at times caustic critique of the New Right, describes it as an
"institutionalized, disciplined, well organized, and well financed movement of loosely
knit affiliates. Collecting millions of dollars in small contributions from blue-collar
workers and house-wives, the New Right feeds on discontent, anger, insecurity, and
resentment, and flourishes on backlash politics" (Crawford, 1980: 5).

This imagery is one that more traditional conservatives fear and want to avoid because
of the attraction it may hold for radical fringe groups, and the subsequent loss of
rational legitimacy it presents. Levitas (1986) is careful to note that the British New
Right deliberately attempts to distance itself from Britain’s radical National Front
organization. Indeed, it would be an error to characterize the growth of
neoconservative and New Right activism as emerging from a radicalist core.9

While the neoconservatives and the New Right may find their historical roots in
the US, Canada, like Britain, has been carried along on this wave of neoconservative
thought. Various analysts over the last decade have identified a strain of
neoconservatism at federal and provincial levels shaped by Canada’s unique historical,
political and social structures (Hatt, et al., 1990; Havemann, 1986; Ratner & McMullan,
1985). Like other western liberal democracies, Canada has been increasingly feeling the
pressure of a globalizing capitalist system with its attendant requisites of a minimalist
state, unfettered markets, and access to cheap mass labour.

In response, federal and provincial governments have adopted, to varying
degrees of success, neoconservative agendas. Since the late 1970s, Canada has been
traveling down an uneven path to what has been described as its “New Establishment
Ideology” with its “New Economic Reality” and strategy of “managing consent”
(Marchak, 1985; Havemann, 1986; Hatt et al, 1990).10 Examining the impact of this
journey on unemployment, McBride (1992) has identified a marked shift from
Keynesianism to monetarism in matters of monetary policy, labour-market policy, unemployment insurance, and industrial relations. The result has been a weakened infrastructure of hegemonic legitimation activities as the state has focused more intently upon improving mechanisms of capital accumulation (McBride, 1992). To address the risks this presents for a consensus based Canadian hegemony, the state has sought to "manage consent," a strategy Hatt et al describe as

"governing a country of diverse national and regional interests primarily through the transformation of controversy into technico-bureaucratic problems and the manipulation of complex federal/provincial relations" (Hatt et al, 1990:31).

This last point equates to reducing the size of the federal government bureaucracy through a program of downloading previous federal responsibilities to the provinces via, among other things, constitutional change. Among its prescriptions, the Meech Lake accord called for a significant decentralization of federal power to the provinces, and while the accord itself failed, this aspect of it has not (McBride, 1992:218). This is an important component of the neoconservative agenda because of the constitutional principle of the supremacy of Parliament in Canada, which effectively limits the federal state from moving dramatically left or right in response to domestic or foreign economic crises (McBride, 1992; Hatt et al, 1990). By offsetting responsibilities to the provinces, the latitude required for a neoconservative response to such crises is not only secured, but the agenda itself becomes hidden behind the complexities of federal/provincial relations. As Ratner and McMullan (1985) point out, the neoconservative agenda has a strong localized quality that allows it to operate behind the inevitable regional conflicts and peculiarities that arise from Canadian federal/provincial policy relationships.
The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Canada signed with the US and Mexico stands as arguably the best national example of the new Establishment ideology and as potentially the most significant neoconservative threat to Canadian social democratic hegemony. Wolfe (1989) argues that while Canada has escaped the worst excesses of Thatcherism and Reaganism, the role of the state in the management of the economy is being replaced by a belief in the primacy of the market, a strategic shift manifested in the details of the FTA. Wolfe’s concern is that the agreement presents a backdoor opportunity for the dismantling of Canada’s social safety net through claims of “unfair subsidies” (Wolfe, 1989:120). It presents in other words, another opportunity to achieve indirectly what the capitalist class has been unable to achieve, thus far, directly, and suggests once more the markings of the clandestine, surreptitious nature of Canadian neoconservatism. John Warnock observes fittingly that in the FTA “There was always a hidden agenda - the New Right program of solving the persistent economic crisis ... the reality is that support for free trade comes almost exclusively from big business and its ideological supporters” (Warnock, 1988:22).

Preston Manning’s federal Reform Party best represents an institutionalized federal example of the new Establishment ideology. Its grassroots, common sense approach to government includes recognizing that Canada must be willing to take its place in the new global economic order which is “dominated by the three huge trading blocs - the European community, the Asia-Pacific economic community, and the north American free trade area” (Manning, 1992:336). Manning, in The New Canada, also calls for a downsizing of the federal bureaucracy, elimination of grants to special interest groups, “fiscal responsibility through constitutional reform,” distribution of social goods and services through the provinces, and efforts to “develop transition programs
to move public-sector workers to more productive employment in the non-governmental sector” (1992:342, 344).

Provincially, the Conservative government of Mike Harris in Ontario has been vigorously pursuing a neoconservative agenda since its election in 1995. The “Common Sense Revolution” which is underway in the province is one of deep budget cuts to the civil service, layoffs, privatization, workfare, and downloading of provincial responsibilities to municipal governments. This intention to off-load previous provincial services such as welfare, housing, child care and policing costs is the logical extension of neoconservative state decentralization which began at the level of federal government. It is, in the words of political scientist Andrew Sancton, a functional downloading in which “government simply quits its responsibility for a service and leaves it to other governments”. The similarity with the federal Reform party is so striking that Preston Manning has come out in open support of Mike Harris’s agenda.

Ontario though, is only the most recent province to experience an attempt by neoconservatives to establish a political and economic beach-head at the provincial level. Ralph Klein’s Conservative government in Alberta undertook equally drastic measures in the early nineties to control the province’s downward spiralling economy, and was applauded by his rural constituents for his “common sense.” Manitoba’s conservative government appears to be following a similar path as it privatizes its telephone company, implements legislation to limit the powers of unions and takes what Premier Filmon has called a “sharp turn to the right.” This is reminiscent of Stirling Lyon’s neoconservative agenda implemented in 1981 to deal with Manitoba’s chronic struggle to gain a system of stable economic development and roll back, like all
neoconservative projects, the size of the welfare state (Chorney & Hansen, 1985). Yet as Chorney and Hansen point out, the project that undertook a program of massive fiscal restraint on a faith in free market ideology did not have the economic and social benefits that were predicted.

The Saskatchewan Conservatives under Grant Devine experienced a similar disappointment with their forays into neoconservative ideology in 1982. Pitsula and Rasmussen (1990) document Devine’s failed attempt at revitalizing the province’s economy with his devout belief in the power of the market. They write that “His views parallel those of the entire New Right coalition, whether it be the Chamber of Commerce, REAL Women, the Institute for Saskatchewan Enterprise, or Campaign Life ... Step-by-step the neo-conservative program unfolded: the promotion of Christian right moral values, the experiments with supply-side economics, the touting of free enterprise, the reining in of the Crown corporations, the attacks on the civil service, social programs and trade unions, and the massive push towards privatization” (Pitsula & Rasmussen, 1990:21).

Despite Devine’s convictions though, by 1986 the provincial debt had grown to over $5 billion, ownership and control of large parts of the province’s economy had moved to central Canada, and the need for social assistance among Saskatchewan’s unemployed and underclass had grown (ibid., p. 283,285).

It is the case of British Columbia however, which has been regarded and analyzed as arguably the most pure and austere example of neoconservatism in Canada (Havemann, 1986; Hatt et al, 1990; Carroll & Ratner, 1989; Shields, 1986; Marchak, 1986; Butcher, 1985). Bill Bennett’s Social Credit Government introduced twenty six pieces of legislation in the summer and autumn of 1983 that among other things gutted the rights of unionized public-sector employees, reworked the human rights code to narrow the definition of discrimination, eliminated rent controls, eliminated the human rights
commission, stripped local school boards of budget authority by centralizing it in the Ministry of Education and provided the opportunity for doctors to opt out of Medicare (Palmer, 1987:22). As Carroll and Ratner point out, in response to BC’s fiscal crisis, the Socreds had

"opted for a cyclical crisis-management strategy, prioritizing the “balanced budget” over demand management and necessitating coercive interventions vis-à-vis its unionized employees" (1989:36).

It was not however, an entirely reactive strategy. As Howlett and Brownsey indicate, the 1983 budget was a culmination of a continued “economic and administrative program pursued by the Social credit government since it had regained power in late 1975” (1988:142). Coincidentally, the Fraser Institute, now the country’s leading neoconservative think tank, had been formed a year earlier with sponsorship that included the province’s forestry and mining sectors (Carroll & Ratner, 1989). It was this institute which lent the Socred legislation of 1983 its neoconservative purity. As the principal architects of the 1983 budget, the Fraser Institute had managed to achieve what American neoconservatives had with the Reagan administration: direct policy influence over a government. In its annual report, the Fraser Institute commented on the 1984 provincial budget:

"... the BC government’s experiment with Fraser Institute type economic policies ... the four objective of the B.C. government’s budget: (1) fiscal restraint, (2) downsizing of government (3) deregulation, and (4) the beginning of a change in the philosophical orientation of government policy” (Fraser Institute, 1984, quoted in Havemann, 1986:19).

Havemann goes on to note that

“The Fraser Institute’s advocacy of self-reliance, church-based charity, voluntarism, and privatization was strikingly paralleled by government policy. The Fraser Institute
argued that the welfare state has displaced the family and the churches which should be central in meeting the needs of the poor” (1986:20).

Yet despite these measures, the British Columbia economy, like that of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, continued to worsen, rather than improve. Unemployment increased, as did demands for social assistance, and the provincial debt escalated (Shields, 1986).

To date, the sum of Canada’s experience with neoconservatism continues to be dramatic attempts by provincial, and to a lesser extent, federal governments, to implement draconian economic initiatives to remedy a protracted economic crisis. Yet such attempts have ultimately failed to forge a new hegemonic project for the provinces or the country (Carroll & Ratner, 1989; McBride & Shields, 1993; Pitsula & Rasmussen, 1990). As McBride and Shields put it

“It would seem that Canadian political culture is still inclined towards collective social provision and tolerates reasonable levels of governmental intervention in the economy to moderate the effect of market forces. The current Canadian government may have become “true believers” in neo-conservative political economy, but in this respect their position is incongruent with the broader political culture.” (McBride & Shields, 1993:115).

The altruism and compassion rooted in Canadian political culture stubbornly refuses to give way to the ascetic neoconservative social philosophy of self-reliance. This was reflected in the Canadian Conference of Canadian Bishop’s 1982 condemnation of neoconservative economics and social policy as generating a “moral disorder” in the abandoning of the poor, the unemployed and the disenfranchised” (Havemann, 1986:26-7). This is a position which exposes an apparent socio-political conundrum - that is, how to promote economic and individual self-reliance while maintaining a Christian “duty of charity” to the underprivileged and socially powerless - resulting
from the allegiance which has developed since the mid 1970s between neoconservative ideologues, New Right populists, and politically reinvigorated Christians.

**Culture Wars: The American Christian Right**

What emerged in Britain, Canada and the United States as neoconservative and New Right thought was a somewhat secular phenomenon with a focused concern on the economic. Little direct attention was paid to sociomoral issues; the feeling was that a properly nurtured free market would take care of whatever social ills had befallen these countries and that their aetiologies could be traced back to an over-interfering state. Following thinking from the Fraser Institute “The market tests of profit and loss ... tend to eliminate from the private sector those who indulge in discriminatory practices” (quoted in Marchak, 1985:8). It was also politically expedient to lean on the hidden pillar of social Darwinism. The Thatcher, Mulroney and Reagan administrations well understood the populist nature of modern electoral politics and the potential minefield that could result for a conservative government tackling such trigger issues as women’s equality, abortion, and gay rights. This left those who considered themselves primarily social or religious conservatives feeling alienated from the mainstream political process. Marginalized, Christians began to mobilize behind the organizers of the New Christian Right (NCR).

While the Christian Right is active in all three countries, it is in the United States that its most mature and successful form can be found. The NCR has appeared on the political landscape of America within the larger movement of the New Right (Liebman & Wuthnow, 1983), developing over the last fifteen years into a well-disciplined,
organized and financed political force. Analysts were surprised by the movement's rapid ascendancy and influence in the 1976 Presidential campaign, but this mobilization was only a relatively recent instance in a history of activism that spans over two hundred years (Liebman & Wuthnow, 1983; Lienesch, 1993). Lienesch (1993) has identified in the twentieth century a pattern which finds Christian activism emerging and then tailing into a prolonged periods of quietude: The 1920s, 1950s and 1980s are all decades which exhibited intense activism over predominantly single-issue concerns such as alcohol, the teaching of evolution in public schools, prayer in public schools, and the erosion of the traditional family.

The New Christian Right is broadly understood as an Evangelical Christian movement, a loosely bound and very diverse collective of religious conservatives that have united around specific socio-moral problems. Unlike the sometimes commonly held belief that Christian activists are fervent Southern Baptists or geographically isolated pockets of staunch Evangelical Protestants, the NCR is a broad based national phenomenon. Within its fold are numerous religious groups opposing any number of issues that threaten traditional lifestyles (Liebman, 1983). Commenting on Gallup's survey findings, Lienesch writes that the "millions of religious conservatives were a diverse and divided group," a product of innumerable interpretations of biblical scripture and political preferences (Lienesch, 1993:2). Such theological differences, coupled with the cultural growth of secular and liberal attitudes and the quasi-formal belief in separation of church and state have all contributed to a general disaffection among Christians for the formal political process. The last point is particularly contentious for those of the NCR because of the original intention of such a separation,
to limit state interference in religious practice rather than vice versa, as well as the long heritage that religion has in influencing American politics. As Alex de Tocqueville remarked about American political culture, “religion should ... be considered as the first of their political institutions” (Tocqueville, quoted in Hammond, 1983:208), and Lord Hailsham wrote concerning the basis of all conservative thought

“There can be no genuine conservatism which is not founded upon a religious view of the basis of civil obligation, and there can be no true religion where the basis of civil obligation is treated as purely secular” (Hailsham, quoted in Scruton, 1984:170).

For supporters of the NCR then, political activity independent of a belief in God becomes not only a philosophical and practical impossibility but counter to American political tradition. The church is necessarily a political institution which carries with it the legitimating power of historical precedent, heredity, privilege and popular trust (Scruton, 1984). Separating the church from its political functions disempowers and marginalizes those Lienesch has described as “traditional people struggling to maintain rural religious values in an increasingly urban and secular society” (Lienesch, 1993:10).

A peculiar feature of this heritage is the simultaneous stress it places on commitment to the pursuit of individual interests as well as the elevation of concern for the collective good.17 This is the source of a cultural tension which generates a social conundrum for the NCR and the American right in general, which Platt and Williams see resolved in a combination of

“Self-interested individualism with a dogmatic conception of doing good works by providing for, if hesitantly, begrudgingly, and patronizingly, the less fortunate of the community” (Platt & Williams, 1988:41).

It is arguably this characteristic of the American conservative religious tradition which has proved to be its ideological Achilles heel, presenting for the movement chronic
problems of legitimacy and opportunities of caricatures like that presented by comedian George Carlin in his description of the conservative right and their opposition to abortion:

“They’re all in favor of the unborn ... but once you’re born, you’re on your own. pro-life conservatives are obsessed with the fetus from conception ‘til nine months. After that, they don’t want to hear from you. No neo-natal care, no daycare, no Head Start, no school lunch, no food stamps, no welfare, no nothing” (George Carlin, 1994).

Such negative popular imagery, attributable to a preoccupation with economic crises at the expense of attention to the problems of social decay have led, at different periods of American history, to a religious variant of “status frustration” and its consequent “status politics.” In two different books, Sara Diamond has documented the institutionalized form of this frustrated Christian politics in which she traces the roots of the modern (1970s onward) era of the NCR back to the Church League of America, formed in 1937 to oppose Roosevelt’s New Deal social economics with a defence of social Darwinism. Through to the 1970s, Diamond links American religious conservative activity with phenomena such as McCarthyism, anti-Communist foreign policy, Fundamentalist opposition to employment equity bills, the teaching of evolution in public schools and support for “trickle down economics.” Like Lienesch, she identifies periods of rigorous activism, followed by periods of relative quiescence such as the early 1960s, when there was little Evangelical opposition mounted to the Supreme Court’s ruling that restricted praying in public schools (Diamond, 1995:105).

The 1970s ushered in the era of the modern Christian right as religious conservatives found themselves faced with the four policies of the Apocalypse: the 1972 passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), the Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade
decision which struck down anti-abortion legislation, the IRS’s 1978 attempt to invoke racial quotas in Christian schools and the ever progressive gains being made by gay rights movements (Diamond, 1995; Wuthnow, 1983; Lienesch, 1993). Religious conservatives identified these issues as examples of the ever increasing pervasiveness of the legal and legislative branches of the state into the private institutions of family and religious assemblies.21 As Diamond describes it

“The major social issues of the 1970s caused right-wing evangelicals to feel threatened about their ability to promote the supremacy of the traditional nuclear family. Women’s equality, abortion, and gay rights were all issues that crossed lines of economic class, and even race ... Also at stake was the drive of evangelical activists to exert their democratic rights to participate in the political process and to assume some measure of political power. These highly charged social issues all involved questions of welfare state spending, law enforcement and business regulation in discrimination cases” (Diamond, 1995:161).

The personal nature of these social issues fueled a Christian population with a strong sense of moral urgency which in turn forged novel alliances and activities. The Roe v. Wade decision brought evangelicals into the previously Catholic domain of the abortion fight by reconfiguring it into a public political issue from its previous private moral status (Gottfried & Fleming, 1988). Evangelical Christians also experienced a political “outing” in the 1976 presidential election when they voted in unusually high numbers for Jimmy Carter, a professed evangelical convert (Diamond, 1989,1995; Wuthnow, 1983). Disenchantment with public debacles like Watergate and Vietnam reinforced the Evangelical belief in the intimate connection between private morality and public office and further underscored the need for political involvement. As Liebman and Wuthnow (1983) observe, the increasingly blurred line between private morality and public policy coupled with the general increase in popular exposure that
Evangelicals were receiving through the 1970s gave them a sense of motivation, legitimation and social connection to engage en masse with the political process.

Carter, however, in the Evangelical eye, was an unmitigated failure. He "represented compromise, flexibility, pluralism, ecumenicism and willingness to see that there is more than one moral position on a given issue" (Diamond, 1989:56). Consequently, a disenchanted grassroots electorate and a keen eye for strategic opportunism combined to give the modern Christian right its unique quality. Despite the overwhelmingly Evangelical character of the NCR, it is in actuality a movement constructed by Catholic activists involved with the secular New Right movement.

In their attempt to build a mass political movement, Paul Weyrich (Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress), Richard Viguerie (founder of Conservative Digest), and Howard Phillips (Conservative Caucus), all Catholics, saw the tremendous mobilizing potential of the Evangelical community as invaluable to their quest for influence within the Republican party.22 With the help of Robert Billings (National Christian Action Coalition) and Ed McAteer (Christian Freedom Foundation), these professional activists approached televangelist Jerry Falwell and the NCR came to organizational life as the Moral Majority in 1979. It was a movement strategically designed around highly charged moral issues: abortion, gay rights, women's equality and the threats they posed to the very foundation of American society, the family. Not defensive or reactionary,

"At its inception the New Christian Right, far from being a populist uprising, was an army organized from the top down by those New Right strategists who set much of the early agenda for their politically less sophisticated recruits" (Lienesch, 1993:8)
The product was a movement characterized by a high degree of organizational sophistication, frontmen that were popular charismatic preachers, and strategists capable of turning single issue concerns into general political activism.

Following Diamond's argument, Richard Viguerie identified abortion as an issue capable of unifying divided factions within the Evangelical and Catholic communities with the logic of a

"hypothetical case of a man, never before politically active, who suddenly becomes disturbed by the image of dead babies. For the first time in his life, he joins a political group and believes naively that change will come when a few citizens get angry. But once he realizes that the outlawing of abortion involves a prolonged struggle, he begins to take an avid interest in electoral politics and in a host of political issues related to his concern about abortion" (Diamond, 1989:58).

It was a strategy that strengthened links between the number of single issue groups in the country by highlighting the political and moral interconnectedness of concerns over abortion, euthanasia, gay rights, the ERA, foreign policy and the deficit. Groups like Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum, which was instrumental in the defeat of the ERA amendment to the constitution, found kindred spirits with the likes of the Conservative Caucus, Christian Roundtable, Christian Voice and the host of other organizations that arose in the 1980s.23

Schlafly's Stop ERA organization (later renamed Eagle Forum) was an exercise in just this kind of sociomoral interconnectedness. Herself a Catholic, Schlafly opposed the ERA on legal and economic grounds, claiming it was a federal power grab that would "destroy the power of state legislatures to make laws on divorce, child custody, inheritance, welfare and labor" as well as threaten the economic security of women by removing their right for child support (Diamond, 1995:169). It would also grant, she
argued, "legal sanction to homosexual marriages and make it impossible for the Supreme Court to reverse its 1973 Roe v. Wade decision" (ibid., 170). It was an argument that aligned itself naturally with economic neoconservatives, pro-life activists and opponents of the gay rights movement like Enrique Rueda of the Free Congress Committee (founded by Paul Weyrich) who “cited evidence of government support for the homosexual movement which he portrayed as a kind of conspiracy against conventional morality” (Gottfried & Fleming, 1988:84).

The NCR’s drive to restore a traditional moral order by constructing a broad sociomoral program around a single issue found favour with the Republican party through the 1980s because it presented what the GOP had always lacked, a grassroots constituency (Diamond, 1989). By backing Reagan in 1980, who claimed an Evangelical conversion experience in 1976, the NCR did something decidedly modernist, they compromised on a leader who was “viewed as too liberal and not enough of a leader by some of the clergyman” because “he was all that was left” (Guth, 1983:36). Reagan’s two term presidency did prove a disappointment for the NCR, but their hopes were buoyed by televangelical magnate Pat Robertson’s bid for the White House in 1988. Despite losing the nomination, most Robertson supporters viewed the 1988 campaign with optimism because of the gains they had made within state and local GOP apparatuses (Diamond, 1989).

Political activism at state, local and schoolboard levels was one of the primary strategies adopted by Robertson’s newly formed Christian Coalition in 1989. Replacing Falwell’s Moral Majority, the Christian Coalition was built from the remnants of Robertson’s 1988 campaign with the strategic intention of keeping “one figurative foot
inside formal Republican Party circles and another planted firmly within evangelical churches ... [and embarking] ... on a 1990s strategy combining issue-based and electoral activism” (Diamond, 1995:290-91). The success of the Christian Coalition within the Republican Party in 1992 was unparalleled in Christian activist politics:

“An estimated 47 percent of the delegates at the 1992 party convention were self-described born-again Christians, and the Christian Right had its way in drafting the party platform ... a constitutional amendment to ban abortion (with no exceptions). Other planks included opposition to any civil rights laws for homosexuals, a call for the government to ban the sale of pornography and for condemnation of public funding for “obscene” art, endorsement of home schooling and school prayer, and opposition to contraception being made available in schools” (Diamond, 1995:296).

The growing influence and power of the Christian Coalition was again demonstrated during the 1996 presidential campaign. During the primaries, potential presidential nominee Steve Forbes had his campaign severely damaged by the Coalition in a move described as “swift and coordinated”:

“The Christian Coalition and affiliated groups on the religious right unleashed verbal attacks aimed at destroying Forbes’ ... campaign ... The religious groups charged the publishing magnate with being “soft” on abortion and gay right and with trying to “confuse pro-lifers” by fudging on the issues.”24

The Coalition was also accused of “hijacking” control of the Republican National Convention with “intimidating” tactics and platforms.25 Again, despite losing the White House, the NCR were satisfied with their growing influence and the deeper inroads made to all levels of government policy making. As Christian Coalition Executive Director Ralph Reed has commented

“Instead of focusing on winning the White House ... we’re developing a farm team of future officeholders by running people for school boards, city councils and state legislatures ... Now we’re seeing those institutions that are closest to people’s lives and have the greatest impact on them in the hands of conservative people of faith” (Reed, quote in Diamond, 1995:301).26
In a number of publications, Reed outlined the agenda of the Christian Coalition and its "religious" or "pro-family" conservative followers. To revitalize an American culture that has been torn apart by "the sexual revolution, Watergate, Vietnam, the rise of the drug culture, and the explosive growth of the welfare state" family centred policies and government initiatives need to be instituted, it is argued, because "the family is the most efficient and effective Department of Health, Education, and Welfare ever conceived" (Reed, 1994:3,8). Worth quoting at length, this broad based platform aims at restoring

"Much of what was good about America ... marriages that work and a far greater proportion of intact two-parent families. Lower taxes, less bureaucracy, leaner government. A thriving, expanding economy with less job-killing government regulation ... Greater empowerment of private citizens to free themselves from dependency on government programs. Hard-core and child pornography illegal and socially stigmatized. Abortion rare and largely restricted ... Voluntary, student-initiated school prayer and other public expressions of faith protected as free speech under the First Amendment. Television shows and movies that celebrate the family and elevate the human spirit and do not glorify violence, extramarital sex, vulgar language, and human cruelty ... A tougher criminal-justice system that puts violent offenders behind bars ... Tax policy should reflect two family-friendly policies ... income dedicated to providing for the basic needs of children ... should be exempt from taxation ... income dedicated to creating jobs should be exempt from taxation ... the welfare system subsidizes family breakup ... it fails to address the root cause of government dependency: family breakup and illegitimacy ... We must also provide greater stability for the most important contract in civilized society: the marriage contract" (Reed, 1994:3,4,7,9,10).28

In Active Faith, Reed describes this agenda as "bold and ambitious," one based on the "need to affirm the basic social and religious values upon which the nation was built. Ours is largely a defensive movement. We are not revolutionaries but counterrevolutionaries, seeking to resist the left's agenda and to keep them from imposing their values on our homes, churches, and families" (Reed, 1996:203, 195; emphasis added). The political amalgam of neoconservative economics, Christian morality,
charismatic fervor and sophisticated mobilizing infrastructure which constitutes this counterrevolution is proving to be a highly effective movement, one that like-minded Canadians are enviously peering at over the border.

**Christian Politics in Canada: The Canadian Christian Right**

Perhaps consistent with Canadian self-definitions, Canadian Evangelicals first describe themselves in terms of difference from Americans. One thing they are *not* is equivalent to their American counterparts. In his history of Canadian evangelicalism, John Stackhouse points out that while it is a vain effort to find an adequate characterization of Canadian evangelicalism, one can be sure that "this kind of Christianity should not be dismissed as some fringe group or some bizarre American export" (Stackhouse, 1993:204). The closest Stackhouse himself comes to defining Evangelicalism in Canada is the unexceptional description of its followers as "not all that strange, not all that different from other Canadians" (*ibid*:204). He in fact challenges the view of Canadian Evangelicals as necessarily fundamentalist, conservative and having experienced a conversion. This stands in partial opposition to Robert Burkinshaw's definition (1995) of Evangelicals as believers in conversion, biblicism, activism and crucicentrism. Historically sectarian until the 1980s when they began to develop closer transdenominational ties, it is only in the last few years that Evangelicals in Canada have begun to emerge with a more popular profile. At a time when Canadian culture is becoming less influenced by Christian values, interest in the Evangelical movement is growing, particularly in British Columbia (BC).
Bibby (1993) has found a steady decline in Protestant and Catholic membership and church attendance through the latter half of the century. As he describes it “there’s little doubt that organized religion is in very serious shape, its golden years apparently relegated to history” (Bibby, 1993:115). An Angus Reid poll also found that only 19 percent of Canadians let religious beliefs influence their political thinking, 18 percent support Christian right politics, 8 percent considered moral issues to be a primary electoral issue and believed BC had the highest rate of secularism in the country; these figures stand in sharp opposition to those in the US where strict belief in biblical doctrine, the importance of conversion, and the priority of promoting family values run much higher. The evangelical trend in BC however, seems to run counter to the death knell being rung for organized religion by such statistics.

The general religious profile of BC is handily reflected in the observation that “people don’t seem to worry very much about churches out here” and Peter Newman’s remark that British Columbians are “pioneers, not pilgrims” (quoted in Burkinshaw, 1995:4). Nonetheless, in Pilgrims in Lotusland, Burkinshaw (1995) argues that while Catholicism never took hold in the transient non-native population of BC, Evangelicalism has grown steadily since 1921, opposing the trend Bibby has identified in the rest of Canada. Like their American brethren, British Columbian Evangelicals have through the course of their history “very frequently felt alienated from the religious and social mainstream ... [and] ... did erect, with varying degrees of intensity, defensive walls to hold back the inroads of modernism and secularism” (Burkinshaw, 1995:12,13). This trend towards isolation is one which by popular media accounts appears to be diminishing. The import to the province of organizations like the
Promisekeepers, the Christian Coalition, Focus on the Family, the Toronto Blessing (via the Vineyard congregations), and the continued growth of Evangelical denominations all indicate a pattern of increasing attempts to move in from the margins of society.  

The evangelical population in BC has risen to 290,000, eight percent of the provincial population, 3.5 percent higher than the 1921 figures (Burkinshaw, 1995).

In general, this small surge has not translated into a cohesive form of political activism like that seen in the US. Akin to their self-definition, Canadian evangelicals are not like their American counterparts. There is none of the organizational sophistication and unity or fervent sense of urgency over the sociomoral issues that plague modern secular societies. With the exception of Grant Devine’s conservatives, neoconservative and New Right agendas throughout the country have been secular and economic in focus, not moral. Religious activism is present in Canada, but it has tended to be buried deep within party politics or isolated around single sociomoral issues which have yet to be politically interconnected. Opposition to gay rights, abortion and feminism, support for traditional schools, smaller government, welfare reform are all vibrant issues for Canadian religious conservatives like evangelicals, but it is only the latter two issues that have been of any significant concern to mainstream conservative political parties in Canada.

The potential political firestorm that could be triggered by directly confronting abortion or gay rights sends religious conservative politicians behind the protective curtain that says ‘you can’t legislate morality’. Similar to US religious conservatives, frustration has increased for Canadian religious conservatives over the lack of political victories. The 1969 removal of abortion from the criminal code, the slow but steady
recognition of homosexual couples as legal marital unions, and the apparent stranglehold of secular humanism on Canadian culture have all been fuel for a gradual strengthening of political resolve among religious conservatives in this country.

Unlike the American state though, the Canadian party system does not afford organizations like REAL Women, Campaign Life, and the National Citizen's Coalition much lobbying power within particular parties. This has forced activism over sociomoral issues down one of three roads: influencing individual sympathetic politicians within parties; formal legal intervention in particular court cases; or civil education campaigns. Each avenue has particular merit and importance to a cause, but none of them offers the necessary entrance into legislative power which is required to effect the kind of social change desired by the Canadian Christian Right (CCR). Certainly the odd exception exists - Devine's neoconservative experiment in Saskatchewan was largely centred around the promotion of Christian right moral values. His personal slogan of "God first, family second, and the NDP under my thumb" encapsulates his sociomoral positions on abortion and homosexuality:

"I think one of the biggest challenges we face in this country and North America is one of morals ... I would venture to say that 98 percent of the women that you find out peace-marching or against nuclear energy are pro-choice. They haven't got their objectives straight. They are living in the 'I'-centred egotistical society. They don't have God as their focus. Very selfish ... [on homosexuality] ... I don't want my children thinking that this is a reasonable, normal thing to do ... " (Devine, quoted in Pitsula & Rasmussen, 1990:17).

W.A.C. Bennett's Social Credit party in BC was also a Christian based party, but never advanced an agenda as overtly Christian as Devine's. The Socreds did however, enjoy tremendous support from the evangelical community in BC, indeed, one of its
most flamboyant and popular ministers, "Flying Phil" Gaglardi, was a Pentecostal preacher. Burkinshaw remarks that the Socreds were

"At least until the mid-1970s, ... composed largely of rural and small-town people from the province’s interior and the Fraser Valley, and it functioned as a populist protest movement against the urban elites in Vancouver and Victoria ... While on a few Social Credit ministers ... were self-declared evangelicals, as right-of-centre politicians they ideologically supported the concepts of private initiative” (Burkinshaw, 1995:8,215).

The Vander Zalm era of the Socreds in the late 1980s also exhibited strong Christian undertones. His failed 1988 attempt to remove abortion funding from the Medicare fee schedule was driven by his strong Catholic convictions over the issue, and in many ways characterized the rest of his turbulent time in office.

Frustrated attempts such as Vander Zalm’s led many of the CCR to reconsider the utility of continuing to fight within a particular party for these contentious social issues. What took form as a result was the creation of a number of new political parties. Federally, the Christian Heritage Party (CHP) formed in 1987 with the view that

"The political task we in the CHP have perceived as our God-given duty is to call fellow Canadians back to Bible-obedient lifestyles ... the CHP brought a new perspective ... of principled politics, policies which are rooted in Biblical ethics” (Van Woudenberg, 1989:20,22).

Founded by Ed Van Woudenberg, a member of the Canadian (Dutch) Reformed Church, the CHP has a mandate similar to that of the Christian Coalition in the US. Electorally, they have been most successful in rural Ontario. In the 1988 election the party garnered over 100,000 votes nation wide, 64,707 of them in Ontario (Harrison, 1995).

The Reform Party of Canada was also founded in 1987 by Preston Manning, an evangelical whose father directed Canada’s National Bible Hour for more than forty
years. Manning insists that Reform is not a religious party, and actively distances his party from the CHP:

"The Reform Party of Canada is not a religious party, nor does it have a hidden religious agenda ... [the pro-life/pro-family agenda] ... is being pursued by ... a new political party, the Christian Heritage Party. Although I do not deny Christians of the right or the left the right to develop such agendas and to pursue them through political action ... this is not the approach I have taken to politics, nor is the Reform Party of Canada a product of such an approach" (Manning, 1992:102,104)

Yet he also contends that

"There is a relationship between private and public morality, between what one believes and how one responds to public policy issues ... And these relationships should be openly explored ... A different approach to Christian involvement in politics, and the one that I personally favour, might be described as “working Christianly with the urgent or existing public agenda.” This involves accepting the present political agenda as a legitimate starting point for one’s involvement in politics ... and trying to influence it from within by the application of one’s most deeply held values” (Manning, 1992: 103,104).

The party has been plagued since its inception with not unfounded images of its supporters and members as religious and social intolerants.34 MP Bob Ringma’s now infamous “back of the shop” comment about the right of a store owner not to hire gay employees, Manning’s well known evangelical background and anti-abortion stance, activities like MP Herb Grubel’s attendance at the libertarian “International Society for Individual Liberty 1996 World Conference,” and MP Lee Morrison’s opposition to subsidized day care all paint the Reform party into the CCR corner, if only at its ecumenical edge.35

Provincially, the Ontario (1987) and BC (1991) Family Coalition Parties are attempting to blend Reform’s neoconservative economics and populism with the CHP’s heavy emphasis on moral fortitude. While neither party formally relies on biblical scripture for policy formation in the manner of the CHP, their constitutions uphold
similar doctrine: sanctity of life from the moment of conception to natural death, recognition of the traditional nuclear family as that of two married people of the opposite sex and those directly related by blood, support for "family-friendly" tax policies, reduction in government size, and parental choice in education. Like Reform, they adhere to the potential of 'doing the Christian thing without mentioning God'. The unique political feature of these parties, in particular the BC FCP, is their primary focus on the erosion of the traditional family and the concomitant social problems this has produced. Unlike the American New Right and NCR, their agenda appears to be founded on sociomoral issues for their own sake, not as an ideological screen behind which free market economism can be protected and advanced. Whatever the principal motivation however, these parties reflect a similar world view as the NCR, one of the Canadian Christian Right as anti-government, free market, pro-family and pro-life.

With these parties, the CCR now has another important part of its infrastructure in place. The CHP, the FCP in Ontario and BC and to some degree the Reform Party of Canada are structurally capable of providing the necessary legislative inroads to political change. While not as large as the US network, the televangelism of such programs as David Mainse's "100 Huntley Street" and the growth of Christian literature in Canada have the same mass mobilizing potential as the "700 Club" and Third Century Publishers. And organizations like Campaign Life, the National Citizen's Coalition, Focus on the Family, and REAL Women continue to perform extensive educational and lobbying functions for the movement.

In BC, the CCR's situation is similar. The FCP and the provincial Reform party have survived two provincial elections, conversions continue to bolster evangelical
numbers in the province, and a number of new organizations have formed in recent years to defend and promote traditional social and family orders. US based Focus on the Family runs a $6 million a year operation from Vancouver’s downtown core, Christian Coalition Canada has emerged in BC, and the Catholic Civil Rights League has formed in an attempt to instill political vigour into the province’s Catholic community. These are in addition to already existing provincial organizations that are at least sympathetic to a Christian right position: BC Pro-life, Citizen’s Research Institute, REAL Women, Vancouver Right to Life, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, Westcoast Women for Family Life, and Campaign Life Coalition. While differing in mandate and political involvement, these are the types of organizations from which a more cohesive, interconnected CCR could emerge in the province on a platform rooted in the politics of family and preservation of life.

Family Feud: The Politics of the Family

The centrality of the family in the politics of the New Christian Right in America and for Canadian Christian Right cannot be overstated. From the writings of Edmund Burke through to the current brand of Christian right conservatism, the family has been identified as one of, if not the, primary sociopolitical institutions required for a stable social order. For the Christian right, the family has become the main fulcrum for their broad, comprehensive program of social and economic reconstruction. It is a strategy that has ignited a fervent, tenacious and vicious battle over the ontology, function and structure of the family as well as the construction and deployment of “family values” as a primary source of cultural ideology. The adversarial relations of religious
conservatives and those on the Left simply cannot be sketched in shades of grey. Those of the NCR and CCR view the gains of feminists and gays as a social plague which is destroying the family with deviant lifestyle proclamations and moral relativism. At the 1992 GOP convention, evangelist Pat Robertson commented that “feminism encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians.” The Left takes an equally antagonist stand, interpreting the defence of the traditional family as one for the continuation and promotion of a patriarchal social order with its concomitant oppression of women, refutation of state sponsored social programs, advocacy for laissez-faire economics, and stagnating, repressive impact on the general social order.

In the *Anti-Social Family*, Barrett and McIntosh write that “It is the over-valuation of family life that devalues these other lives. The family sucks the juice out of everything around it, leaving other institutions stunted and distorted” (Barrett & McIntosh, 1991: 78). For present purposes, pushing the virulent rhetoric aside and better comprehending the political and social implications of this feud is a matter of exposing the political institutionalizing of the ‘family’ and then exploring why religious conservatives so staunchly defend traditional family, how they utilize it as a political symbol, and in what ways the Left opposes this use.

Jerry Falwell has said the family is “the fundamental building block and basic unit of our society, and its continued health is a prerequisite for a healthy and prosperous nation” (Falwell, quoted in Lienesch, 1993:52). This political sentiment is an entrenched vision in the policies and dialogue of all Christian Right institutions. The Christian Coalition’s “Contract with the American Family” which among other
provisions calls for a "Mother’s and Homemaker’s Rights Act" is, as Ralph Reed states "not a Christian agenda. It is not a Republican agenda. It is not a special interest agenda. It is a pro-family agenda" (Reed, 1996:201-02; emphasis added). This document is in part a resolve to remedy the social pathologies brought on by the erosion of the family in America. "The crime problem can only be solved by strengthening the two-parent, nuclear family" argues Reed,

"No amount of money thrown at education can substitute for strong families and stable homes ... what religious conservatives want is to make the restoration of the two-parent, intact family with children the central and paramount public policy priority of the nation" (Reed, 1994:85,87,91).

The avenues of dialogue necessary for promoting this pro-family ideology have been expanded through the growth of publications put out by NCR organizations, from Paul Weyrich’s Conservative Digest, Family Protection Report, Journal of Family and Culture and later, Journal of Marriage and the Family to James Dobson’s plethora of Focus on the Family publications.

In Canada, the centricity of family issues to the politics of religious conservatives is threaded through conversations from the kitchen table through to policy statements of the Reform Party of Canada, the CHP, and the FCP. Like Falwell, William Gairdner, a chief ideologue of the Reform Party of Canada, sees the family as the foundational social unit:

"If the first building block of democratic capitalism is the individual and his personhood, the second is the family, which nurtures and creates this reality. Practically speaking, however, we could reverse this order, and say that the family is first, for it is in the bosom of the family that the crucial values, disciplines, and standards of individual behaviour are formed." (Gairdner, 1990:80).
This belief is demographically reflected in Trevor Harrison's analysis of polls which indicated that Reform is the only federal party which has greater support among married than non-married people, and that over eighty percent of Reform members are married (Harrison, 1995). It is also discreetly embedded in the Reform Party of Canada's Statement of Principles, in which the sixth principle states that

“We affirm the value and dignity of the individual person and the importance of strengthening and protecting the family unit as essential to the well-being of individuals and society” (Principles and Policies, 1991).

The Christian Heritage Party founds its similar, albeit more biblically doctrinaire position, on the sentiment reflected in Psalm 32:12: “blessed is the nation whose family serve the Lord.” The party's constitutional entrenchment of the family is born of the fear that “knock the family off its God-ordained foundation, and all of society will suffer irreparable harm and damage” (Van Woudenberg, 1989:78):

“We affirm that the family is a God-ordained institution and the fundamental indispensable basis of human society; that it consists of a man and woman lawfully wedded for the purpose of procreation; all in a secure family home. We affirm that heterosexual, monogamous marriage is God-ordained as the foundation of the family, and that any other form of union whatsoever is biblically prohibited” (CHP Policy and Program, 06.4, Section 1).

A strong pro-family stance was even to be found in Brian Mulroney's conservative government. Erwin (1993) points out that the 32 member “Family Caucus” would meet with pro-family leaders in an attempt to address what was being perceived among the movement as the dramatic failings of the Conservative majority to concretely deal with family and life issues. Erwin notes that

“The Caucus quietly bills itself as a ‘defender of Christian values’ ... it supports various pro-family positions, including the recriminalization of abortion, the elimination of tax breaks for common-law couples ... It has also been credited with preventing
amendments to the *Human Rights Act* that would recognize same-sex marriages" (Erwin, 1993:416).

The Ontario and British Columbia FCP parties bring the pro-family concerns of religious conservatives to provincial politics with less stealth than the Family Caucus. In Ontario, the FCP is "a political party based on family values ... the policies of the FCP are based on moral principles expressive of the Judaeo-Christian tradition" and a recognition of

"The family as the basic social cell. When family values are strong and promoted by the State, democracy and economic enterprise flourish. When family values falter, society becomes disordered and is in danger of collapse" (Ontario FCP Statement of Principles).

The purposes meanwhile, of the BC FCP are stated as intentions

"To enact laws and policies which recognize the right to life of every innocent human being from conception to natural death ... To enact social, educational and economic laws and policies which recognize the family as the basic unit of society" (BC FCP Constitution, purposes 2b & c).

Family is accepted by its members to mean "TWO OR MORE INDIVIDUALS RELATED BY BLOOD, MARRIAGE OR ADOPTION. The FCP recognizes the definition of marriage to mean THE LEGAL UNION OF TWO PEOPLE OF THE OPPOSITE SEX" (BC FCP Constitution, emphasis in original).

This emphatic and ubiquitous presence of the family as the key feature of the religious conservative platform suggests an agenda driven by far more than concerns over unemployment and rising deficits. Reinvigoration of the economy may well be aided by transfigurations within the sociocultural realm of civil society but it is not so closely linked that it is wholly dependent on such changes. The concern of religious conservatives over the present and future threats to the family makes them a convenient and beneficial ally of the secular New Right's promotion of a free market ideology, but
there is also a specific independence to this concern over the family. The heavy emphasis which is at times placed on the economic runs the risk of masking the reality that liberal attitudes and social policy have generated concrete changes in the makeup of the American and Canadian social landscape. The cultural hegemony of both nations is being altered through the hard fought battles by women, gays, immigrants, environmentalists and other traditionally dispossessed citizens and groups. This social metamorphosis is occurring in large part independent of the economic forces which are restructuring the labour and financial markets. Were a close dependency between conservative economic and cultural imperatives to exist, Canada and the US, as they move more towards strategies of increasing globalized, free-trade accumulation, would be exhibiting sociocultural patterns and values more reflective of those desired by religious conservatives. Yet quite the opposite seems to be occurring. As the push to economic globalization continues, social patterns reflect an increasing, not decreasing, diversity of family structures, marriage patterns, and attitude towards gay and women’s rights.40

For religious conservatives, this diversity has brought with it an apparent social pestilence in the form of increasing crime by young men who have been stripped of their male authority and right to a job by the demands of the feminist movement; increasing teenage pregnancy, illiteracy, and promiscuity brought on by an failing education system which promotes liberal sexual attitudes and lifestyle choices while denying parental involvement in matters of educational policy; increasing social and familial deviancy with the promotion of gay lifestyles; and most seriously for them, a growing disregard for the sanctity of life with the promotion of abortion, euthanasia
and the various reproductive technologies of the day. Religious conservatives believe that social redemption and salvation can only be sought through a restoration of the traditional family and its values, in other words by an appeal to the divinely ordained.

The importance of the family to religious conservative politics and their argument linking such social decay to the erosion of the family is found in their belief that the family is ultimately a transcendent institution because of its universality and naturalness. Divinely ordained, the family is a pre-social body upon which all forms of social order and authority are based. Roger Scruton's (1984) explanation of this adopts a secular philosophical argument that the family, unlike society at large, is non-contractual, its bonds based not on choice but on natural necessity, giving it an indispensable and transcendent nature. The bonds between parent and child which flow from the family, Scruton continues, are themselves transcendent. The obligation and responsibility a child feels towards its parents are founded not on any notions of socially derived justice, but on a natural sense of honour and respect that is "simply due to the parents as a recognition of the filial tie" (Scruton, 1984:32, emphasis in the original). As the child matures "it is this ability that is transferred by the citizen from hearth and home to place, people and country. The bond of society - as the conservative sees it - is just such a transcendent bond" (Scruton, 1984:33). The glue of Scruton's conservative social order then, is a transcendent authority based on the recognition and acceptance of traditions which command obligations and allegiances not reducible to contractual choice. When this glue comes unstuck, it is the family which must be attended and repaired for as it goes, so goes society.
Conservatives with strong religious beliefs turn to a second source of proof of the transcendent nature of the family, ecclesiastical doctrine. Very close to the beginning, in the book of Genesis it is written:

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Genesis 1:26-28).

John Paul II in his 1994 Letter to Families uses this passage among others to “discern how the primordial model of the family is to be sought in God himself, in the Trinitarian mystery of his life” (John Paul II, 1994:13, emphasis in original). The genealogy of the family cannot only be traced directly back to God, but the family structure of Father, Mother and Child becomes in some manner a corporeal representation of the Holy Trinity. With such an understanding, the sacred and deep commitment religious conservatives, in particular Catholics, exhibit towards the sanctity of the family takes on a dimension greater than simply one of political expediency to achieve economic change. The Holy See’s 1983 Charter of Rights of the Family translates the transcendent spirit of the family into a political language:

“The family is based on marriage, that intimate union of life in complemertarity between a man and a woman ... and is open to the transmission of life ... the family, a natural society, exists prior to the State or any other community, and possesses inherent rights which are inalienable ... the family ... is uniquely suited to teach and transmit cultural, ethical, social, spiritual and religious values, essential for the development and well-being of its own members and of society” (Holy See, 1983:5).

It is in the last part of this passage that a final, and politically the most important, reason can be found for the family’s centricity in the politics of the Christian Right. More than any other social institution, the family is a symbolic repository for a nation’s cultural hegemony. As the Holy See’s passage suggests, the family is the
primary site of transmission for the cultural, economic, spiritual, and moral schemes of a society. It is viewed as the institutional protector and molder of innocents, a space where the knowledge and wisdom of a passing generation is passed onto the children of the next. As such, it is a politically vital piece of social terrain over which this feud is being fought, not so much for its institutional reality or form, but as symbolic ideology.

When the monolithic image of the family as a static absolute is replaced by the understanding that the family is a porous construction of intersections and trajectories, its symbolic importance becomes even more accentuated. For example, the Christian Right’s argument that rising rates of abortion, sexually transmissible diseases, divorce, shoplifting, car jacking, and high school drop out rates are attributable to family dissolution becomes dissectable. As Crawford (1980) has suggested, the movement is a symbolic one as much as it is political. In an attempt to restore stasis to a system in flux, the strategists of the New Christian Right have appropriated the family as a catch basin for all the symbolic examples of a crumbling conservative order. In his discussion of the NCR and symbolic production, Donald Heinz writes that

"The New Christian Right finds in the family a means to recover a lost meaning as well as a lost past. It has become a primary symbol of the worldview, and the story they offer as a countermythology. The family is both a symbol for that mythology, and its primary and necessary socializer" (Heinz, 1983:142).

The richly emotive images that the symbol of the 'family' and its destruction evoke were not lost on Paul Weyrich as he and others attempted to forge mass support for the New Right agenda in the US. During the 1970s, after Richard Viguerie had identified abortion as the issue capable of mobilizing a previously apolitical mass, Weyrich suggested using the term "pro-family" rather than "pro-life," recognizing the
potential of the term to capture a broader spectrum of social issues dear to the hearts of religious conservatives (Diamond, 1995). With this, the pro-family movement (PFM), was, if not born, at least developing a morphological identity. The New Right ideologues and strategists had constructed a broad PFM agenda out of previously single issue concerns and identified a clear enemy: secular humanism. Like the ‘family’, secular humanism became a symbolic repository, but one that identified the enemy as those influences, groups and people who propagated godlessness, moral relativism, tolerance for pornography, gay lifestyles, the abortion culture and the dissolution of the traditional family.

The PFM was the New Christian Right with a sharpened focus: to beat back legalized abortion, gay rights progress, permissive and liberal public education policies, and feminism. Weyrich’s Heritage Foundation, which by the 1980s had become very influential in US politics, sought to couch these initiatives in the narratives of ‘family values’ and ‘conservatism’; but, in fact, he has “acknowledged that he does not truly intend to conserve anything [:] ... “We are no longer working to preserve the status quo. We are radicals, working to overturn the present power structure of the country”” (Diamond, 1989:54, emphasis in original). The urgency and determination reflected in this statement are a product of understanding the function of family as ideology. Stripped to its core, it is a matter of socializing society’s children and “the right to determine how and by whom the minds of children are molded is the most valued prize in the tug of war between the Christian Right and secular society” (Diamond, 1989:84).

Two of the earliest PFM initiatives in this tug of war were the walkout staged by the Christian Right at Jimmy Carter’s 1979 White House Conference on Families and the
1981 drafting of the Family Protection Act. Led by Connaught Marshner, a director of Weyrich’s Free Congress Foundation, the walkout by pro-family supporters was in response to the perceived bias against Evangelical Christians at the conference and a definition of family which included unmarried and homosexual couples (Diamond, 1995). Marshner was also instrumental in the creation of the Family Protection Act, a traditional family bill of some thirty five major provisions that was debated in Congress in 1981, but never passed. It included among other provisions, a restricting of abortion and gay rights, tax incentives to encourage mothers to stay home with their children, restrictions on the foodstamp program, a return of voluntary prayer to public schools, and a call to end coeducational school sports programs (Diamond, 1995). With such provisions, the Family Protection Act stands as an exemplar of the PFM strategy. Under the cover of family symbolism, a spectrum of single sociomoral issues with deep ideological consequences are brought forward in an attempt to reinvigorate what is perceived to be a fading past.

**Abortion, Euthanasia, Reproductive Technology**

The issue that breathed life into the pro-family movement still holds sway as the principal issue for PFM activists, but the growing debates over euthanasia, doctor assisted suicide and reproductive technologies are likely to take an equally important place on the agenda of pro-life activists. The highly charged battle over abortion rights has been raging in Canada since the 1969 liberalizing of abortion in the criminal code and in the US since 1973 when the Supreme Court legalized a woman’s right to an abortion on privacy grounds in the *Roe v. Wade* decision. More than any other
sociomoral issue, abortion has proven to be a stubbornly intractable debate. The crevasse that divides pro-life and pro-choice activists offers little hope of finding any ground on which to build a compromise.

Traditionally, the abortion fight has been a Catholic one. The supreme value placed on the sanctity of life is so great that even the thought of an abortion may be considered a mortal sin. As with the protection of the family, a divine defence can be found for protecting the unborn child: “Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth” (Psalms 127:3-4). As John Paul II writes in his encyclical, The Gospel of Life, “the mere possibility of harming, attacking, or actually denying life in these circumstances is completely foreign to the religious and cultural way of thinking of the People of God” (John Paul II, 1995:77). Divine ordinance aside, it must also be recognized that the early church did not look favourably upon the institutions of marriage and family. Marriage was viewed not as natural, but as a vocation and as such “Marriage was understood to have a peculiar service to the community - namely, it served a symbolic function denoting God’s loyalty to his people and as such was the appropriate context for reception of new life ... Therefore, for Christians, having children or getting married is not a “natural” event but one freighted with the deepest moral and religious significance. Their attitude toward abortion is but an aspect of the conviction that they must be people who are ever ready to welcome children into the world” (Hauerwas, 1993:154-55).

With a belief system so deeply rooted in religious conviction, the tenacity and durability of the pro-life movement is understandable. Although it is a sub-movement of pro-family activists, the pro-life movement is a well organized and operated movement in its own right. Support for the pro-life cause has expanded beyond the Catholic community in the US, especially after the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, which
generated the greatest amount of support the movement has ever known (Luker, 1984). It also brought Catholics and Evangelicals together by transforming abortion into a public political matter from a private moral one. The pro-life community's opposition to abortion has taken a number of strategic forms, including scholarly refutations in Human Life Review, the abortion clinic blockades by Operation Rescue, the militant tactics of Joe Schiedler's Pro-Life Action League, and the efforts of the National Right to Life Committee. Most troubling for the movement has been the violent tactic of clinic bombings which began in the mid-1980s and continues to date. This full range of tactics has been coupled with the help of New Right strategists like Paul Weyrich and Richard Viguerie to mobilize Republican party support for the pro-life stance. At the 1984 Republican convention it was affirmed that

"The unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed upon ... [we therefore] support a human life amendment [which would define human life as beginning with conception]" (Platt and Wililams, 1988:44).

In 1995, the Republican dominated house began an attempt to restrict abortion by limiting federal funding and then in 1996 passing a bill which banned the controversial practice of "partial-birth" abortions.

Canadian governments have been far more reluctant in their willingness to tread into the explosive arena of abortion. Preston Manning's recent foray into the abortion debate and Bill Vander Zalm's failed attempt to restrict Medicare funding for abortions stand as examples of the few partisan attempts to develop a legislative platform for a pro-life position. When the availability of abortions was liberalized under the Trudeau government in 1969, the pro-life movement initially mobilized under Alliance for Life, Canada's first national pro-life organization. Since then the movement has diversified
nationally and provincially, into educational, political and counseling branches. Membership patterns in the pro-life movement have been similar to that in the US. Initially Catholic, the movement has enjoyed increasing participation by Protestant Evangelicals, yet this has had the effect of splintering the movement into hard and soft factions, with Evangelicals being more liberal in their views than Catholics (Herman, 1994). Tactically, the Canadians have also followed the US pattern of increasing diversity and violence. The bombing of Henry Morgentaler's Toronto abortion clinic in 1992 and the shooting in Vancouver of Dr. Garson Romalis in 1994 have pushed the Canadian pro-life movement to the terrorist end of its movement spectrum. Since 1989 when the Supreme Court struck down the 1969 abortion law as unconstitutional under the Charter of Rights, Canada has been without any abortion law. One of the litigants in the case, Dr. Henry Morgentaler, is for the pro-life community, their archenemy, while Joe Borowski, who lost a Supreme Court case over fetal rights in part because of the Morgentaler decision, is their martyr. These clearly identifiable foes give the Canadian pro-life movement a dimension the American one lacks, adversarial personalities upon which to pin their hopes and horrors.

In British Columbia, the pro-life movement is currently trying to revitalize itself in the wake of a number of setbacks. After a protracted struggle over picketing outside the Everywoman's Health Clinic, the "Bubble Zone" decision, which prevented picketers from demonstrating within fifty metres of the clinic, was upheld. The removal of elected health boards at BC hospitals also has the potential to limit avenues for pro-life activists. John Hof of Campaign Life has been quoted as saying this decision of the NDP's is because they would "like to see abortion in every hospital." Despite
their trenchant attitude, established organizational structure, and committed activism, the pro-life community in BC, like others, is battling a global flood tide of pro-choice sentiment among the public that supports these type of “pro-choice” decisions. It is a trend that has seen abortion numbers continue to increase in Canada, the introduction to the US of different methods of abortion and even in the relaxation of abortion laws in staunchly Roman Catholic Poland.53

The core of the abortion debate of course, revolves around the status of personhood and the concomitant rights which accompany that status. For pro-choice advocates it is the matter of a woman’s right to control her own body and exercise her reproductive function as she deems fit. Her personhood established, these rights supersede those of the foetus which only enjoys the status of potentiality.54 For pro-life supporters, the right to life necessarily extends equally to the fetus because of this potential, and the pregnant mother has an inviolable moral obligation to protect those rights due to her parental status. This debate over fetal rights has been highlighted lately by a number of legal cases in the US and Canada in which the state has attempted to protect the fetus from the actions of its mother. A Manitoba woman remanded to a drug rehabilitation centre to protect her fetus, the case of an Ontario woman who shot her near term fetus in the head, and identical cases in the US all raise the issues of fetal rights and the state’s right to restrict an expectant mother’s behaviour to protect a fetus. While the US decisions are pending, the Canadian courts found it unconstitutional to force a mother into treatment for drug addiction and charges were dropped against an Ontario mother because under Canadian law the fetus is not considered a person.55 For the pro-life movement, such rulings are frustrating defeats, but they serve to not only
fuel their commitment but redefine their movement away from abortion and towards a broader notion of what may be understood as ‘life politics’.

This augmenting of their cause is fueled by the rapid expansion of reproductive technologies and the implications they have for fetal rights and family structure. Yet pro-life and pro-family advocates seem not to have fully recognized this area of medical technology as a dangerous Pandora’s box for the family. It would seem that stories concerning surrogate grandmothers, test-tube babies for lesbians, “rent-a-womb” arrangements, destruction of frozen embryos and book deals based on the survival rate of eight fetuses being carried by a single woman could only strike horror into the heart of the movement. Yet it appears that the capacity of reproductive technologies to redefine the traditional familial relationship, in particular the procreative aspect, has yet to be addressed by pro-life and pro-family activists. At best there appears to be a vague acknowledgment of the danger this technology represents to their cause, but little strategic attention has been paid to it. It is a curious paradox. While there is currently no abortion law in Canada, and the pro-life movement is desperately seeking a highly restrictive one, they have engaged in little mobilization over attempts to restrict reproductive technologies; and yet while the federal government appears reticent to act on the abortion issue, it has called for a moratorium on reproductive technologies while legislation restricting their use can be passed.

Beyond the reproductive technologies of the womb however, the euthanasia and assisted suicide debate is being viewed as a cause that will re-invigorate the pro-life movement. Abortion, while becoming no less important to the movement, has become a stale mobilizing issue; little significant progress has been made in twenty five years of
activism. Cases such as Sue Rodriguez's doctor assisted suicide and Robert Latimer's euthanizing of his severely handicapped twelve year old daughter offer the potential to broaden the support base for a pro-life movement concerned with more than abortion. In the Latimer case for instance, disability groups have opposed the leniency shown Latimer over the killing of his daughter. Hugh Scher of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities observed "We are talking a lot about Robert Latimer and a lot about mercy and compassion or what some perceive that to be, but what's getting lost is the fact that a little girl has been killed." For the pro-life and pro-family movements, this is a debate over the sanctity of life and familial responsibility to it. Anything less than a commitment to protecting life to its natural end is a violation of that sanctity, and as Roger Scruton (1984) has argued, there exists a transcendent obligation within the family to respect and care for its members. It is these life politics, abortion, euthanasia and reproductive technology, that are at the core of the pro-family movement in the US and Canada. With the rapid expansion of euthanasia and reproductive technology, the pro-life movement has new battles to wage and the pro-family movement more threats from which the traditional family structure must be protected.

Gay Rights

Where abortion is the shame of modern society for the Christian Right, homosexuality is the scourge. For the PFM, banishing it from mainstream society is the second most important cause on their agenda for with its disappearance they believe that a prime source of social deviance, violence, pornography, promiscuity, family disintegration and disease will be eliminated. Jerry Falwell’s almost comic remark that
“God created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve” reflects the Christian Right’s biblical opposition to homosexuality but also disguises what may sometimes be described as an attitude of violent moral revulsion. Texas evangelist James Robison, well known for his anti-gay position has stated that

“It is perversion of the highest order. It is against God, against God’s Word, against society, against nature. It is almost too repulsive to imagine and describe. It is filth.” (Lienesch, 1993:84).

Other comments have been similar, with one PFM supporter describing homosexuality as “sodomy, that’s it. Where they put their cock is the dirtiest place in a human being,” and a supporter of Oregon’s attempt to limit gay rights commenting that “if someone tells my son its okay to suck cock, I’ll kill the son of a bitch.”61 This is in some respects an inflammatory description, but nonetheless these sentiments provide a strong undercurrent, if not a majority opinion of the Christian Right’s anti-gay attitude.

Biblical doctrine again provides the source of the Christian Rights opposition to homosexuality. Ralph Reed writes that

“The Christian view of homosexual practices derives from a belief in the moral principles of human sexuality found in the Bible. From descriptions in the Book of Genesis of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the injunctions against sexual misconduct in Leviticus to the apostle Paul’s letter to the Romans, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, the Bible makes it clear that homosexuality is a deviation from normative sexual conduct and God’s laws” (Reed, 1996:264-5).

Moral justification in hand, the Christian Right in the US have actively opposed gay rights throughout the country for the past twenty five years, enjoying a degree of success not to be found with the abortion cause.

Anita Bryant’s “Save Our Children” campaign was one of the first and most prominent of the Christian Right’s crusade against homosexuality. In 1977 she
successfully managed to overturn a Miami-Dade county ordinance including
homosexuals in local anti-discrimination laws (Adam, 1995). Bryant explained her
opposition to the ordinance by saying that

"Homosexuals do not suffer discrimination when they keep their perversions in the
privacy of their homes ... so long as they do not flaunt their homosexuality and try to
establish role models for impressionable young people - our children" (Lienesch,
1993:85).

Barry Adam's (1995) analysis of Bryant's organization identify its supporters as the
National Association of Evangelicals, Jerry Falwell, the direct-mail lobby group
Christian Cause, and the archbishop of Miami. Bryant also toured nationally,
promoting her opposition to gay rights, and helped organize California's Proposition 6,
a defeated bill that would have banned homosexuals from teaching in public schools
(Adam, 1995; Diamond 1995).

The 1990s have brought a continued assault by pro-family forces on gay rights.
In Oregon, a 1992 bill which would have restricted gay rights was narrowly defeated,
while in Colorado, the group Colorado for Family Values ran a successful ballot that
was later overturned preventing local jurisdictions from enacting civil rights ordinances
(Diamond, 1995). Federally, President Clinton agreed in 1996 to sign a bill restricting
same-sex marriages, and the Senate passed bills which would deny the recognition of
same-sex marriages under the Defence of Marriage Act and deny gays protection
against job discrimination. In Mississippi, a bill was signed banning the recognition of
same-sex marriages and Washington state currently has a similar bill under discussion
which appears as if it may pass.
Canadian pro-family forces appear to be confronted with a culture more resistant to anti-gay sentiments than that of the US. Although not overwhelming in majority, two different news polls showed Canadians support the protection of gays and lesbians under the Human Rights Act (fifty nine percent in favour) and the recognition of gay marriages (forty nine percent). Some significant policy decisions and legislation also have the potential to advance gay rights in the country. Corporations, including the federal government, have begun to extend same sex benefits to their employees, the BC government has legislated the right of homosexuals to adopt children, and the federal government is attempting to pass legislation protecting gays from discrimination. Didi Herman (1994) also doubts the efficacy of Christian Right forces in their various attempts to lobby against gay rights throughout the country.

Nonetheless, the PFM in Canada does mobilize against gay rights initiatives. In 1986 a campaign in Ontario opposing a "sexual orientation" amendment to the province's Human Rights code was mounted by REAL Women, the Evangelical Fellowship, the Conference of Catholic Bishops and the National Citizen's Coalition under the banner, Coalition for Family Values (Herman, 1994). REAL Women has also opposed the proposed protection of homosexuals from discrimination under the federal Human Rights Act. As national vice-president Gwen Landolt argued, changing the act would open the door to homosexual marriages and job quotas. In Ottawa, Catholic Bishops have opposed a section of Bill C-41 which would invoke harsher penalties for those convicted of crimes based on bias towards race, gender or sexual orientation. And in British Columbia, the changes allowing gays to adopt have been opposed by the
Family Coalition Party. The ideology behind this opposition to homosexuality can be found in the writing of such people as Reform ideologue William Gairdner. On the issue of gay rights he argues that

“Canada ... promotes the idea of "families," while providing funds to special-interest groups that promote perverse anti-family sexual "orientations" (Canada has rushed to embrace the entire homosexual agenda, thus weakening the privileges and protections of the natural family) ... Cultures that want to guard against the threat of homosexuality must therefore drive a cultural wedge down hard between maleness and femaleness, for it is no simple coincidence that homosexuality is flourishing in a time of feminism ... they are winning the right to all the privileges of social group membership, but without fulfilling any of the requirements ... young male and female homosexuals demand the legal, tax, and even commercial advantages and privileges of married couples, without submitting to the procreative order of society” (Gairdner, 1990:81, 281, 447).

More than the free rider problem Gairdner alludes to, for pro-family supporters the threat homosexual couples pose to the traditional family is similar to the one posed by the advent of reproductive technologies - they undermine the procreative cornerstone of the Christian family. Once this foundation is eroded it is argued, the family moves onto a slippery slope which sees marriage devalued, the socialization and education of children turned over to public institutions, and Judeo-Christian morality discarded. For pro-family supporters avoiding this requires re-centering the traditional family through social and economic policy and buttressing it with Christian values. A well-balanced nuclear family it is believed, with clearly defined roles for its members would help abate not only the general cultural and moral decay of modern society, but homosexuality itself. Gairdner cites statistics that suggest a child raised in a non-religious home has a four hundred and fifty percent greater chance of “choosing the homosexual lifestyle,” and pro-family activists Tim and Beverley LaHaye have observed that, “homosexuals are being created all the time, the product of failed families, of
weak-willed fathers and overly dominant mothers” (Gairdner, 1992:366; Lienesch, 1993:85).

The Public Education System

Public schools to the Christian Right are the secular institutions of a morally bankrupt liberal society which have usurped the natural function and right of the family to educate children. Bans on school prayer, sexual education curriculums that allegedly promote promiscuity and homosexuality, condom dispensers in school washrooms, youth violence, and an oppressive bureaucratic structure that limits parental input are all issues which have mobilized pro-family forces. This sub-movement of the PFM is far more diverse and amorphous than the pro-life movement. Its range of concerns which include home schooling, traditional schooling, private schooling, busing, textbook selection, funding and prayer defy categorizing it with a single name, although in the US Paul Weyrich’s Heritage Foundation tried to gather them all under the National Congress for Educational Excellence (Crawford, 1980). Running through all these issues are two consistent themes: lack of parental control over the education of children and the general moral decay that presides over the current public school system.

In the US, Christian Right activist Beverly LaHaye believes that “the public school has turned into a zoo today. Drugs, immorality, pornography, violence, and in some places witchcraft, have replaced what once was a great educational system” (Lienesch, 1993:82). Miriam David points out that for the Christian Right, a partial antidote for this situation is returning to public schools a strong sense of Christian morality which will help “reassert parental influence over children and to ensure
instruction in right and proper sex roles in the family as well as the wider society” (David, 1986:157). This faith extended as far as the White House, when Ronald Reagan stated that “If our opponents were as vigorous in supporting our voluntary prayer amendment as they are in raising taxes, maybe we could get the Lord back in our schoolrooms and the drugs and violence out” (quoted in Platt and Williams, 1988:42).

Efforts to inject moral fibre back into public education have been focused on school textbook selection, sex education curricula, and voluntary prayer. Since the mid-1970s, the textbook selection issue has been largely directed by Mel and Norma Gables (Diamond, 1989). Removing school library and textbooks that promote secular humanism, occultism, promiscuity, alternative lifestyles and violence, and introducing morally wholesome texts in their place, is viewed as a major step to reversing the moral erosion in schools. The Gables, working from their Texas home, have helped numerous parent groups nationwide in having books banned from their local schools, as well as from school libraries in Tennessee, Alabama and West Virginia (Diamond, 1989; Crawford, 1980). Alice Moore, the protagonist in a West Virginia banning succinctly placed the issue in its broader agenda:

“What we are fighting for is simply who is going to have control over the schools, the parents and the taxpayers and the people who live here or the educational specialists, the administrators, the people from other places who have been trying to tell us what is best for our children” (quoted in Crawford, 1980:156).

The issue of school prayer has been delicately framed as a matter of discrimination against Christians. Ralph Reed has stated the Christian Coalition position as one that supports “the right of children to bow their heads in prayer in our public schools” but in an effort to calm the furor over Newt Gingrich’s 1994 plan to hold
a vote on a school prayer amendment deftly took a position that "stressed we were less interested in mandated school prayer than we were in prohibiting religious discrimination" (Reed, 1994:251; Reed, 1996:197). It is argued that this is ultimately a matter of morally shaping children, teaching them right from wrong and instilling a proper value system in them, which means "the Bible should not be banned and the rights of parents to mold and shape the souls of their children should be respected" (Reed, 1994:257). Little progress appears to have been made on this issue, but it is one that the Christian Right keeps on the boil and seems likely to continue pursuing.

Sex education programs are the most reviled of the liberal education curriculum for the Christian Right. The inclusion of birth control methods, condom machines, descriptions of gay and lesbian sex have, says Tim LaHaye, created a "moral holocaust, a wave of promiscuity, teenage pregnancies, and venereal disease" (quoted in Lienesch, 1993:83). For the Christian Right, sex is a subject properly taught in the home but any public education program should be abstinence-based: "abstinence-based curricula that encourage young people to resist peer pressure in the area of drugs, alcohol, and sex will greatly reduce the social pathologies that have transformed too many schools into war zones. The prophets of permissiveness have done tremendous harm to our children" (Reed, 1994:257).

For pro-family advocates, regaining parental control over the educational system has come via the home, traditional and private school movements, as well as through opposing state directed initiatives such as busing. Like the IRS attempt to force Christian schools to accept racial quotas in 1978, the busing issue has been seized by the pro-family movement as another example of state interference and "social engineering"
by government bureaucrats, which denies parents the right to educate their children in an environment they deem fit (Crawford, 1980). The home, traditional and private school movement is perhaps the most vital effort of pro-family parents to gain control of the education system. Susan Rose (1989) points out that the Christian school movement is the most rapidly expanding sector of private education as the Christian Right attempts to develop a curriculum Miriam David (1986) has called "teaching family matters." Central to these alternatives is the notion of the "teacher centred" classroom and the discipline of children rather than the liberally permissive and self-absorbing focus of the "child centred" class. It is believed that this is a necessary shift if children are to be properly trained and taught respect for authority and tradition. In specifically Christian schools, there is an "authoritative, disciplined and God-centred education that emphasizes character development and spiritual training" (Rose, 1989:60). For the pro-family movement to achieve the power necessary to achieve these goals in the public system however requires more than just co-optation to the private sector. A restructuring of educational funding to a voucher system which gives parents the opportunity to choose where and how to educate their children, and aggressive activism at the level of local school boards, are imperative, as the Christian Coalition argues, to the pro-family cause in education (Reed, 1996). The Coalition’s three point plan for public education is an amalgamation of all these concerns, with its emphasis on a learning environment free of current social pathologies, a "back to basics" curriculum, and greater parental control over school board decisions (Reed, 1994).

The Canadian Christian Right is strikingly similar to their US counterparts with their views on the current public education system and the required remedial measures
which need to be taken. Overly graphic and promiscuous sex education programs, "child centred" classrooms, heavy handed governmental interference, and text and library books which promote sex, violence and alternative lifestyles have catalyzed pro-family activists over children's education. As Gairdner puts it "the people have allowed the State to take out of their hands the most important task of any nation: the nurturing of the quality of the minds, spirits, and bodies of the young" (Gairdner, 1992:277). In British Columbia, parental reclamation of this task has included a call by the pro-family movement for a voucher system in education funding, a growing pursuit of home, charter and traditional schooling, challenges to the sex education program and careful watch over school literary material.

There is a general agreement among pro-family activists in BC that a voucher system would provide parents with greater choice and control over the education of their children. In 1992, the Family Coalition Party submitted a brief to the provincial government over education funding in which they recommended

"The government of British Columbia establish a pilot program in several BC school districts where the Voucher/Choice system can be evaluated ... each school would become autonomous and the Department of Education would be required to provide only the fund required by the student enrollment to each school in the district. The problem of balancing a budget would become local and much more manageable through the co-operation of a responsible teaching staff and concerned parents" (FCP, 1992:2).

Such a system would it is believed, facilitate the growing variety of school movements in the province and across the country. Gairdner, who sees an inherent superiority in private and denominational schools, contends that the retention of public education on a voucher system like this will
“Create competition for educational excellence in all schools. (A parent receives one voucher for each child equal in value to the per-student cost of a year’s education, and can “spend” it at any qualified school he wishes, public or private - if he gets there quickly enough!). This makes the producers of education responsive to the consumers of it, instead of to the government and its ministries” (1990:244).

The benefits and shortcomings of this funding structure has recently been debated in the province over the idea of charter schools, as private schools in the province are gaining in popularity among parents. Those favouring charter schools view their “back to basics” and “teacher centred” classrooms as offering greater discipline and tradition, while opponents fear the creation of a two-tiered education system. This trend towards alternative schooling appears not to be restricted to only supporters of the pro-family movement, a situation which may provide the movement with an opportunity to increase its popular appeal.

The pro-family agenda continues with supporters challenging sex education programs and the appropriateness of reading material available to students in schools. Heather Stilwell, leader of the FCP and member of the Surrey schoolboard, has been involved with screening reading material deemed inappropriate by parents. The importance of this to the pro-family movement revolves around regaining social and moral control from the secular humanists, “collectivists in the West [who] have long since captured the prime means of media communications, plus the vast majority of schools and universities, which they all but control with “politically correct” textbooks” (Gairdner, 1990:53). This control, it is argued, has left public schools and school boards without any sense of need to instill moral values in students. Nowhere for the PFM is this more observable than in the teaching of sex education. Since 1966, Gairdner states,
"Sex education in the schools became unrestricted, and it now includes the full range of psycho-social deviations. Special attention is given to the "restructuring" of student attitudes for eager acceptance of masturbation, oral-genital sex, homosexuality, sodomy, and even animal sex, with abortion-on-demand taught as a basic right" (Gairdner, 1992:249).

The fear of pro-family activists over such liberal sex education programs is their capacity to redefine social and moral normalcy, thereby displacing traditional family values and leaving children at risk for the number of social pathologies secular humanism has supposedly wrought. To combat this trend, pro-family activists have engaged local school boards and the provincial and federal governments in an attempt to restrict and modify a program that undermines parental control, traditional family authority and basic Christian morality.72

Feminism

The visceral dislike the Christian Right has for feminism is neither masked nor difficult to understand since feminism, as an ideology, tends to occupy a position diametrically opposed to that of the pro-family movement. Feminism’s critique of the traditional family as oppressive and patriarchal, as well as socially and psychologically repressive for women and children make it the ideological antichrist to the Christian right. Phyllis Schlafly has described feminists as psychologically unstable, alleging "oppression that exists only in their distorted minds," and even as responsible for bringing sin into the world:

"The woman in the Garden of Eden freely decided to tamper with God’s order and ignore His rules. She sought her own self-fulfillment. She decided to do things her way, independent of God’s commandment. She even persuaded the man to join her in ‘liberation’ from God’s law. She thus entered the world, bringing fear, sickness, pain, anger, hatred, danger, violence, and all varieties of ugliness" (Schlafly, ).
Jerry Falwell considers feminists to be “prohomosexual and lesbian. In fact, it is shocking how many feminists are lesbians,” and Beverly LaHaye views feminism as a “philosophy of death. At its core in modern times there is a stridently anti-life motivation. Radical feminists are self-destructive and are trying to bring about the death of an entire civilization as well” (quoted in Lienesch, 1993:72). William Gairdner opines that

“Every age seems to have its peculiar intellectual cancers ... Like so many, I find myself increasingly surrounded by strident, petty, whining feminist arguments that have by now nibbled their way into every organ of our society ... When studied carefully ... their arguments, taken as a whole, amount to a virulent, cultish, man-hating, and family-hating program that threatens the fundamental health of our society' (1992:296).73

The root of these sentiments is what Berger and Berger (1983) have categorized as “acute value conflicts” between feminists and the pro-family movement. More specifically, there exists acutely disparate opinions about the ontology of the family function in Western society. The pro-family perspective is wrapped in stability, warmth, security and freedom in following a biblically prescribed natural order. Feminists however, have challenged that vision with a critical deconstruction of the family that leaves its claims of universality and naturalness on shaky ground.

With analytic views like Donzelot’s (1979) conception of the family as a site of innumerable intersections, feminists have pulled apart the traditional idea of the nuclear family into a complex series of meanings and moral sanctions. In the case of abortion, pro-life activism is interpreted as a social control mechanism aimed at restricting a woman’s sexual life. As Rosalind Petchesky argues, “if a woman can control her pregnancies, there is no built-in sanction against her having sex when, how and with
whom she pleases - and this, for the "pro-family"/"pro-life" movement, is the heart of the matter." She continues that

"Over and over again in antiabortion and "profamily" literature, one is struck with a defiantly traditional middle-class morality regarding sexual behavior and an undisguised antipathy toward all forms of sexuality outside the marital, procreative sphere" (1981:229-30)

Restricting women’s sexual behaviour to the realm of heterosexual marriage and child bearing not only eliminates for the Christian Right the terribly upsetting vision of a woman ‘enjoying her clitoris’ but helps restore the ‘proper’ psychodynamics of the familial relationship and thus the greater social order. Lienesch (1993) in his analysis of the Christian Right family has explored the psychosocial roles of man, woman and child in the family, concluding that for the PFM, the solution to familial problems is for men to adopt their natural position at the head of the household, and for women to submit. It is this structural situation which has led feminists to the conclusion that “the family is a factory for producing submissive people” and to expose women’s feelings of undervaluation, exploitation and oppression (Segal, 1983:12; Nava, 1983).

Direct frontal assaults on the traditional family and the political manipulation of it by the Christian and New Right have further fueled the antipathy of the PFM towards feminists. Works like Barrett and McIntosh’s, The Anti-Social Family, and Abbott and Wallace’s (1992), The Family and the New Right, have called for the complete destruction of the nuclear family and questioned the true motivations behind the PFM. For Barrett and McIntosh, the traditional family is characterized and driven by relations of patriarchal domination and “the principles of selfishness, exclusion, and pursuit of private interest and contravenes those of altruism, community and pursuit of the public
good” (Barrett and McIntosh, 1991:47). Familialism they argue, is a cloak for the individualist ideology that accompanies capitalist consumption and production patterns as well as the reproduction of chronic class and gender inequalities: “the family remains a vigourous agency of class placement and an efficient mechanism for the creation and transmission of gender inequality” (ibid. p. 29). Once it is understood that the family as a private institution is a constructed social process, they argue its essentialist nature can be discarded and it becomes possible to entertain social arrangements that promote a more equitable social collective. In this pursuit, Barrett and McIntosh recommend experimentation with household and personal arrangements, the avoidance of oppressive acts like heterosexual marriage with traditional roles, and a cautionary attitude towards the idea of ‘domestic bliss’. Wary of the damage the family as an economic and social institution has done throughout history, Barrett and McIntosh have no wish to see any type of replacement because “as a bastion against a bleak society it has made that society bleak” (ibid., p. 80).

Abbott and Wallace pursue a more political angle in their analysis of the motivations behind the New Right’s attempt to save the traditional family. For them, the entire pro-family agenda is one the New Right has used to politically manipulate popular support for a neoconservative economic plan in the US and Britain. Their exposé of this strategy mounted by conservative ideologues such as Roger Scruton and Ferdinand Mount in Britain and Charles Murray in the United States challenges the moral convictions and honest motives the Christian Right put forward as justifications for their agenda. It also casts doubt on a fundamental pro-family argument that sees the secular humanist bias of society as a product of state interference in family life. The
Thatcher and Reagan administrations, Abbott and Wallace argue, were strongly pro-family in their policy directions, to the point that internal party groups like the Conservative Family Campaign of the British Conservatives arose to blatantly promulgate "remoralising the nation's life through the restoration of the traditional patriarchal family and a revival of fundamental Christian values" (Abbott and Wallace, 1992:48). The Reagan administration, heavily influenced by neoconservative and New Right advisors, followed a similar path, and the current Republican dominated Senate with its "Contract with America" is doing the same, with the blessing of the Christian Coalition. As Williams (1984) duly notes, the state has a long history of policy involvement with the family, and Abbott and Wallace's analysis support Elshtain's observation that

"Today state intervention is being used for the purpose of smoothing out the conflicts between the ideology of liberal individualism and the ideology and reality of male dominance. Factions within the state are trying to reassert patriarchal control by challenging existing abortion rulings, publicly funded daycare, the ratification of ERA, and homosexual rights" (Elshtain, 1983:53).74

The error of the Christian Right argument has been to presume that policy implementation supporting alternate lifestyles and familial forms has been strictly the product of an over-interfering liberal-minded state. Over at least the last twenty years, the pro-family ideology has been an agenda of limited policy success, as liberal social legislation has increasingly come to reflect the character of Canadian, American, and British cultural hegemony. However, this is likely more (or at least equally) a product of successful mobilization by the Left and a shift in general attitudes and sociomoral norms, than simply ipso facto state interference. As well, observations such as Elshtain's point to continued conservative sentiments within the state and as such crack the edifice
of the Christian Right argument, leaving its ideological core assailable to critics such as Abbott and Wallace:

"The 'pro-family' movement is concerned with sustaining the patriarchal nuclear family as the norm and it is vigourous in its attack on welfarism, divorce, abortion and sexual deviancy. It is also anti-feminist and racist. The key areas in which it advocates political reform arise from these issues" (Abbott and Wallace, 1992:49).

Such assessments evoke infuriated reactions from the Christian Right towards 'femi-nazis,' whom they view as attempting to corrupt all that is good and wholesome in society with their toxic blend of lesbianism, availability of abortion services, universal daycare and equal opportunity employment. In the end, there is little hope for conciliation between these two groups. The vastly different 'stocks of knowledge' that construct their understanding of the function of the traditional family obviates any bridging of the ideological chasm that separates them.

About the 'Crisis' of the Universal, Natural Family

The linchpin of the pro-family movement argument is the status of the traditional family as a natural and universal institution. As a divine creation, its existence is omnipresent, from human families to those of beasts and birds. Its assumed universality and naturalness is said to stand as proof that it is the best social institution in which to develop children into model citizens. When feminists, sociologists and anthropologists challenge this claim, pro-family advocates often respond with bewilderment. To them, validation of their position is as simple as looking out a window, but this evidentiary act also shows them that the family is in crisis. Escalating divorce rates, double income families, single parent families, gay families and common
law families confirm the PFM fear about the erosion of the traditional familial form of a working father, domestic mother and their children.

It is a partially defensible argument since divorce rates have risen over the years as the dissolution of marriage has become simpler, family structure is changing with the growth of these various familial forms, and there are studies that suggest two parent families are healthier for children. Yet at the same time, statistics suggest that the traditional nuclear family is overwhelmingly the dominant familial form. A recent Canadian survey on families found eighty-three percent of children under twelve live in a household with two heterosexual parents and are growing up healthy, emotionally well adjusted and well educated. There also seems to be no diminishment in popular interest or faith in marriage as a positive social institution. As Eichler (1988) argues, despite rising divorce rates, marriage rates remain remarkably stable and high, due largely to remarriage. The pursuit of marital rights by homosexuals, in the face of at times stubborn opposition, further suggests that legal marriage has broad popular appeal and support. Any search for the ‘crisis’ of the family then, must move beyond statistical and popular reality, neither of which seem to support the claims of ‘crisis’ put forward by the pro-family movement.

Margrit Eichler and others have suggested that the root of this ‘crisis’ is embedded in the normative monolithic vision of ‘The Family’ (Eichler, 1988; Diamond, 1983; Flax, 1983). If family structure is legitimated and operationalized as only that consisting of the ‘traditional form,’ then the formative transitions which are occurring today may justifiably be viewed as hurling the family into ‘crisis.’ Yet this ‘death of the family’ thesis remains problematic for a number of reasons, one of which is that the
observation itself enjoys no novelty. As scholars like Christopher Lasch have observed, The Family has been in crisis since the mid nineteenth century (Lasch, 1977; Casey, 1989). Lasch cautions that

"The first thing to understand about the present crisis of the family is that it did not materialize overnight ... the family has been slowly coming apart for more than a hundred years. The divorce crisis, feminism, and the revolt of youth originated in the nineteenth century, and they have been the subject of controversy ever since" (Lasch, 1977:xx).

Another cautionary note regarding The Family concerns its purportedly universal status. The findings of anthropologists have cast a shadow over this claim. Malinowski’s original thesis of The Family as a universal human institution was founded on the three functions of nurturing the young, providing a bounded domicile for raising children and pursuing the daily tasks of living, and offering affective psycho-social conditioning and support (Collier et al., 1992). Yet as Collier et al. observe, Malinowski’s conclusions are mistaken because he commits the error common to most functional analysis:

"Because a social institution is observed to perform a necessary function does not mean either that the function would not be performed if the institution did not exist or that the function is responsible for the existence of the institution” (Collier, et al., 1992:34).

As the authors note, the work of later anthropologists have refuted Malinowski’s thesis of familial universality. Among the supporting evidence cited are examples of the variability of the presence and importance of the father in different cultural households, the absence of the word ‘family’ in certain languages to describe the familial relationship, the lack of a singular place used to raise children, and the absence of an expectation of developing affective bonds, or “love” between family members.
For example, Claude Levi-Strauss (1956) denied the existence of any natural law supporting The Family as universal. Examining the family from its procreative standpoint Levi-Strauss pointed out that while monogamous unions are the most widely prevalent form in the world, polygamous marriages in a variety of forms do exist, which denies the possibility of claiming universality for The Family on the basis of sexual order. Further, he identified this conjugal family as properly comprised of a mother and child only, not a father. This is a familial form which is “practically universal, since it is based on the physiological and psychological dependency which exists between them at least for a certain time” (Levi-Strauss, 1956:60). While the introduction of the father into the conjugal family is a widespread phenomenon, it is not a natural necessity, but one that is a social function of complex economic, sexual, psychological and legal recognitions. Levi-Strauss further contended that it is overall functionality that determines the prevalence of the family in society:

“When the family is given a small functional value, it tends to disappear even below the level of the conjugal type. On the contrary, when the family has a great functional value, it becomes actualized much above that level” (ibid., p. 61).

The Christian world view has bestowed on The Family the latter. It enjoys paramount functional value in western society, but again, this does not extend globally:

“During the course of centuries we have become accustomed to Christian morality, which considers marriage and setting up a family as the only way to prevent sexual gratification from being sinful. That connection has been shown to exist elsewhere in a few scattered instances; but it is by no means frequent” (ibid., p.62).

As the form of The Family thus becomes a product of social, cultural, religious and economic considerations, it also becomes a mistake to conceptualize it as universal or natural, because “what makes man really different from the animal is that, in
mankind, a family could not exist if there were no society" (ibid., p. 65). This is an argument which does not simply challenge the Christian notion of The Family, but cleanly stands the Christian relation of society and family on its head; rather than being the basis of society, it becomes the product.

If understood this way, the family becomes a product of numerous trajectories intersecting to form a familial structure which can meet various economic, reproductive, and socialization requirements for a society. This view makes possible an understanding of the family not as a static and passive monolithic institution, but as a vibrant interactive social construct that is in constant flux and capable of great adaptability. In turn this allows the opportunity to make sense of anthropological and historical research which has demonstrated the viability of different global familial forms as well as the changing forms of the family in Western society. Michael Anderson identifies this as the "problem of diversity":

"The one unambiguous fact which has emerged in the last twenty years is that there can be no simple history of the Western family since the sixteenth century because there is not, nor ever has there been, a single family system. The West has always been characterized by diversity of family forms, by diversity of family functions and by diversity in attitudes to family relationships not only over time but at any one point in time. There is, except at the most trivial level, no Western family type" (Anderson, 1980:14).

The use of different units of familial analysis, be it kinship, household or family, or different methodological approaches like demographic, household economic or psychohistory all produce results that support Anderson's thesis. Scholars studying the family using these different approaches all come to the general conclusion that the family is an institution with multiple forms and functions and is constantly changing to meet the political and economic demands of Western society (Stone, 1975; Zaretsky,
1976; Flax, 1983; Eisenstein, 1983; Conway, 1990). Even Talcott Parson's (1956) analysis, despite its functional defence of universality, demonstrates the social plasticity of the family. Parson's suggests that the extensive degree of structural and functional differentiation that the family has undergone throughout history has specialized its role in Western society as the primary site of personality development. The primary function of the family, he argues, is no longer that of an economic unit or political power group, but rather the primary socializer of children and stabilizer for adult personalities. Bert Adams' (1970) functionalist analysis of the American family exhibits a similar acknowledgment that the family's function and form changes:

"The family ... is likely to persist over the next generation, making concessions (once thought to be signs of disintegration) here and there to new definitions of individual and societal need - in pre-marital sex, divorce law, even in the areas of abortion and extra-marital sex. Yet most readers will enter marriage, with all of its intensity, choices and uncertainties" (Adams, 1970:359).

A final point emerges from Adams's conclusion that weighs heavily on the idea of The Family as natural. In noting that people enter marriage, Adams is recognizing the contractual basis of the marriage. The Christian ideal does the same. 'The Family' is based on heterosexual marriage - the legal and religious union of two people of the opposite sex. Without the social rituals that accompany these ceremonies, Christians do not recognize the union as legitimate. If this is the case, then there is no foundation from which a legitimate family can arise and consequently the Christian argument of The Family as natural collapses under the weight of its own logic and codified rituals.

Refutation of The Family as natural and universal however, leaves in doubt the reasons for the prevalence of this form in Western societies. There is still that view from the window that shows it to be the most popular and dominant form in capitalist
societies such as Canada. As Conway notes "by the mid-nineteenth century the industrial nuclear family had become the norm for virtually all Canadians, regardless of class" (Conway, 1990:13). To understand this phenomenon, Eli Zaretsky and others have explored the early periods of Western European industrial development and brought The Family forward through a series of cultural and industrial changes that have influenced the evolution of its form and function (Zaretsky, 1976; Eisenstein, 1983; Casey, 1989; Rosenberg, 1975; Stone, 1975).

In looking at the family from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, Lawrence Stone (1975) identified two evolutionary features of the family form. One was the diminishing importance of kinship with the rise in focus on the nuclear family core, while the other was the growing importance of the affective function of the family as a private domestic unit as its economic function declined. Stone attributes these shifting values to the slow rise of the modern state which demanded the subordination of kinship ties to an obedient sovereign, the missionary success of bringing Christian morality to the family, and the increasing strength of patriarchal power within the family. Zaretsky (1976) describes a similar set of processes occurring as he traces the family from the early bourgeois family to the Victorian ideal of the nineteenth century. The early bourgeois family which arose roughly in the fifteenth century between the disintegration of feudalism and rise of capitalism, provided the core for the bourgeois ideal of the sixteenth to eighteenth century family. Its economically self-producing character led the bourgeois to be more accepting towards an institution which in medieval society had been scorned: "The Catholic church, anti-sexual and savagely
anti-female, had sanctioned family life only reluctantly, as the alternative to damnation, and had forbidden it to the clergy" (Zaretsky, 1976:40).

Through the seventeenth and most of the eighteenth century, this 'patriarchal' family functioned as a complex economic and social unit, fostering a belief in individualism and becoming a principal site of religious instruction and prayer. As Zaretsky explains, English Puritans during this time came to accept the material necessity of life, as well as marriage for its capacity to restrict sexual expression and also "exalted the family as part of the natural (i.e. God-given) order of productive and spiritual activity" (ibid., p. 41). It was a situation that brought the economic and spiritual together and also provided an opportunity for the indoctrination of religious beliefs and lifestyles. Gottlieb points out that unlike the twentieth century mantra - 'the family that prays together stays together' - during this period, "prayer was not an instrument for holding families together. The family was an instrument for promoting prayer" (Gottlieb, 1993:254).

In addition to these changes, Philippe Aries' (1962) work on the historical construction of childhood highlights an emerging concept of childhood during this period that had not existed previously. As he argues, childhood did not exist as a concept in medieval society. It was only beginning in the sixteenth century that a form of childhood recognizable to the modern eye became visible. This 'coddling' phase in which children were protected because of their innocent sweetness and amusing behaviour gave way to the ascetic, disciplinary visions of the moralists of the late seventeenth century. These were predominantly clergymen who understood children to be a gift from God and requiring both safety and reformation. The issue of safety fell
to the family, but reforming behaviour became a matter of prayer within the family accompanied by external clerical guidance. The implication of course, is that the history of formal external interference in the family has a direct ecclesiastical component, not simply a sovereign or secular state one.

With the rise of industrial capitalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth century came a further reconfiguration of childhood and the family. Factory and manufacturing systems of production replaced the bourgeois family as a site of economic production and relegated it to the sphere of private social reproduction. Zaretsky argues that Methodism became the dominant religion of the time, espousing the spiritual necessity of this separation and displacing the Puritan idea of unity. Slowly, with this growth of industrial capitalism, the family came to be viewed increasingly as an emotional and spiritual shelter from the cruel realities of commerce and industry. It became a private domain, safe (or so it seemed) from the vulgarities of public life. This quality of a sanctuary made the family the ideal place for the socialization of children, a place to prepare them slowly for the role of worker and citizen, and childhood became “exalted as the time of life untainted by the roughness of material necessity” (Zaretsky, 1976:52). It also sheared off the domestic labour of the household from the openly productive sphere of the public realm. This had the effect of devaluing “women’s work” by isolating and hiding it from the economic marketplace. It also cast women further into the dark shadows of a patriarchal social order, giving them even less power and status than they had in medieval society (Zaretsky, 1976). The sharpness of this distinction between private and public life in early capitalist society was novel, if not original.
Aries points out that until the seventeenth century, life had been, for the most part, lived in public: "the density of society left no room for the family" (Aries, 1962:405).

As capitalism matured through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, the contradictions which had slowly been emerging for the past hundred years grew ever more apparent and menacing to the idea of The Family. Eisenstein has identified two of these as particularly threatening to the existence of the patriarchal family which had become the ideal of bourgeois society. The first was the conflict between liberal individualism and the continued oppression and structural dependence of women in the family. She points out that both exist antagonistically within the family itself:

"To the extent women have taken seriously and internalized the individualist values of bourgeois society for themselves, they are in conflict with the patriarchal relations of the family that define females as dependent rather than independent being. This antagonism becomes amplified when women seek jobs and are still faced with the responsibilities of a family and household organized in terms of a system of male privilege" (Eisenstein, 1983:48).

The second stems from the demands of capital for a continual source of labour and its unquenchable systemic thirst for ever greater production, consumption and profit. This has forced an increasing number of women to enter the workforce and is redefining the public/private distinction that came to define the traditional family.

"Today," Eisenstein writes, "the rigid patriarchal division of public and private, home and work life, is being challenged by advanced capitalism’s need for working mothers. Hence, the arguments of the New Right that the (patriarchal) family is in crisis" (ibid., p. 46). What emerges here is an understanding that the prevalence and persistence of The Family is a result of two forces: the structural requirements of capitalism and the strong emotional belief of people in the ideology of the family as, to use Christopher Lasch’s...
term, a "haven in a heartless world." Also tumbling out is the opportunity to understand with greater precision what 'crisis' the 'death of The Family' thesis is really about.

Similar to most periods of history, the present postmodern age of popular belief tends to rely on folklore, myth, and memory more than historical fact in constructing visions of 'the way it was'. In thinking about the family this way today, memory is pushed back to the 1950s and is confirmed with television reruns of *Father Knows Best, Leave it to Beaver,* and *Happy Days.* In Canada, as John Conway (1990) points out, this was the time when the industrial nuclear family reached its modern apotheosis. In 1951, ninety percent of Canada's 3.3 million families had a married couple with a working husband and domestic wife. The average family had two children and "divorce was so unusual that there were a scant 32,000 divorced people at the time the Census was taken" (Conway, 1990:16). However, this statistical picture of the traditional family was still patriarchal and oppressive to women:

"For women who wanted a choice, there was none, and the socialization process ensured that few wanted to be anything other than wives and mothers. Low wages, restricted jobs, no career future, hostile attitudes, and blatant sexual discrimination made the paid labour force an option of only very last resort ... In other words, this traditional family was premised on the oppression and exploitation of women" (Conway, 1990:17).

Conway emphasizes that the price paid by women for this stability was twelve hour days of hard, unrecognized labour doing laundry, cooking, comforting, placating and serving. Poignantly he recalls his own mother: "Juxtaposed with the smell of freshly baked bread in my memory is my mother's quiet weeping some nights after she thought we were long asleep" (ibid., p. 17).
Stephanie Coontz's 1992 analysis of the American family in, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*, identifies a similar trend in the US during the 1950s. Yet she argues that in fact this period was a social and demographic anathema, reversing trends which had been consistent up to the end of the 1940s:

“The “traditional” family of the 1950s was a qualitatively new phenomenon ... for the first time in more than one hundred years, the age for marriage and motherhood fell, fertility increased, divorce rates declined, and women’s degree of educational parity with men dropped sharply” (Coontz, 1992:27).

Despite Coontz’s and Conway’s valid qualifiers though, the idea of The Family was supported statistically and in popular reality. Around the corner however, lay a series of social and economic events that would directly challenge the primacy of this familial form.

In Canada, the 1960s brought a new Divorce Act (1968), the liberalizing of abortion (1969), and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (1967), it was a period of “coming together of a set of material and ideological circumstances that made women’s emancipation increasingly possible” (Conway, 1990:19). Coupled with a protracted economic crisis that continues today, such social transformations forced structural changes to The Family of the 1950s, which resulted in the proliferation of a number of different family forms. Conway has identified four main types of family forms and seven different sub-types. In 1986, 80 percent of families were those of a married husband and wife with children. But the dominant subtype was no longer that of the single male breadwinner and domestic mother (which now constitutes only 27 percent of these families). Instead, the most typical family was, and continues to be, that of the dual-income form, constituting 62 percent of this family type. Similarly,
there have been steady increases in the number of single parent families, particularly those headed by women (13 percent of the 1986 family total, making it the third largest family type), common-law families (7 percent of total families and one of the most rapidly growing family forms), blended families and transitional families.

A key feature of this pattern of expanding family form has been the necessity of families to increase their earning potential because of the economic climate and systemic demands of capitalist production. Families are increasingly concerned about the state of the economy and their capacity as a household to maintain their standard of living and care for their children.81 This is particularly true for single parent families and working poor families.82 One divorced mother commented, "being divorced is not so hard in itself, it's being poor which is" (quoted in Ambert, 1990:209). Conway notes that in 1985, sixty percent of female single parent families lived below the poverty line, a trend confirmed by Coontz in the US and one that supports the "feminization of poverty" thesis. Coontz notes though, that this is not a product of diversified family forms, citing studies by economists which have shown there is “77 percent of poverty that is not associated with familial transformations” (Coontz, 1992:258).

What remains at this juncture is to understand that two crises exist today for the family in Western societies like Canada. The first affects not solely The Family in its traditional form, but all families as they attempt to grapple with the challenges presented by an ever-expanding and consumerist capitalist economy. The second is the crisis the pro-family movement has focused upon. It is a crisis that sees the “death of The Family” in the rapid social and economic changes modernity has brought with it. It does appear that the ‘idyllic’ form of the 1950s traditional nuclear family is declining;
certainly statistics seem to suggest that, but this form was in many respects illusory and deceptive, and as Levi-Strauss observed, while "the assertion that the nuclear family successfully fulfills certain functions is perfectly valid ... the reverse assertion that other social forms can never suitably fulfill these functions is both empirically and theoretically invalid" (Levi-Strauss, 1956:82). One other point needs stressing. It is clear that the dominant family type in Canada is that of a married heterosexual couple with children, so the significant change to The Family has been the emergence of dual-income subtypes. This suggests that the 'death of The Family' has an economic more than socially driven aetiology. But regardless of economic or social onslaughts, the family does not appear to be dying, one particular type may be diminishing, but the idea of the family remains strong. As Berger and Berger (1983) have observed in their defense of the traditional family, the family is a remarkably adaptable institution and will likely continue, if for no other reason than Aries observation that "men and women will always go on loving one another, will always go on having children ... and will always go on guiding the first steps of those children" (Aries, 1962:9).

This is the hope behind the mission of the pro-family movement and the Christian Right in Canada, that there is enough sentimental support for the nuclear family that it can provide a foundation upon which to reconstruct the 'idyllic' form of the 1950s traditional family. Pro-family forces believe that to achieve this requires a profound change in social and moral attitudes in Canada which must take the form a decisive shift away from the allegedly destructive forces of secular humanism and towards the safety and truth of biblical scripture. The institution of heterosexual marriage they argue, must be strengthened by dissuading divorce and homosexual
marriages. Further, they contend that mothers staying at home to raise children should be recognized as a legitimate career choice and one that should be actively promoted. Abortion and euthanasia they continue, must be severely restricted or ideally banned, and health care support systems must be structured more towards helping women with crisis pregnancies and people needing palliative care. Also, changes in the economy and size of government must also accompany this. Freeing up the capitalist marketplace and getting the government 'off the backs of families and on their side' must be a priority if the tax burden on families is to be alleviated. Finally, they believe that public education policy should be driven more by parental opinion and less by heavy-handed bureaucracies. These are the issues of the pro-family movement in Canada. These are also the issues of the Family Coalition Party of BC (FCP) and the need for their legislative implementation was the driving force behind its creation. Its founders and supporters stubbornly cling to a vision of The Family as it fades into the past of this postmodern age, determined to resurrect it through a strategy that combines social movement activism with institutionalized political action.

The next chapter documents the history of the Family Coalition Party of British Columbia as a party/movement, from its genesis in 1991 through the provincial general election of 1996 to its current political and organizational state in 1997. What becomes evident is that the FCP arose because of several shifts in constitutional and policy directions that occurred within the Social Credit party of BC and that like other minor political parties, it is struggling in its attempt to develop into a viable political and social movement force. Perhaps more importantly at this point however, it also becomes obvious that the Family Coalition party shares a political, moral, religious and economic
ideology highly resonant with that of the pro-family forces examined in this first chapter. FCP attitudes and policy positions on issues such as abortion, public education, gay rights, and the role of government and family in society, make it apparent that, like the pro-family movement in the United States and the neoconservative agendas of various governments in Canada, theirs is a political philosophy deeply rooted in the traditional tenets and tensions of Burkean conservatism.
Chapter 3
The Family Coalition Party of British Columbia:  
A Party of Last Resort

Nineteen ninety one was a year of some remark for conservative politics in 
British Columbia. Easter brought the resignation of Social Credit Premier William 
Vander Zalm as he faced conflict of interest charges surrounding his sale of Fantasy 
Gardens. As well, the autumn provincial election foreshadowed the erosion and 
splintering of the solid conservative bloc known as Social Credit that had largely 
dominated BC politics for the past forty years. Hugely dissatisfied with Vander Zalm’s 
administration, the electorate had not only brought the NDP, this time under Mike 
Harcourt, back to power after more than fifteen years, they had also reintroduced the 
Liberal party, under Gordon Wilson, to the BC political landscape. For religious 
conservatives in the province, these political developments were a sword with two 
particularly sharp edges. On one side, the province had taken a decided shift to the left 
with the NDP victory and growth of the Liberal party which threatened to create a more 
difficult political climate in which to foster conservative social and economic policies. 
On the other side, they had lost both a Premier and a political party sympathetic to their 
concerns over pro-life and pro-family issues. Politically homeless, the staunchest 
conservatives of these Socred refugees sat down at a kitchen table in Victoria and 
created BC’s first pro-life and pro-family political party, the Family Coalition Party of 
British Columbia (FCP).

Registered in June 1991, the FCP is a socially conservative free enterprise party 
founded on two unconditional principles. The first of these is the recognition of life
from the moment of conception to the point of natural death. Next is the recognition and acceptance of the family as a legally married man and woman with natural or adopted children. All of the party's policies and mandates are directed towards the legislative support of these principles, which includes removing abortion funding from the Medicare fee schedule and having "family friendly" legislation passed that would among other things ease the tax burden on families and grant greater parental control over a child's education. It is a platform that has attracted a small but extremely dedicated core membership of long time pro-life and pro-family activists. The founders of the party, Kathleen and Mark Toth have been active in the pro-life movement for over twenty five years. The current leader of the party, Heather Stilwell, also has a long history of pro-life activism as well as being the past deputy leader and leader of the Christian Heritage Party. The executive board members of the party bring equally long records of involvement in the movement and the majority of the general membership are active or at the very least hold memberships in pro-life or pro-family organizations.

In its six years of existence the FCP has run candidates in two general elections and two by-elections, has presented a number of policy briefs to provincial commissions and has earned the respect and admiration, if not the electoral support, of the pro-life and pro-family community in BC. The party currently finds itself at a crossroads after their modest achievements of these six years. General membership hovers at just under the one thousand mark, and while they did run almost twice as many candidates in the 1996 election as the 1991 election, results were nonetheless disappointing for the party executive. They are faced with a number of challenges if they are to expand themselves into a more viable political force, including expanding their membership base, recruiting or developing expertise in the areas of policy development and media
management, and managing the problems associated with being a mainstream political party founded on issues more commonly arising in the realm of social movement activism.

It is this last point that gives the FCP its unique characteristic among the province’s political parties. Their aim is to raise awareness among British Columbians about legislation they view as harmful to the traditional family and which denigrates respect for human life and, in turn, replace it with more favourable legislation. However, the party does not consider the winning of political power as primary to achieving such awareness. Bill Vander Zalm, who was instrumental in developing the initial membership base for the party, commented that

“They are very different from any other political party that I know, in the sense that they are not running to win an election, but rather see it as an opportunity to obtain the best possible platform for the purpose of debating their beliefs and their views of what is needed in this particular society, meaning BC.”

They are a party seeking change, not power. Indeed, Mrs. Toth has remarked that it “would be nice if we didn’t even have to be here” but years of frustrating work within other political parties and in the general movement produced few tangible victories and have led ultimately to the last resort of forming a political party. This chapter focuses on the history of that formation to date, the policies of the FCP as a pro-life/pro-family party, and the challenges the party faces at the beginning of its seventh year.

Put Out on the Street: Social Credit Goes Secular

When Bill Vander Zalm took over the leadership of the Social Credit Party in 1986 and then subsequently became Premier, a wave of hope and optimism must have run through the province’s pro-life and pro-family ranks. Here was a Catholic Premier not afraid to take a stand openly opposing abortion leading a free enterprise party
founded on Christian principles. Having known Vander Zalm for over fifteen years, the Toths had in fact offered their support to him should he pursue the Socred leadership, and joined the Party as a result of his acclamation as leader. Heather Stilwell and her husband, along with many other now FCP members had also been active within the Social Credit Party before and during Vander Zalm's time with the party. Two FCP executive board members had been constituency association presidents and had carried on with these positions for a time even after Vander Zalm had resigned as Premier and the FCP had been formed. What initial optimism existed though, likely turned to frustration for these religious conservatives as they witnessed Vander Zalm politically pilloried over his attempts to remove abortion from the medicare fee schedule, and the eventual dismantling of the Christian philosophy of the Social Credit Party.

As the Toths describe it, several pro-life lobbyists attended the 1986 Socred leadership convention in Whistler, BC and backed Mr. Vander Zalm because of the forthright position he took in opposing abortion in general and specifically the use of public funds to pay for the procedure. In 1988 Vander Zalm attempted to turn this position into Social Credit Party policy by making a proclamation in the provincial legislature that the government would no longer fund abortions on demand. In a lengthy ministerial statement, the Premier made his government's position clear:

"The Supreme Court in its judgment made a serious statement of concern when it acknowledged that a fetus - Latin for "baby" - at some point was no longer a part of a woman, but rather an individual human being with its own right to protection. At what point they didn’t, couldn’t or wouldn’t say, but rather said legislators would need to decide this very quickly. ... My government takes the position that we can in no way be a party to open abortion on demand. The court has spoken. We cannot stop abortions, but we can speak out on behalf of humanity, on behalf of those babies and in support of morality. Our action is not simply an issue of public moneys used for the funding of a cause but rather one where in a forthright way we also say that society cannot be
expected to rectify whatever some individuals may be unhappy with in their lives. ... The senseless termination of human life at the slightest whim or notion is simply removing yet another stone from the wall of an already crumbling society. ... As far as one's moral values influencing government's decisions, I could never support legislation which I would consider to be immoral ... I cannot be a liar or a hypocrite."

The proclamation was subsequently overturned by the courts because no statute had been passed by the government on which to found the removal of abortion funding from the fee schedule. For Vander Zalm and many of his supporters, this political debacle alluded to a growing conspiracy within the Socred party to undermine the Premier's credibility as well as pointing to an emergent secular humanist philosophy inside the party. In a 1994 British Columbia Report article, Vander Zalm describes it this way:

"In 1988 the tables turned and the knives came out. ... Suffice it to say that leaks from confidential cabinet meetings started to undermine the government's efforts. Only that which some wanted to see in public debate was leaked in distorted fashion. ... There was the cabinet decision not to fund abortions through the health plan - which soon turned into a pro-life/pro-choice debate."

This adversarial climate within the Social Credit Party came to characterize the next three years of Vander Zalm's Premiership as the rift between the conservative and liberal elements within the party continued to grow. The rift was not a product of Vander Zalm taking over leadership of the Socreds however, but rather the result of a change in the ideological support base of the party that had begun years before. Burkinshaw observes that when Bill Bennett won the 1975 provincial election

"Social Credit was not entirely the same party it had once been. It had added to its former populist constituency (which had largely been centred in the interior and the Fraser Valley) much of the sophisticated urban constituency in the upper-middle class areas of Vancouver, which in the past had usually supported the provincial Liberal party" (Burkinshaw, 1995:199).

Vander Zalm believes that the resulting tension created by this change fully emerged only after Bennett stepped down:
“It started I guess at the leadership convention at Whistler, where the initial rift between the more liberal and conservative element [sic] came to the forth, it existed during Bill Bennett’s time and WAC Bennett’s time, but because it was viewed by many long time Socreds as a sort of Bennett party, no one really dared or bothered to challenge much. That changed following Whistler in 1986, and I guess immediately after the leadership convention the more liberal element began to organize and they became more daring during the heated debated over abortion funding in 1988.”

This increased activity by the liberal element of the Socreds was forcing the religious conservatives of the party to its fringes as they found maintaining their ideological presence a progressively difficult task. In an attempt to counter this growing influence, Kathleen Toth ran for the 1990 by-election Socred candidacy in Oak Bay - Gordon Head to at least give some profile to the pro-life religious conservatives in the party. After losing the nomination to Susan Brice, Mrs. Toth tried again by running for the nomination in the Victoria-Beacon Hill by-election of the same year. In this nomination race, Toth “ran into a party machine, like the Republican convention. We ran into balloons, bands, and several ministers there, it was obvious overkill and that they didn’t want me to win.” She lost the nomination to Suzanne Hansen, a Beacon Hill Alderman, who quit after winning the nomination Toth says because “my people wouldn’t help her in an election and so she believed she couldn’t win.”

In the general election of 1991, Toth returned to the Oak Bay-Gordon Head riding and again faced off against Susan Brice, but this time as an FCP candidate taking on a Socred.

The ebbing security that religious conservatives within the Socred party had felt was further accelerated by a challenge to the Christianity clause within the Social Credit constitution in 1990. This proved to be the crippling blow for Socreds like the Toths, who viewed the removal of the clause as the final surrender to the secular and liberal forces within the party. Vander Zalm’s view of this was that
"It was a real struggle to keep peace between the liberal and conservative elements within Social Credit. That was my challenge, and I found it to be an impossible one, but for many of the conservative elements with Social Credit, that related particularly to its rather pro-Christian image, because basically Social Credit was born out of the Christian movement many years back [sic]. And many that related to its pro-Christian image, they suffered great disappointments during that struggle ... because the more liberal element's first achievement was to, in the name of political correctness, destroy the appearance of the pro-Christian image."

The issue of the Christianity Clause came forward at the party's 1989 annual convention, when Michael Levy, an orthodox Jewish member from Vancouver - Little Mountain, walked out of the convention in opposition to the clause and the executive's refusal to withdraw it forthwith. Viewing it as exclusionary to anyone other than Christians, Levy was quoted as saying

"Let the right wingers go because you're opening up the party to the mainstream, liberals and conservatives. Let's make it what it's supposed to be, a mainstream party. That's what Grace McCarthy envisions. ... There's room for all. It's time the fundamentalists took the blinders off. The constitution should be changed to meet the 1990s."

After a year long review, a constitutional amendment convention was held and the Christianity clause was replaced by one that referred to God, but mentioned nothing about Christian principles. Some members, like the Toths, viewed this as a deliberate political strategy by Grace McCarthy to wrestle control of the party away from conservatives in the party and further undermine Premier Vander Zalm's credibility. According to Mrs. Toth, when the initial vote for the change was brought to the floor, the change was defeated but McCarthy quickly stood up and claimed her vote had not been counted. During the delay, a number of her supporters were brought in from the hallway outside and in a second vote, the change was approved. This proved to be a defining moment for religious conservative politics in the province because it led
directly to the formation of the FCP. As Mrs. Toth remarked, “the FCP wouldn’t have happened if this hadn’t happened.”

Vander Zalm’s staunchest supporters had felt his leadership had been continually sabotaged by these kinds of tactics from the moment of his surprise victory at the 1986 Whistler leadership convention. Vander Zalm had entered the race at its mid-point after meeting with McCarthy, who was hoping he would draw enough votes away from Bud and Brian Smith to allow her victory. His unexpected victory in the race, pleasant for religious conservatives like the Toths, nonetheless left several high profile Socreds disappointed. In an article written for *British Columbia Report*, Vander Zalm says that

“Grace and her advisers were terribly embittered and refused to follow through on the commitment of support; the knives were quickly drawn by a number of losers. ... I believed that for the sake of party unity and the good of our province, I should trust the defeated leadership candidates and some of their handlers or advisers and bring them on side by offering them good, high-profile positions. ... These appointees were standing behind me from the first day of picture-taking - a most uncomfortable position, I was to learn shortly after.”¹³

The Toths and several FCP members who were Vander Zalm supporters cited this chronic “back stabbing” treatment of Vander Zalm by his cabinet as part of their reason for leaving the Socreds and a source of their disillusionment over party politics in general. Asked about this being a motivation for his supporters leaving the Socreds and joining the FCP, Vander Zalm replied that

“Anyone that sees people in politics to be nice people is probably very far off base. They are not the nicest people in society that find their place in politics. They are often people that are seeking power, influence, position, stature, recognition, all the sorts of qualities that don’t necessarily make the type of person one would seek out to be a loyal, true and good friend. So for people to view what happened to me as back stabbing, they are losing sight of the fact that it is not really a nice business with nice people.”
Of course, the ultimate sabotage of Vander Zalm’s leadership proved to be self-inflicted. On April 2, 1991, conflict of interest commissioner Ted Hughes found Vander Zalm guilty of using his position as a public official for personal benefit during his sale of Fantasy Gardens. Less than an hour after these findings were released, Vander Zalm stepped down as Premier. For the Toths, this was one more nail in the Socred party coffin, but their loyalty to Vander Zalm remained firm. In a show of support, they wrote letters to the editor defending the disgraced Premier and organized an 800 person rally on the lawn of the legislature just days after Ted Hughes’ findings.

The proverbial straw for the Toths came in the subsequent leadership convention when Rita Johnston took over the party and declared it to be pro-choice with regards to the abortion issue. This left the Toths not simply without a party in which to be politically active, but without one for which they could even vote. Mrs. Toth describes it this way:

“Rita Johnston, who became the leader, informed everybody the Social Credit Party was now pro-choice, and so we realized we didn’t have a party anymore, because it is a position of conscience, it’s a disqualifying issue for us, if someone doesn’t think there is anything wrong with abortion, then we can’t vote for them, and we knew we had no one we could vote for, since the other parties had stated their party positions on the abortion issue and they all had the same position.”

The risk alienating Socred religious conservatives posed for the party was not lost on the new Socred leadership, nor was their importance to the party. Rita Johnston and former Socred caucus chair Nick Loenen both appealed to Socreds like the Toths to stay the course with the party because they recognized that

“Under Vander Zalm, the Socreds rallied strong Christian support for the party the likes of which had not been seen since the early 1970s, when WAC Bennett invoked higher powers in the battle against the godless socialists. Prior to the 1986 election, Vander Zalm’s proud declaration of faith drew no fewer than 11 potential Socred candidates from the ranks of serious Christians.”
For the Toths however, it was a hollow appeal. The party which they had actively supported for more than five years had betrayed their friend, denied its Christian foundations and abandoned any moral concern for pre-natal life; it had become secular, humanist, and vulgarly opportunistic. For the true religious conservatives of the province the road to Damascus no longer wound through the Social Credit Party of BC.

In fact, Mrs. Toth may have made a prophetic comment during the debate over the Christianity clause when she said that “the roots of the Social Credit party are Christian. ... [when she and her family lived in Alberta] ... we saw the Social Credit party die in one election, and it was after they removed the Christianity clause.”17 This is a position the Toths hold today regarding the disintegration of the BC Socred party, although it is a matter of some speculation as to whether the collapse of the Socreds was primarily a result of the party losing the support of its Christian constituency. Some members concur with the Toths: “The rock solid base of the party was the Christian element and when that left ... there was nothing left for the party. That is why the Social Credit Party collapsed.” However, there are those, like Mr. Vander Zalm who remain doubtful about such a unilateral explanation:

“I think that Social Credit did not have an exposé [sic] on Christian members, but many of the more conservative Christians probably felt more at home with Social Credit where they could mix and mingle with people of similar minds, than they would with another party. If that one issue alone, because it became so controversial towards the end within Social Credit, had turned off all Christians and caused the collapse of Social Credit and the formation and growth of other parties, then the FCP first of all, and Reform secondly should have been much more the beneficiary of that than they were. I don’t think the Christian community is nearly as cohesive as some of the other identifiable communities within society as it affects politics.”

Nonetheless, the 1991 general election relegated the Socreds to third party standing as they won just seven legislative seats, and in 1996 they were virtually wiped off the political map in BC as they failed to win a single seat and received less than two
percent of the popular vote. Unlike previous conventions that were heavily attended, the 1994 convention was attended by only 254 delegates and only 1,919 of 36,000 members cast a ballot as Larry Gillanders became the new leader of the nearly defunct party. Ironically, a Socred Women’s Auxiliary luncheon honouring Mr. Vander Zalm drew more attention than the actual convention. Concerning the lack of interest in the convention, Vander Zalm said that

“There are still an awful lot of people out there that would like to support Social Credit. But they might feel more at home with Reform or Family Coalition, now that the Socreds want to become more like where the Liberals are at.”

Currently Social Credit executives are attempting to revitalize the party through participation in the newly formed Enterprise League of British Columbia, which is attempting to rebuild the province’s once solid right-wing bloc by bringing together the numerous conservative parties which emerged after the collapse of Social Credit. The newest Socred leader, Ken Endean, has also entertained changing the name of the party in an attempt to remedy the splintered right-wing vote which many conservatives feel allowed the NDP to win the 1996 general election. Grace McCarthy is another supporter of forming such a bloc: “If that doesn’t happen in the next three or four years … we could repeat history” and Liberal and Reform party executives have once again begun discussions on a merging of the parties. As for the FCP, Mrs. Toth was invited and attended the initial meeting of the Enterprise League. The party she says is not opposed to such a coalition, but for the FCP to join, any new party must accept their two founding principles, something she feels at this point is most unlikely.
"What the heck, why don’t we just do it": A New Political Party is Born

There is a certain odd symmetry between celebrations surrounding Easter and the rise of the FCP. Christian, pro-life sentiments had been killed off in the Social Credit Party once Vander Zalm had stepped down and Rita Johnston had become interim Premier, but they were resurrected soon after Easter 1991 when Kathleen and Mark Toth first sat down at a kitchen table with two other relatives and one friend to discuss the potential of forming their own political party. The initial discussion was largely the product of the frustration the Toths felt over the tumultuous year they had just experienced with the Socreds and a casual remark made by a relative that they should consider forming their own party. The Toths had heard that a pro-life/pro-family party had formed in Ontario several years earlier for reasons identical to their own plight - with no party supporting a position guaranteeing the inalienable right to life there was no place to cast their vote. Mrs. Toth remembers that

"Mark and I discussed forming another party, well we have to have ten thousand signatures, that lets us off the hook, we had no responsibility to do that, because although there may be other people who feel like we do, we felt if we could do something that was within our expertise, we would but we didn’t feel obliged to go to those lengths. When we inquired with BC Elections and found out they only needed five signatures, a non-profit society needed five directors and that would be the beginning of the political party, we felt we didn’t have an excuse not to try and the FCP was formed."

After several initial meetings, making inquiries to the Ontario Family Coalition Party, and working out the specific details required to register and operate a political party in BC, the Toths turned in their Socred memberships and prepared to launch the FCP in British Columbia.

The Toths acknowledge that the sanctity of life issue was the paramount impetus for the party’s formation, but certainly the removal of the Christianity clause from the
Socred constitution was nearly as significant. Alec Marshall, one of the original five and the party’s first treasurer observed that “Michael Levy, he was the impetus for the FCP because Mark and Kathleen felt so frustrated about the issue of Christian values. Without him there wouldn’t be an FCP.” For the Toths, there was an inevitable connectedness between the two, because as Mrs. Toth puts it, with the removal of the Christianity clause “we could see it beginning to disintegrate, we felt if the Christian principles were gone then it wouldn’t be long before the rest of it fell.” Mr. Toth views these events more as a catalyst, given their long activist history for the pro-life cause. Having run in Edmonton as a pro-life Liberal during the 1979 federal election and having been active trying to pass pro-life legislation within the Alberta Social Credit Party, Mr. Toth believes that their “impetus to form this party was forming all the time, maybe unconsciously.” After finding out that the BC Elections Act only required five signatures to establish a board of directors for a political party, they decided “what the heck, why don’t we just do it?”

Having no experience in the development and workings of a political party constitution, the Toths approached the executive of the Ontario FCP about the possibility of using theirs as the foundation for their party. The Ontario party executive agreed on the condition that the Toths use the name “Family Coalition Party.” The Toths did not care for the name, but needing the constitution, agreed and after some minor modifications to it, had the FCP’s first constitution. To acquire the necessary five signatures to register the party, the Toths attended a pro-life convention and gathered twenty-one signatures for the party’s first board of directors. Among this pioneering group were Dr. Walter Kazun, who had served as President of the Canadian Physicians for Life, Cecilia Von Dehn, a prominent pro-life activist who owns the
private residence known as Gianna house beside the Everywoman’s Health Clinic, and Paul Formby, the lawyer who recently defended Vancouver abortion protester Maurice Lewis. On June 25, 1991 the party was officially registered with BC Elections as the society known as the Family Coalition Party of British Columbia.

In British Columbia, the FCP is as Mr. Toth describes it “a new kind of party because of strong pro-life, pro-family principles. ... to my knowledge ... there has never been a party whose main principles are pro-life, pro-family. That may be unpopular but I believe it will be a torch.” Despite the recognition of the unpopularity or political incorrectness of taking an inviolable pro-life stand, the Toths drew a hard line:

“There is always someone within the group who would say ‘maybe we should downgrade the abortion issue’ so we could get elected. But the basis of our party was the sanctity of life. We wanted that up front, even if not politically wise [sic]. We also felt strongly that family was suffering and we wanted to have that up front as well. ... We have to protect the traditional family, male and female. Sometimes families have problems but the family is the source of humanity and that is where our greatest problem was derived from, the breakdown of the family.”

The Toths did however, deliberately steer the party away from one potentially contentious issue. There is no mention of Christianity, God, or Christian principles in the party’s constitution. As Mr. Toth describes it, they spoke to a number of their friends and advisors, including Mr. Vander Zalm and a number of clergy about this issue but were strongly advised not to “even mention the God thing, just do the Christian thing. Therefore we didn’t mention God in our constitution but based the principles on Judeao-Christian principles.” It is a strategy however, which has been only marginally successful. While most of the membership agree that it is not overtly Christian like the Christian Heritage Party, they do view it as religious in its guiding principles and membership makeup. The most common response among the membership is that ‘it’s not a religious party per se but a moral party, and religious
people tend to join it. Although the party has been structured to deflect the image of being part of the Christian Right and there are deliberate attempts by the executive to downplay this ideological character, their policy positions and political rhetoric make one conclusion inescapable: The FCP is a religious conservative party whose policies resonate strongly with the pro-family, Christian Right movements in the US and other parts of Canada. Keynote speakers for the party’s Annual General Meetings stand as testament to an ideological intimacy. Among them have been Don Pennell, Leader of the FCP in Ontario, federal Reform Party ideologue William Gairdner, and ex-Premier of Saskatchewan Grant Devine.

**Abortion, Euthanasia, Reproductive Technology**

The importance of the pro-life position to the FCP membership has become self-evident to this point. As far as the Toths and the FCP membership are concerned, when the sanctity of life is defended, it becomes the cornerstone upon which every other social issue and government policy naturally builds. Mrs. Toth remarked that when you have addressed the pro-life issue and “when that one is right, the other ones fall into place.” Another long time executive member put it like this: “number one is to defend the sanctity and right to life. Without life, nothing else matters, it doesn’t matter if you get an education, if we deny life we deny everything.” For the FCP, the sociomoral issues facing modern society must be given priority over economic considerations. Bill Stilwell, another long time FCP member believes that

“We can address economic issues just as well as anybody else can but it is the moral issues that have to be addressed. The fundamental underlying causes of what is happening to our society today and we try to address those issues and direct them from the perspective of the family. So it started from the pro-life thing and becomes more encompassing.”
It becomes unremarkable then, that the second stated purpose of the FCP in their constitution, after holding political office, is "2(b) To enact laws and policies which recognize the right to life of every innocent human being from conception to natural death."

For the general membership, this clause is what makes the FCP a safehaven for their vote. A great many of the membership have admitted to spoiling their ballot or simply not voting during provincial elections because there was no pro-life party which they could support. Deeply committed to their pro-life beliefs, members have said things like, "yeah, I wasted my vote, I admit it. I feel conscience bound not to vote for someone I cannot respect morally or ethically and so I go in there and I spoil my ballot." It has also resulted in a membership concentrated with long time pro-life activists. Apart from the notable activists on the initial board of directors, Mrs. Toth herself was national president of Campaign Life Canada for four years in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Heather Stilwell has been national president for Alliance for Life, Gerhard Herwig, a long serving FCP executive member and election candidate, has been heavily involved with pro-life activities in the province, and past presidents of Birthright are also members of the party. The single biggest disappointment for the party though, is that more pro-life supporters have not joined the party. Estimates put the pro-life community at roughly 20,000 in the province, but with a membership of less than one thousand clearly this community has not fully embraced the FCP.

Politically, the FCP have constructed their policies and activities to reflect their staunch pro-life position. Their health care policy states that the party would

"Discontinue government funding of abortions, grants to abortion clinics, condoms and syringe programs, invitro fertilization, sterilization, fetal transplants, fetal experimentation programs and euthanasia. Support grants for needy pregnant mothers
and their babies, early pre-natal counseling about alcohol, drugs and poor nutrition so as to decrease the number of premature births and low birth-weight babies.”

They also hold an “opposition to the replacement of elected hospital boards by government appointed regional community health boards.” Additionally, they support the implementation of a conscience clause for health care workers which would protect them from penalty should they refuse to perform or assist with a procedure they may find “morally repugnant.” The party has also publicly opposed the availability of the ‘morning after pill’ at regional health units, and Bill 48, the so-called ‘bubble zone’ legislation, which prevents pro-life protesters from coming within fifty metres of what they have termed the “Everywoman’s Abortuary.”

The most significant activism the FCP has engaged in concerning abortion came in the spring of 1992 when the party opposed the $1 million dollars allotted to twenty eight women’s centres in the province by the NDP. It took the form of the party collecting 6,100 signatures in an attempt to force the government to hold a referendum on the public funding of abortion under the new Initiative, Referendum and Recall Act. Despite being unsuccessful, the party continued to collect upwards of 10,000 signatures from which they could mount another attempt in the future.

During the 1996 provincial election, candidates campaigned on the pro-life issue and in two instances highlighted the pro-life position of the party in potentially confrontational fashion. In the Vancouver-Kensington riding Mark Toth placed a sign on the lawn of Gianna House which read “Your taxes pay for killing unborn babies next door. The Family Coalition Party would stop such funding. In Vancouver-Kensington vote for Mark Toth.” In the riding of Nelson-Creston, candidate Brian Zacharias had a 4X8 foot sign made for the back of his pickup truck which read “Elect Brian Zacharias.
The Family Coalition Party of B.C. Homosexuality and Abortion are against God and Nature. Take a Stand. Love Tells the Truth." In general terms though, the abortion issue rarely emerged as controversial during campaign activities and all-candidates meetings. For the most part, the FCP appeared to be naturally recognized as the pro-life party in the province but were not attacked or supported for that position. During an all candidates meeting in the West Vancouver - Capilano riding for instance, candidate Jim Kelly fielded a question from the floor from a lady who identified him as the "Right to Life Party," despite abortion not once being mentioned during the debate, and proceeded to ask a question about education.30

Similar to the pro-life movement in general, the FCP recognizes the pro-life issue as including euthanasia and matters concerning reproductive technology, but have not been particularly active in opposing them or promoting the party along this expanded platform. In identifying respect for life as the overriding principle of the FCP, Mrs. Toth commented that "its not only abortion but euthanasia, bioengineering, experimental embryology and that" and on the party’s Internet website it is stated that “the Family Coalition Party opposes in-vitro fertilization, artificial insemination, fetal transplants, cloning and other fetal experiment programs, embryo and gamete cryogenesis, surrogate motherhood and abortion.” Yet in the last eighteen months between executive meetings, annual general meetings and all-candidate meetings, the topic of euthanasia has not once arisen. There has recently been some preliminary contact between the FCP and the newly formed Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, but at this point it appears cursory and informational rather than associative.

The membership does appear to uniformly oppose euthanasia as it does abortion, but this does not extend to matters of reproductive technology. There is a
certain moral horror reflected in members comments about some of the more extreme of these technologies, but there does exist a range of opinions regarding its acceptability:

"I'm not quite sure of the full impact of it. ... frozen embryos in Britain, frozen and destroyed, don't like that and manipulating genes is no good but using an artificial way for a man and wife to conceive is good. God has given us the technology to use but we have to use it well and not abuse it."

"I think any of that meddling in procreation is absolutely against God's will and anyone who promotes it or does it, well, unless they change their ways will be condemned to hell. It's just not an acceptable part of our society."

"Bad, bad, it's caused more trouble than anything else."

"I know there are many pro-lifers who feel invitro's okay to help a couple conceive but I feel medical science has used experimentation in the stream of life to the point that it is creating some kind of monster. Its like some things you think are good because this couple wanted a baby so badly, so it must be good, but at the same time they're doing all that experimenting, treating life as if it were a toy."

These statements betray a conflict for the pro-family membership of the FCP. While such technologies could be used to strengthen the traditional family, they teeter on a humanist slippery slope which could be, and will likely be, they believe, devastating to the family. Like all the concerns of pro-family activists, reproductive technologies do not exist in isolation from other sociomoral problems that are viewed as destructive to the family. There is an interconnectedness between all of them. The FCP believe for instance, that restricting abortions and promoting opportunities for mothers to carry to term for instance, would diminish adoption waiting lists and reduce the demand for such technologies. Conversely, expanding reproductive technologies such as the birth control pill can have damaging social and familial effects. As one member put it, when the pill was "one of the up and coming things, STD's spread like wildfire and when women went on the pill they became promiscuous, what feminists called sexually active." Another member commented that these technologies allow
“unmarried woman or lesbian couples to have artificial insemination, which is appalling because you are deliberately denying that child a father.” More than any other concern about this issue for FCP members however, is that artificial methods of procreation promote the idea of children being a right and a commodity rather than a gift, which in turn cheapens life and devalues the role of the traditional family.

**Gay Rights**

A more serious and immediate threat to the devaluation and destruction of the family is, for the FCP, to be found in the arena of gay rights. The prospect of gay couples adopting children and demanding equal status with married heterosexual couples is viewed with egregious and moral disdain. One member sees it as an “illogical statement that you can have gay marriage. They can’t produce offspring, it is a falsehood, it is a sham.” Such opinions are heavily in the majority among FCP members and born out of a position that homosexuality is unnatural, unhealthy, against God’s will and detrimental to the general social well being:

“If you’re going to accept God’s laws which I feel a civilization that will prosper will do, then homosexuality is against the laws of God and nature and when we ignore those laws it is to our detriment … when the government makes a day of it and fusses over it, gives it special status, then the government is going along a Sodom and Gomorrah path.”

“We’re all fallen creatures … we inherited certain tendencies and faults or evil inclinations if you like and each of us is saddled with those imperfections and one of these is homosexual tendencies, so it’s a cross, an imperfection that becomes so powerful and they don’t necessarily see what they’re doing is wrong. So first of all its spiritually destructive, then physically destructive, obviously it’s Aids which is killing the homosexuals.”

“I don’t see why they should have more rights … They’re not producing any kids, quite the opposite, they contribute nothing to the family. I can’t think of sodomy doing one bit of good for anyone except satisfying someone’s pleasure … If they contributed something it would be different but they contribute nothing.”
Characteristic of social conservative thought though, is the presence of a tension between such vehement opposition to homosexuality and the recognition that the gay community may indeed require some kind of assistance or protection. One member captures this tension by reflecting that the mention of gay rights “Brings up antagonistic, hostile thoughts that are wrong and judgmental. For example, when I think of homosexuals as teachers, dentists, doctors and preparing food I get upset. But they’re God’s children just like yourself and deserve support, but I don’t think they should be singled out for special rights. But I do think they need protection from people like me who may be hostile or judgmental.”

There are also those within the party who take a far more liberal tack towards gay rights although they correctly observe that they are in the minority:

“I think the party sees them as helping to destroy the family, but I’m not opposed to gay rights. It is an issue that should be left up to the courts to decide. There’s no excuse for violence, for prohibition from teaching and things like that. I don’t know if kids should be taught those lifestyles in the school though. Probably I’m the odd one out here.”

Politically, these opinions highlight the two particular oppositions that the FCP holds regarding homosexuality. The first is their status as a special interest group which grants them apparent preferential treatment under the Human Rights Act as well as providing them with government funding to promote their cause. This is broadly reflected in one of the party’s finance policies which states that “the Family Coalition Party opposes grants to special interest groups.” Members tend to see no reason why this group should receive any social right or privilege beyond the average citizen. One member commented that “when it boils down to it, one percent, although they’d say more, are homosexual and that blows me away because for one percent the amount of rights and privileges is amazing.” Another said “gay rights, they’re damaging. It’s ridiculous to talk about them because they have the same rights as anyone else.”
In 1994, the party presented a brief to the BC Human Rights Review opposing the NDP government's proposal to recognize same sex unions as legally equivalent to heterosexual marriages.\textsuperscript{31} The opposition was based on the infertility of the same sex union and the party's position that marriage, the legal union between a man and woman, has as its primary purpose the procreating and raising of children. From this position, granting legal status to same sex couples becomes a special right because "homosexual and lesbian couples do not suffer discrimination when society rules they are ineligible to adopt children. They have chosen a lifestyle which makes them ineligible."\textsuperscript{32} The party is also opposed to Human Rights Amendment Acts Bill 32 and 33 because it is believed that these Acts will unduly restrict freedom of speech and thus the party's opportunity to voice a dissenting view about homosexuality, particularly during election times.\textsuperscript{33} In this instance, there is a general sentiment within the party that the government has elevated, through such protective measures, the rights of certain special interest groups over those of others, particularly religious conservatives.\textsuperscript{34}

The second opposition carries more weight with the members because of the grave implications they see it having for traditional families. The right of gays to be parents, be it through lesbians becoming artificially inseminated or gays adopting, is stridently reviled by the party. In the party's 1996 election brochures, it was stated that "we oppose: the adoption of infants and children by homosexuals" and in one constituency a newsletter was distributed which included excerpts from William Gairdner's *War Against the Family* under the heading "The Radical Homosexuals Agenda," which was used to buttress the party's opposition to adoption by gays. The party took an active role in attempting to prevent the change to the adoption act which
would permit gays to adopt by circulating a petition against it throughout churches in the province. Nonetheless, the Act passed and was reported in an FCP newsletter:

"The worst has happened by Order in Council! On Feb. 17th we learned that the NDP government has secretly changed the Adoption Act to allow same sex couples the same opportunity as heterosexual couples to adopt children." 36

Management of the party’s position against homosexuality was handled in a number of ways by FCP candidates during the last provincial election. Most made little or no reference to gay rights although one candidate did, in their opening comments during a Rogers Cable all-candidates meeting, say that

"Government increasingly is undermining traditional values. They redefined the family and extended same sex spousal benefits to all prov. Gov. [sic] employees and the NDP also amended the adoption-act to allow Homosexuals to adopt infants and children [sic]. ... The traditional marriage based family is under attack to a large extent through Gov. policies [sic]." (emphasis in original).

Two candidates however, chose a strategy which deliberately highlighted the party’s position. Brian Zacharias, the Nelson-Creston candidate, had the earlier mentioned 4X8 foot sign proclaiming “Homosexuality and Abortion are against God and Nature.” The sign, which he acknowledged was a “very bold statement to make,” resulted in a visit from Alan Dutton, director of the Canadian Anti-Racist Education and Research society. Unsure as to whether the visit was official (the two have known each other for many years), Mr. Zacharias nonetheless assumed someone had registered a complaint against the sign. 37 John Krell meanwhile, running in Comox Valley, created a political firestorm and ended up on the front page of the local paper by claiming during an all candidates meeting at the local high school that homosexuals should be discriminated against. 38

He was quoted in the paper as saying that

“Homosexuality should still be discriminated against, the homosexuals need help. You do not help a person by affirming them in their lifestyle. You need to help them get out and there are ways out. Their lifestyle choice is wrong, has always been wrong, will
always be wrong. They're not following what The Designer says, and they'll suffer for it. So will we if we legitimize it."³⁹

The comment resulted in a scathing local editorial which said Krell’s statement was “nothing less than promotion of hate” and apparently a sound booing of the candidate by students in the audience.⁴⁰ There was also the threat of legal action under Bill 33 by a local gay rights group, but this was never pursued. Despite this fervent response, Dr. Krell remains unrepentant, believing that the only way to restore traditional values in society is to “get the truth out and give them an honest choice.”⁴¹ This is a position reflective of the FCP’s stalwart commitment to restoration of traditional sociomoral values that support the traditional family regardless of how they are labeled or viewed by secular mainstream society.

The Public Education System

The FCP regard the public schools in BC as one of the prime institutions which have been utilized by the state and special interest groups to promote a secular humanist agenda for society. Traditional family values and parental authority, they believe, are undermined and slowly destroyed by a humanist curriculum that indoctrinates students with visions of alternate lifestyles, medical freedom of choice and selfish liberal attitudes. Spawned from this program is a generation of young people with no respect for authority or tradition, pursuing a hedonistic path of immediate gratification, who will ultimately become lost souls, spiritually and morally bankrupt. A typical membership view of the problem with education today contends that

“we can see today the deterioration of the family. Through the education system its undermined, the increase in homosexuality, condom machines in the high schools and most of all the trust between the children and the parents. It’s very subtle. I had never heard of a counselor when I was in school. How did we manage without them? The school and counselors are taking over the role of the family.”
This usurpation of familial and parental authority by a public body is what most concerns the FCP because they view it as stripping away a parent’s ability and right to raise their child according to their moral code of choice. Some members blame this trend not only on the Ministry of Education, but also on the British Columbia Teacher’s Federation (BCTF):

“I guess in my opinion one of the biggest things wrong with education in BC is the Teacher’s Federation has got so powerful the tail is wagging the dog. Instead of us telling them what we want, it’s the other way round. It’s time we got them back into the position of servant, not master.”

“One of the foulest and most corrupt unions we have is the BCTF, not teachers, but the BCTF because they are totally run by radical people, the radical element of the teaching profession ... I know they have taken a leading role in promoting the destruction of education in BC.”

The party’s educational policies indicate that they believe the remedy for this eroding educational system lies primarily in returning control to parents by abandoning the practice of block funding and adopting a voucher system:

“Support for education voucher; ... require accountability of trustees, teachers and bureaucrats to taxpayers and parents; funding for Independent schools be increased to meet public levels without any further government control being imposed. (1992) ... Encourage the establishment of parental choice schools (1994).”

In 1992, the party submitted a position paper to the government supporting a voucher system for education funding and recommending the “government of British Columbia establish a pilot program in several B.C. school districts where the Voucher/Choice system can be evaluated.” A voucher system, the party believes, would achieve the objectives of giving parents increased control over their children’s education by allowing them to apportion the voucher at a school or in a district of their choice. At one executive meeting it was noted that the “whole concept of block funding is wrong because it sends the message that someone else is paying the bill and it’s left so
no one is accountable. We need smaller districts and more [school] board accountability." The necessity of increasing control through such decentralization was remarked on by Heather Stilwell during an all-candidates meeting last year:

"I think that we have to take a really big step backwards and ask ourselves what we’re doing with education funding in the whole province ... I find as a parent the big brother attitude [of the government] so distressing. They’re going to decide how schoolboards are going to be run, whose going to be allowed to go on strike, and they’re going to make massive sweeping changes through the curriculum and none of the other party’s care about curriculum. They’ll talk about economics but not curriculum. There’s just been some mammoth changes taking place in the Career and Personal Planning program that are invasive to the family and damaging to our children. This government has done no consulting on it. They’ve rammed it through without consulting the teachers or the parents. I think it’s a disgrace."43

A voucher system would not only aid in diminishing this centralized control and return it to the local level, but would also achieve a second objective. It would introduce a market dynamic to the system, thereby, it is argued, increasing the quality of public education in BC. One member commented that “it’s an oxymoron to say you must protect quality education when there’s no quality to protect.” Jim Kelly, the candidate in West Vancouver - Capilano, gave a synopsis of the party’s overall view on education funding during an all candidates meeting when he said “throwing money at the system won’t help, we need to give parents choice and we need to increase competition in the schools to increase quality.”44

The second major element of the FCP’s education policy is equally important to its membership. As it is written in the party’s Internet website, the FCP supports “vouchers, Charter schools or other parental choices for educating their children within the public school system [and] should be available to parents who are taxpayers.” Support among the membership for this position on the home and traditional school movement is strong and active. As early as the 1970s the Toths were involved with the
attempt to gain funding for independent schools in the province from WAC Bennett's
government. More recently, Heather Stilwell was the driving force behind the
founding of the traditional elementary school in Surrey which opened in 1994 and has
been playing a supportive role in the attempts to get a traditional high school approved
for the district. She has also just won her second term on the Surrey schoolboard.
Running on a platform of parental choice and fiscal responsibility she took the second
highest vote total on a conservative dominated board. Mrs. Stilwell considers this
type of local involvement and activism as crucial to the overall pro-family movement
because it provides activists with a direct avenue to the decision making processes that
affect what goes on in the schools. She also sees it as

"An absolutely perfect way to politicize parents. At the Surrey Electors Team meeting
there were a hundred pro-lifers, about twenty-five from the traditional school, parents
who have never done anything politically before but they see now how the schoolboard
affects their life."

Arguably the prime target for the political ire of FCP parents who become
involved this way is the Career and Personal Planning program (CAPP) component of
the education curriculum. It is considered by pro-family activists as a program that
injects into students an ideology espousing familial structure plurality and relativist
ideas of sexual orientation and moral conduct. One FCP member commented that with
CAPP

"you have all kinds of sex related programs being introduced which are very anti-
traditional family. They are very promiscuous, encouraging programs that don't
support the idea of chastity. That a child can have an abortion without parental
knowledge, it's unbelievable the state would deprive the family of that right."

The concerns about the program begin with what is taught as early as
Kindergarten. In the Family Life Education component, one of the desired learning
outcomes for Kindergarten and Grade 1 students is the ability to "identify a variety of
models for family organization," an objective viewed by the FCP as tacitly undermining the rightful supremacy of the traditional family structure. There is also strong opposition to what the FCP view as an unrightful intrusion into familial privacy under the Collecting Information component of the program. Here, students are to compile personal information including parent's names, incomes, occupations, and the family's religion and beliefs. This falls under evaluating and teaching the Grade 11/12 student on how to "use their Student Learning Plans as tools to record, analyze, and evaluate their short-term and long-term education, career, and personal goals." Particularly objectionable to FCP parents is that this information is restricted from parent's scrutiny because the Education Ministry considers it privileged and to be shared only between the student and the school. Additionally, this component supplies senior students with information on how to "access and use resources than can support their efforts to carry out their plans [and] access services and technological resources that can help them carry out their plans." To the fury of the FCP, this includes access to information about abortion and related services which students can pursue without parental knowledge or permission.

Perhaps the most morally objectionable part of CAPP for the FCP is its teachings on sexuality. In Grades 11 and 12 students are to "examine the impact of lifestyle choices on the social, physical, and environmental aspects of their personal lives [and] demonstrate a knowledge of key lifestyle practices associated with the prevention of HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, and other communicable diseases." In order to make such an informed evaluation, students are presented with information on homosexuality, use of birth control and safe sex practices. One member's view of this is that
"A certain amount [of sex education] is necessary but there is a lot of it that is going beyond what is necessary to know about sex. They go completely overboard in what they teach. For example, that there are different lifestyles, like man/man and woman/woman relations and this sort of stupidity. In other words the school has lost its sense of morality."

An FCP newsletter distributed during the 1996 provincial election highlighted some specific objections the party has regarding the program when it reported that

"The students in the Grade 10 CAPP (career and personal planning) class at Trail's Lloyd Crowe Secondary School is composed of 15-year olds. A representative of the Aids network asked the students to tell him as many vulgarities for sex that they could think of. These he listed on the blackboard. Later he would hand out a multiple choice questionnaire [sic] called '20 questions about life or death ... “What kind of lubricants are OK to use with condoms? ... “ As class ended, he handed out condoms to all the students and a toll-free number for the Vancouver Gay and Lesbian Centre. What happened at Trail is part of a province-wide trend. In Courtenay, the Aids Coalition hands out material at Vanier Senior Secondary, that included a pamphlet called “a brochure on young men questioning their sexuality” ... and a condom fact sheet that included tips to help the sensation during sex."53

It is the graphic nature of these types of discussions, accompanied by what is viewed as the active promotion of homosexuality in the schools that so disturbs the FCP because as one member commented, "the homosexual movement is very hateful. They are not really willing to be like you, they want the regular folks to say it’s OK, and they want our children, and as the state gets more and more interfering it becomes more and more easy to get our children.” Officially, the party has stated that

"It is understandable that there are parents who object to schools promoting homosexuality simply as an alternate life-style ... These parents feel that sexual orientation protected by law infringes upon their innate human right to teach their children how to live moral lives within the framework of their value system. Schools which teach that homosexuality is equally acceptable as heterosexuality are contradicting the lessons taught in the home. This is indeed a violation of parental responsibility.”54

The gravity with which the party and its members view the implications of the CAPP program on parental authority is evidenced by one member’s launching of a class-action suit against the government over the mandatory nature of the program.
Cheryl Howard, an FCP member in Courtenay, had her daughter withdrawn from the CAPP program after disagreeing with its components. This resulted in the local school board informing the family that their daughter would not graduate because she had not completed the program. Unsuccessful with attempts to have the board reverse its decision, the family has taken legal action against the board and formed "The B.C. Parent Coalition" in an attempt to have the CAPP program stripped of its mandatory status.\textsuperscript{55} In a letter to the Howards, the party has expressed full support and endorsement of their actions.

Two immediate issues facing the public education system in BC are also matters of concern to the FCP. The increasing pressure English as Second Language (ESL) students are placing on the resources of the education system has led the party to oppose public funding of ESL classes.\textsuperscript{56} There is general consensus among the membership that the poorest immigrants should receive free ESL training but that the majority of new Canadians are well able to afford the costs associated with language training and as such should bear this burden and not simply expect state support. Moreover, in the supporting statement to the 1995 resolution on this issue, the party stated that

"In Vancouver, ESL students make up 48\% of the school population, in Richmond 39\% of students need ESL. Of the 52.5\% of kindergarten students who require ESL help, 78\% were born in Canada" (emphasis in the original).\textsuperscript{57}

The inference that the existence of the program itself contributes to a laziness among first generation immigrants in teaching their children English leads to a general conclusion among the membership that people have abrogated personal responsibility for themselves to the state. With fewer government posts to lean on, it is argued that people will become more self-reliant and assume a more independent posture.
There is also the BCTF’s confrontational Resolution 102 which has just passed with a mandate to “create a program to eliminate homophobia and heterosexism within the B.C. public school system.” Beyond the FCP’s opposition, there is also a strong groundswell of opposition by parents because as one teacher who opposes the resolution said, “What we are doing here is teaching that homosexuality is normal, natural and acceptable ... The difficulty in that is that we are teaching a value.” After opposing the Resolution in a local Coquitlam paper, the party sent an official letter of dissent to the Coquitlam School Board at the request of several local parents. For the FCP, this is another example of the overwhelming influence secular humanism is having on the public education system and the destructive forces it promotes to ruin the traditional family.

**Feminism**

Whereas the danger of a proliferating homosexual agenda in BC schools and popular society lies in a discursive psycho-sexual shift towards accepting aberrant lifestyles and family structures, feminism stalks the family’s psycho-cultural character. The FCP membership can find very little of value in feminism other than the partial remedying of wage inequities and blatant workplace discrimination. By and large they argue that feminists have denied the natural capacity and role of women as caregivers and nurturers in their attempts to strip away the cultural differences between men and women. The result has been the devaluation and delegitimation of the roles of mother and homemaker. Members argue that motherhood, like any other job, is a legitimate professional choice for women, and one far more noble and self-sacrificing than entering the general workforce. By denigrating women’s natural role in this career,
feminists have hurt not only themselves, but in general, all women and families by creating a culture that frowns in disappointment at the stay-at-home mother and valorizes the working woman and alternate family structures.

Feminism has "done a great deal of harm to the family" says one member,

"It has denigrated the influence of fathers. Children need fathers and mothers and by their movement towards empowering themselves, to have power over themselves and over the male hierarchy they have damaged the influence of men and women. They have promoted the idea that there is no difference between men and women, and there is a difference between the male and female. When you try and combine those two and say that they are exactly equal they can do what the other one does, I think it wrecks havoc to the original intent of the creator."

Another member concurs with this view that feminists have "done a lot of harm. They didn't mean to do it, but they did. Basically what they did to the woman who decided to stay home and be a wife and mother, they looked down on her - she was nothing and that's what upset me more than anything." Others have said that "if you are a mother, stay at home and raise kids, it's not viewed as positive." Like their views on gay rights, the membership's opinion of feminism travels a spectrum from this kind of soft negativism to a more malignant view where feminism has created for the family "absolute devastation because they have denied the reality of the role of the nature of women. They want to make men out of women. ... I think in that regard they have been totally destructive to the family and destructive to children. This is another cause of the destruction of the family and leading to divorces as well [sic]. I know men at work whose wives have got up and out to discover themselves, ... have a big career, absolutely and totally destructive to the family and rather than one of sacrifice and work to raise a family it becomes one of self centredness, selfishness, pride and wanting to reverse the roles."

At the darkest end, there is a sentiment reminiscent of some in the American Christian Right. A element in the FCP believes that feminism has "four stages: first is the women's liberation, then there is radical feminism, then lesbianism and then finally witchcraft" and as another member pondered, "lesbians and feminism, I'm sure there's
a connection there." Most members compartmentalize their views about feminism, separating its few positive aspects from the predominantly negative effects that "radical feminism" has had on the family. Yet such attempts at normalizing their views fail to cast a large enough shadow to cloak the strong anti-feminist sentiment among FCP members.

Politically, the FCP view feminists as another special interest group which feeds off government subsidies and grants to promote an anti-family agenda. Comments from members reflect a resentment that "they [feminist groups] get government money, our tax money, sixty-five million dollars a year, ... to spread their propaganda." The party has as a stated policy a goal to eliminate the Women's Equality Ministry:

"Among ministries to be definitely dissolved would be the WOMEN'S EQUALITY MINISTRY and THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND MULTICULTURALISM."61 (emphasis in the original).

Replacing the Women's Equality Ministry would be a Ministry of Families which would oversee and promote legislation specific to the promotion of the traditional family. If the party met with opposition to the formation of this Ministry or development of such legislation, it "would not hesitate to invoke Section #33 (the Override Clause) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms should a Charter challenge be initiated to prevent the enactment of legislation to protect the marriage-based, two parent family."62 The party has taken the stance that abating the decay of the family in the face of these humanist movements demands these kind of strong legislative actions; actions that would assuredly result in vigorous opposition from gays and feminists. The likelihood of this reaction is anticipated by the membership with their suspicion that probably, as one member noted, "the feminists are very angry with us."
The 'Crisis' of the Family

It is the opinion of the FCP membership that somewhere along the path to material prosperity the family became subject to a process of social erosion that has left it teetering on the precipice of relativist oblivion. Members of the FCP are unsure precisely when or how this dismantling of society's institutional cornerstone began, but they share a unanimous voice of concern for the future of society if The Family does not have its proper apical status restored. The displacement of The Family and its subsequent ideological dismantling is a product, or as a good number argue, the cause, of a sociomoral crisis in modern society. It is for some FCP members a crisis of faith, of "people trying to live without God" or "lacking a sense of the belief in a creator, it is the position of a society that there is no such thing as right or wrong." For others it is the gradual demise of concern for moral behaviour in a culture that covets monetary wealth: "The sense of being, the purpose to life is gone except to succeed financially" laments one member, while another thinks "we are without morals, there is no right and wrong, and I blame a great deal of it on the education system." There is a sense also that this is a global rather than localized problem of liberal attitudes sweeping democratic societies like BC, and that this is but the latest in a lineage of social crises for nations with a Christian heritage:

"Everything's kind of global, it's not BC or Canada. A euthanasia law was passed in Australia last week. We have this decline of moral values, the attack on the family, its all wound together. We can't say the government caused all this, there seems to be a worldwide agenda to destroy moral values with the family under attack. The Humanist and Materialist philosophy which has slowly taken hold of society, well, since the Second World War material things have become more important than values."

"The state is taking over from the family. The family is losing its place. The state is pitting families against each other, giving rights to one family over another. Its happening all over the world, do everything for people and collect taxes to do it."
"I think it’s just a gradual change from one kind of mixed society to another kind of mixed society ... Believing in a fall, as Christians do, we tend to sin and it manifests itself in different ways at different points in history. The issues can vary between societies but they are only manifestations of the age old battle between God and the Devil."

Many simply believe “the crisis is a complete and absolute fundamental breakdown of the family.” Regardless though, of whether it is the cause or effect of the crisis, unanimity exists among the FCP that The Family is in crisis and that this has generated the numerous social pathologies witnessed in society today. Citing rising rates of divorce, youth crime, single parenthood, poverty, abortions and high school dropouts, party members believe deeply in a healing process for society that centres on restoring a sociomoral order that celebrates the power of The Family rather than the state. Members see a necessary and intimate relation between the roles of these two institutions, a relation that has come to be disproportionately dominated by government in the past twenty-five years. In reflecting on this, one member said that “society is shaped by the two, a dynamic between families and the power structure, government and what not, and when the family is strong we need little government and get maximum freedom.” Another member sees that

“there’s a problem with families that we’re trying to solve with government social programs. Once upon a time our society was structured on the presumption that people had a family to sustain them and the government would sustain widows and orphans or those who through tragedy had been left without family support. But implicit in this was that the family would sustain them and now that social contract isn’t being executed. People are being taught to look for government social programs for their security and they’re not being rewarded for their actions in their families.”

The challenge, believes the FCP, is to battle the social and psychological forces which have created this crisis of state dependency and to beat back the creeping humanist and secular value system which underpins it. To achieve this and restore to The Family its past social valor demands a committed effort to a process of long term
change along a number of personal and political paths. Individually, people must begin trying to “abide by some morals and spirituality and do good things for people and not be so swayed by the selfishness that seems to be portrayed by society today.” This includes restoring a faith in God such that Christian principles can guide not only personal and family lives, but the life of the public body as a whole. Socially, purveyors of popular culture must begin to reel in the violence, profanity and promiscuity which they have distributed with such wild abandon through the television and movie theatre. Inventions like the V-chip and implementation of rating systems for televisions programs and music need to be expanded in order to increase the capacity for a parent to control the external influences which can undermine familial morality. Politically, the government must be forced to relinquish much of its power over families and education and return it to parents and the local community. Government policy must also come to reflect the proper understanding that The Family is the most important social unit in society and that it, not the state, is the proper repository for primary control over the education and socialization of children. Commenting on the solution to the crisis families are facing, Heather Stilwell sees that

“It is really very simple - to just get back where the family is the overriding unit. Where the state only interferes minimally, and then we get back to you don’t get married without a marriage preparation course and you don’t get divorced this week because you decided you might like to, and men have to support their children and work towards getting the corporations to pay them a little more so the mom’s can be home.”

All of the policies developed by the FCP, well beyond those discussed, are founded on this vision of promoting The Family and minimizing state interference. Entrenched in its constitution is the party’s intent “to enact social, educational and economic laws which recognize the family as the basic unit of society.”63 To recall from Chapter Two, the party defines family and marriage as:
“THE FAMILY IS TWO OR MORE INDIVIDUALS RELATED BY BLOOD, MARRIAGE OR ADOPTION. The FCP recognizes the definition of MARRIAGE to mean THE LEGAL UNION OF TWO PEOPLE OF THE OPPOSITE SEX.” (emphasis in original).64

To help ease the financial burdens on this traditional ideal, the party’s housing and tax policies are structured to be ‘family friendly.’ The FCP housing policy supports the concept of homesteading and lower mortgage rates for young families trying to acquire property. Their tax policy proposes to “design a provincial tax system to sustain the traditional family as the fundamental unit of society and to sustain good government.” The party has also committed to lobbying “the federal government to permit the spouses in single-income families to file separate tax returns (income-splitting) to benefit from the lower tax rate” as well as support for “giving the same child-care subsidies to all families with children.”65 The latter policy would also increase parents’ choice in child-care by providing the opportunity to use extended family or friends for this purpose, rather than being restricted to licensed child care centres. The area of child care is one which the FCP feels has been particularly intruded upon by the state. Parents, they contend, are better able than the government to determine appropriate child care for their children and should be given this control. In 1992 the party made a presentation to the B.C. Child Care Regulation Review committee recommending that

“Parents be allowed to choose the child-care facility which best reflects the requirements they decide are important to them when judging quality care. ... Some parents prefer to have their children cared for in government licensed and regulated facilities, however there are other parents who prefer more informal arrangements with relatives, friends or nannies caring for their children. Quality child care is not synonymous with care in government licensed facilities”66 (emphasis in the original).

Section 16 of the Infants Act, which provides minors with the opportunity to seek medical treatment without parental knowledge or consent, is also opposed by the party
because of its diluting effect on parental authority. On their Internet website, the party states its support “for the right and responsibility of parents to decide what health care their minor children should receive.” Of particular abhorrence to members is the fact that their children can solicit information about abortion through their school and then because of this section, legally consent to the procedure without their parents knowledge. Officially, the health care policy of the party states that “FCP B.C. opposes the recent amendments to Section #16 of the Infants’ Act,” and it is agreed among the executive that given the opportunity, they would remove it from the Act.67

The party has also presented the government with its views on the Child Protection Act, with recommendations that wherever possible, the integrity of the family structure be maintained by using extended family as caregivers for abused children rather than using government foster care.68 Their social services policy “supports legislation ... which recognizes the need to protect the integrity of the family. ... Child-care givers should first be sought among immediate family members.” The party would also pursue a policy where “the rights of parents to care for their own children and the rights of children to be cared for by members of their immediate or extended family be protected by legislation” (emphasis in original). 69 The newly formed Ministry for Children and Families is particularly worrisome for the FCP and other Pro-family organizations in the province because it is viewed as having “sweeping powers to intervene in the home and a mandate to screen all parents and families for risk of potential child abuse.”70 The fear is that this bureaucratic monster is a consolidated effort by the state to intrude upon and direct family life while usurping parental rights and responsibilities.
To reduce this type of massive government interference in the lives of families and the economy, the party “recommends cutting the number of government ministries by at least one third along with their respective bureaucracies. ... The remaining ministries would reduce their staff by at least one-third over 18 months.” There is also support for an efficient Initiative, Referendum and Recall Act. By simplifying these processes, the FCP believes the government would become more responsive to the citizens of the province and less heavy-handed in the implementation of legislation. Finally, the party is a champion of injecting democratic freedom into an increasingly dictatorial parliamentary system through electoral reform. In 1994 the party passed a resolution supporting the replacement of the current system with one of mixed member proportional representation.

Accompanying this support for a minimalist state is the party’s free enterprise economic policy. Although this is one of the least developed aspects of the FCP platform, there is full consensus that the party is virtually identical to the Reform Party of British Columbia with regards to economic initiatives and support of the free market. The party supports “a Constitutional Amendment that would mandate a balanced provincial budget” and the membership would support an economic strategy similar to the ones being pursued by Ralph Klein in Alberta and Mike Harris in Ontario. In discussing the economic imperatives the province must follow if it is to balance its budget, members’ comments support a platform of neoconservative economics:

“We need a substantial break from what has been going on in the past. I think you see that in a certain degree with the conservatives in Alberta and Ontario. They made a substantial break, they said we have to get this thing back in order, and despite how the press tries to report it, they seem to be increasing in popularity all the time because they are making substantial changes that people deep down know have to be made and I think it will start taking over more and more across the country.”
"We’re really going to have to go by the New Zealand example and say we don’t want your interference. Drop taxes by 75%, cut out welfare, cut out UI [unemployment insurance] after three months and any grants to big corporations and special interest groups. Forget them, we’ve got to get the government, the bureaucrats out of our lives.”

Such draconian positions are however, articulated with a certain wariness. The religious conservative nature of the FCP membership urges them to help the less privileged and thus traps them in the classic tension created by the contradictory conservative tenets of self-reliance and community obligation.

From Conception to Adolescence: Six Years of Building a Party Base

From its registration in June of 1991, the FCP executive had only four months to make their fledgling party battle-ready for a provincial election. With less than a hundred registered members and an executive that had extremely limited knowledge of running a political party, let alone preparing one for a provincial election, the FCP found itself on a steeply graded route to Victoria. After running eight candidates who gathered a collective total of 1,200 votes in the autumn election of 1991, the party barely survived an executive vote to disband.73 Since that time the party has run in two by-elections and one more provincial election. Its membership has grown marginally in this time, with its most significant growth period coming in the Spring of 1993 when Mr. Vander Zalm was the keynote speaker for the party at a series of membership forums. The FCP continues to struggle with low membership numbers, limited financial and personnel resources and other associated growing pains.

After the 1996 provincial election, the party finds itself once again at a crossroads. While there seems to be no immediate danger of the party collapsing, the executive has recognized that it must confront the critical question of strategic direction. Born out of a desire to provide a haven for the pro-life vote in the province, the party
has not attracted what it perceives to be its natural constituency. In many respects a protest party, it is battling the image of being fringe and single issue and as such unable to provide well rounded governmental representation for the people of BC. Ideally not wishing to exist, executives in the party, to a degree, celebrate this image and herein lies the party’s conflict over its future. Viewing it as part of the pro-family/pro-life movement in the province, the executive consider the party’s mandate to be the promotion of these concerns through public awareness via the electoral process and political pressure on the government and other political parties. This is a goal which requires no electoral success to be achieved. Concomitantly however, the executive recognize the need to sit in Victoria in order to be truly effective at implementing ‘family friendly’ legislation and the necessity of becoming more populist and broad based in their appeal if such a goal is to be achieved. While this question is grappled with though, there is a common understanding that either of these directions will require a larger membership base if the FCP is to effect the types of social change its activists seek.

Party Membership

Current FCP membership stands at roughly 900 and exhibits the continuing pattern of marginal growth that has been characteristic over the past six years. The majority of memberships are the product of individual conversations between friends or people who attend the same churches, community functions or became acquainted through their involvement with pro-life or pro-family organizations. The 1991 and 1996 provincial elections both boosted the membership total by about a hundred and the speaking engagements of Mr. Vander Zalm netted roughly 250 new memberships for
the party. Activism by the party over particular issues has also had the effect of raising the profile of the party which in turn has resulted in inquiries about the FCP and some new memberships. The recent debate for example, over the BCTF’s Resolution 102 and the FCP’s letter of opposition to it in a local Coquitlam paper resulted in more than a dozen phone calls to party headquarters and two new memberships. As Table 3.1 indicates, there has never been a drop in party membership, but 1997 is the renewal year for those taken out in 1993 during the peak of Mr. Vander Zalm’s involvement with the party. A membership committee has been struck to actively pursue renewals from these members as well as to formulate a strategy for a general membership drive. This must be treated as the paramount initiative of the party believes Mr. Toth, who sees that

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Table 3.1: Family Coalition Party of BC - Membership changes 1991 - 96.
*Note: data for all tables in this chapter was compiled from the party’s archives.
"There has to be a membership drive. There are thousands of people out there who hold the same view and it's a matter of convincing them. It's a matter of having more members so we can accomplish the changes we want in society."

The executive as a whole share this view, that by increasing the party's membership, its profile, financial situation and political fortunes will follow.

Originally, the Toths sought out people in the pro-life community for the seed memberships of the party. Mr. Toth acknowledges they "were quite well known in the pro-life area, so we got as many as we knew from the pro-life arena to join as we could. Kathleen and I also publish a small Catholic paper called The Trumpet. We got a lot of members as well from those that subscribe." Mrs. Toth remembers that they "would attend right-to-life conventions and REAL Women conventions, wherever people would be of like mind, so we could set up an information table with literature." It has become frustratingly apparent to the party though, that ideological alignment does not automatically convert into political party support. Governmental viability, vote splitting, vote wasting, and movement strategy differences have all combined to suppress formal membership endorsement for the FCP by the pro-life community. Norm Herriott, a long time FCP executive member, believes pro-life supporters see the "FCP as just splitting the vote, taking the vote away from people who know how to run the place" and another executive member commented that the pro-life community "treated us like we had leprosy. They've stayed far away, afraid that if they associate with a political party in any way, they will lose their charitable status." The Toths recall one FCP member asking a pro-life priest for permission to distribute some FCP flyers and being told that "we can't split the vote, we all have to vote Liberal." By far the most common response the party has heard regarding not being supported however, has been that to do so would be to waste a vote because the party has no chance of victory.
In a mildly deprecatory tone Mr. Toth sees this lack of support as "apathy, passivity, and then there is the feeling of the wasted vote syndrome. People use their votes also against some parties." For some or all of these reasons, the pro-life community has yet to throw its support behind the FCP.

Neither was there an immediate, or subsequently huge, benefit to the FCP from the disaffected religious conservative faction of the Social Credit Party. Mrs. Toth commented that

"It was a real revelation. Some of them were not prepared to leave the Social Credit Party no matter what. Although they were very vocal about the removal of the Christianity Clause, they just couldn't bring themselves to leave the party."

In fact, several of today's key FCP personnel remained Socreds for a substantial period after the Christianity Clause was removed, still apparently hopeful that they could effect change from within a well established party. The migration finally began when "it became obvious it was never going to succeed" as Bill Stilwell put it about working within Social Credit, "we were never going to succeed in bringing in family values, it was getting to be more and more a non-entity." Socred refugees have wandered over and found a political home with the FCP, but more striking is the large number of members who have never before taken out membership in a political party. This element of the FCP membership has in past soothed their pro-life conscience by either not voting, or casting a vote for a pro-life candidate, often regardless of the candidate's affiliated party.

Typically, FCP members have voted conservatively. Federally they have voted for Reform, Christian Heritage, and the Progressive Conservatives. Provincially they have usually supported the Social Credit Party. Their social and political concerns are founded on a pro-life and pro-family ideology which they see as being strengthened
through a reduction in the size of government and the promotion of free enterprise. There is no difference to them between the politics of life and the politics of family; they are one and the same. One member put it this way:

"It's a necessary and natural relation. I don't think you can be pro-life and not pro-family and visa versa. Family is basically children, they make the family, and marriage is between a man and woman and life is what you get from that relationship and children are that life."

It is overwhelmingly a white, Anglo-Saxon and Catholic membership of Western European, in particular British, descent. Ninety-five per cent of the 56 interviewees are married, with those who reported being single intending to marry and start families. Eighty-six per cent reported having children, with all but one respondent indicating an intention to have children in the future. As a whole, there is an average of 3.63 children per household in the sample, with that average jumping to 4.22 when those without children are excluded. Fifteen respondents indicated having five or more children, eight reported having none. The average age of a party member is 55, with only 17% of respondents being born after 1960. The average household income is $40,000 per annum earned through a distribution of occupations in the public, private, trade, and small business domains.

Forty-six per cent of the respondents work (or did before retirement) as professionals in the private or public sector (a roughly even distribution). This included occupations such as accounting, teaching, medical service technologists, engineers, computer systems analyst, and banking executives. Of those who identified themselves as self-employed (11%), most were tradespeople, including carpentry, plumbing, heating systems contracting, and general construction. Of the 21% of respondents who reported being homemakers, all were female (44% of total female respondents). The
remaining respondents included a physician, lawyer, dentist, and various semi-professional occupations. In terms of education, 56% of the respondents indicated they either held a university degree (29%) or had some post-secondary education (27%). Six per cent of the interviewees had not completed high school matriculation and 5% were high school graduates without further post-secondary education. Eighteen per cent of those interviewed had taken some additional vocational training in addition to their other educational efforts. Those holding Master's or law degrees constituted 12% of the interview sample. 33% of respondents reported being retired.

In describing their upbringing, 80% described it as traditional, with two parents of the opposite sex, one or more siblings, and a sufficient modicum of love and discipline (Seventy-five per cent of this group considered their upbringing to be excellent, while 25% reported it as good but with the occasional difficulty). Eight per cent of total respondents indicated a dysfunctional upbringing, characterized by a chronic problem which beset the family while they were growing up. The majority of those interviewed (59%) indicated growing up in a Roman Catholic household while 12% reported that their parents followed no organized religion. Seven per cent of those asked said they grew up in a non-denominational but Christian home and the remainder identified some Christian denomination. In terms of the education of their parents, 39% of those asked stated that their mothers held only an elementary school education, 12% had some high school education and 33% had graduated from high school. Twelve per cent of the respondents indicated their mothers held a university degree, while the same percentage indicated their fathers were university graduates. Thirty-one per cent of respondents indicated that their fathers had only an elementary school education, 11% had some high school education and 22% had graduated from
high school. The occupations of respondents' fathers were broad and included farmers, publicans, steam engineers, landlords, teachers, shoemaker, farm machine and heavy equipment sales, interior decorator, electrician, janitors, millworkers, longshoremen, accountants, carpenters, coal miner, musician and an architect. Forty-nine per cent of those interviewed stated their mother's occupation as a homemaker, while others indicated their mothers to be nurses, teachers, secretaries, cooks, farmers, bookkeepers, dressmakers, musicians and telegraph operators.

Geographically, the FCP is at present a predominantly Lower Mainland party, with 50% of its membership residing in Lower Mainland electoral ridings (Table 3.2). Only 10% of its membership live in ridings traditionally associated with the Fraser Valley bible belt. The heaviest concentrations of memberships are to be found in the three Prince George ridings, the four Okanagan ridings, the Surrey ridings and those of North and West Vancouver. The latter are virtually all new memberships, the result of some vigourous recruitment by a core of North Vancouver members just prior to the 1996 provincial election. The memberships in Prince George and the Okanagan were a direct result of Mr. Vander Zalm's speaking engagements in 1993. The Surrey memberships also reflect the impact of Mr. Vander Zalm's involvement, as well as the name recognition enjoyed by Heather Stilwell. As mentioned, the party is currently developing a two part strategy for increasing overall party membership. Their first priority is to secure the renewals of those 250 odd memberships that were taken out in 1993. Second, the party intends to target specific ridings and recruit new members by advertising, and using friends, families or associates in those areas to solicit memberships.
## Family Coalition Party of BC - Provincial Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BC Electoral District (In numerical order)</th>
<th># FCP Members</th>
<th>BC Electoral District (In numerical order)</th>
<th># FCP Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbotsford</td>
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<td>Parksville - Qualicum</td>
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<td>Bulkley Valley - Stikine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burnaby - Willingdon</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Powell River - Sunshine Coast</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Prince George - Mount Robson</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cariboo South</td>
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<td>Prince George - North</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Richmond - Steveston</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malahat - Juan De Fuca</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rossland - Trail</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Saanich North &amp; The Islands</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Vancouver - Point Grey</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Okanagan - Boundary</td>
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<td>West Vancouver - Garibaldi</td>
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<td>Okanagan - Penticton</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yale - Lillooet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Okanagan - Vernon</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total: 894

Table 3.2: Distribution of FCP membership in BC's 75 electoral districts (1997).
Party Finance

Financial resources for the party are scarce. The $2,500 bank balance at the end of 1996 is the most the party has ever been able to carry over into a new year and they have at times had as little as $150. The bulk of the party’s funds come from their Annual General Meetings with its associated luncheon and dinner banquet with guest speakers and silent auction. The remainder of party funds are derived from membership dues and general donations. Mrs. Toth sums up the FCP’s financial strategy and position by saying that

“Every time we send out a newsletter, we send out an appeal for funds. It’s amazing that people send money and we’ve survived from these donations. Usually it’s not more than $100, some people send $100 once a year, some people only send $20. It’s been just enough to keep us alive. We certainly don’t have any extra money, but we have been able to pay our telephone bills and hold our conventions. Conventions bring in money, because we have auctions and fundraisers at the same time. We do renew our coffers at the conventions.”

The party has benefited from some donations in kind, including help to set up their Internet website, discounts on printing costs, and donated election signs, but this for the most part has been a limited form of financial relief for the party.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>$260</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>$1,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>$750</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>$525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>$1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>$2,530</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3: Family Coalition Party of BC - Fiscal year end balances

To get the party off the ground Mr. Toth remembers, a “few people put in a few dollars to start the organization, the cost of registration we funded ourselves.” Gary
Thomas, another of the founding five, recalls that the "party never had money, it just came in dribs and drabs, people would just give $50 or $60 dollars." The shortage of party funds was such that the executive were forced in 1992 to amend their constitution which called for an independent chartered accountant to annually audit the books. Unable to afford the fees for this service, the constitution was changed to allow "two members at large selected by the Management Committee" who will "provide the AGM with a report." Two fundraising dinners were held in the first year, one of which featured Mr. Vander Zalm as a guest speaker that, as Mrs. Toth recorded, "have helped keep us afloat financially, but only barely." Relief for the party came in the form of a benefactor from Prince George who in 1992 first donated $75 with the proviso that Mr. Vander Zalm become the leader of the party. The Toths initially returned the cheque, unwilling to accept conditional donations, but later accepted Louis Matte's help with organizing three speaking engagements featuring Mr. Vander Zalm. To this end, Mr. Matte contributed over $4,000 to the party and bore all the costs of this tour. He also funded the party's constituency office in Matsqui in the hopes that Vander Zalm would run as an FCP candidate against Grace McCarthy and take over leadership of the party. After this did not transpire, Mr. Matte left the party to become active in the Reform Party of BC. Although parting on less than amicable terms, the Toths acknowledge that without Mr. Matte's help, it is unlikely that the party would exist today.

Nonetheless, aside from and despite this one party-saving injection, the executive realize they are severely hamstrung by their limited financial resources. Norm Herriott stated the situation with succinct urgency in saying that "the pressing issue right now is finances [sic], we've got to have money or we won't go anywhere."
You can talk about grassroots all you want but you’ve still got to have money.” There is currently a sense of confusion among the executive about how to generate enough money to push them beyond their hand-to-mouth existence and provide the party with a stable financial foundation. Haphazard was the word offered most frequently by executive members in describing the party’s financial resource strategy between conventions, a situation recognized as demanding serious attention if the party is to progress.

**Party Personnel**

The lack of any paid personnel within the party is indicative of the FCP’s austere financial position and present restricted capacity for development. Membership recruitment, financial management, policy development, media relations and administrative duties all require dedicated personnel with some degree of expertise. The limited financial resources of the party prevents the hiring of any sympathetic professionals to meet these needs and forces the party to draw upon its shallow membership base for interested volunteers. It is a situation that severely truncates the search for political expertise and places a heavy emphasis on the dedicated aspect of voluntarism. Without even a small stipend to offer as remuneration, the FCP must take what help its membership is able to offer within their hectic lives of raising families and earning livings. It is a common and frustrating observation among members that comparatively, their lack of political progress to those on the Left is a product of having families and prioritizing them over politics.

Among the executive, while there exists what may be thought of as “heart”, there is a lack of commitment to the serious pursuit of political legitimation for the
party. Only the Toths, Gerhard Herwig, and most recently new party President Darren Lowe demonstrate a consistent dedication to the long term development of the party and its objectives. Other executive members, for reasons that take various forms, are unable to move beyond the point of interest and intermittent contribution. Time, energy, frustration, familial obligations, professional responsibilities, and earning a living are all identified by the executive as limiting factors in the levels of executive activism on behalf of the party. Long term dedication and interest exists, but does not translate into a consistent pattern of productive involvement. With few tangible successes to identify, the arduous process of building a political party weighs down those involved and seems to generate individual levels of involvement over time that reflect the pattern of a sine curve. Members with assigned tasks usually complete them, but often long after the timelines set at executive meetings. It is not unusual for items to be pushed forward two or three meetings because work has not been completed or members have not attended a particular meeting to present their work. Executive meetings also often veer from a set agenda to become a forum for venting frustrations about general social disorder. At one meeting, Mr. Lowe asked for input regarding developmental directions for the party and one member commented exclusively on Singapore's practice of caning and their low crime rate.

This is perceived by the executive as a critical situation for the party. Past-president John O'Flynn's comment that there was "no money, you get the same old people, the same numbers. You have meetings but you start realizing who your core people are," more importantly reflects a mild sense of resignation rather than general frustration. It is the risk of such resignation creeping into its core activists that the party
recognizes it must vigourously defend against. One core executive member remains
more frustrated than resigned at this point, but nonetheless says

“Well, I’ll tell you, I’m just about at the end of my leash and if I don’t get them to agree
to some serious fundraising I may just drop out of it because we’re not putting our heart
in it. We’re not giving it all and if we hope to do anything in four years we’ve got to get
going right now and put it in high gear.”

There is also a small but growing sentiment that this lack of dedicated involvement
extends to their party leader, Heather Stilwell. As one member put it, “we have a
Leader now who has no damn time for anything. She’s running for schoolboard which
is good because she’ll get her face out there, but she doesn’t have time to be a leader
while she’s doing that.” It is not a situation Mrs. Stilwell denies:

“I’ll be busy for the next three years [with the School Board]. I would rather not have
the responsibility of the FCP right now, but if they’re willing to have me in a holding
position right now, I’m okay with that. Even though there’s not a lot going on right
now there should be - meetings for policy development every two weeks, public
relations, finding out what the government is up to - but I’m not doing any of that.”

Combatting this splitting of allegiances and focus, some executives believe, is a matter
of finding the money to salary positions for a leader and an administrative assistant.
Others fear that even this will not help, and that when the Toths are no longer able to
continue, the party will collapse because like Mrs. Stilwell, others will not give it the
serious attention it demands. Mrs. Toth summarizes her concern over this last point this
way:

“As long as we stay well, if someone gets ill. I am just worried about all that stuff on the
computer. I have to find someone who can duplicate what I do. ... But to get people to
admit they have computer skills and that they are willing to do it, it’s just another job.
Most of us are involved in other things. Everyone can honestly say I am so busy I
haven’t got another minute to do anything more. It’s true. Somehow we have to find
time, because we’ve put so much work into it now that we have to spread the jobs a
little more.”
Yet tempering this pessimistic outlook is the recent involvement of new members to the party and the continued involvement and support of those long term, intermittent activists. The 1996 FCP Board of Directors has 22 members, more than any other time in its history and there is a renewed vigour within the executive concerning the preparatory work leading up to the next provincial election. Sub-committees for membership, policy, and fundraising have been struck, something that has not happened since 1993. There has also been a shift in the age of some key personnel in the party. Darren Lowe and Jim Hessels, respectively the new party President and Deputy Leader, were born after 1955 and Heather Stilwell brings to the party the important image of a mature youthfulness that reflects experiential and political wisdom. Of the fourteen candidates who ran in the last election, only three were past retirement and four were younger than 45.

Asked how active members are recruited to the party, long-term executives emphasized the important role word-of-mouth plays and the enthusiasm new members bring to the party. As Mrs. Toth remarks,

“Some people discover the party, and if they have never heard of it before, they become very enthusiastic and we hook them right away, and keep them involved. You can’t know who is going to stay and who is going to go.”

The executive tap into this initial enthusiasm and gain as much ground with it as they can until the enthusiasm and energy of the individuals involved wanes. This repeated pattern has the net effect of increasing the membership and party profile slightly, and committing at least one person to more prolonged activity within the party. Mrs. Toth appears to accept this as a fact of membership activism within the party because as she says
"I have seen it in the Pro-life movement. The people become very enthusiastic, they hear the issues and they think, like wow, they become very enthusiastic. When they run up against people who have other causes they are interested in, it discourages them to the point of no longer continuing. I believe every person you give information to, a little bit remains behind, therefore I don’t think it’s wasted. It’s early burnout that has an effect on the party."

One riding on the North Shore in the last election is particularly characteristic of what Mrs. Toth has described as these “flurries of activity.” After hearing about the party, several North Shore members quickly formed a constituency for West Vancouver-Capilano, generated at least 50 new memberships for the party, nominated a highly personable 35 year old candidate, and received the most uncontroversial media attention of the party’s campaign. Typical of activism within the party however, was the dejected response to having their candidate receive only 174 votes. Dissatisfied, one of the key organizers in the riding said he would probably have been wiser to support the pro-life Reform candidate and the constituency association was to be disbanded until the Toths and Mrs. Stilwell attended the dissolution meeting and convinced riding members to retain it. At the meeting, one member wanted an answer to a single question: “What we want is a reason as to why we should be involved.”

Stripped, this question asks about motivation. Electoral success, favourable public response, large outpourings of membership support; none of these exist to give the party an inspirational boost motivating them to carry on. For the party executive, tangible victories like broadening the party’s resource base cannot be relied upon as a source of motivation for continuing. In discussing the results of the 1996 election, Gerhard Herwig evaluated victory this way:

“How do you measure success? I wouldn’t want to say we weren’t successful. We weren’t for the average politician, but I think we could say we were successful. We had several thousand people in fourteen ridings vote for us and we got the message out. And you don’t know what the long term effects will be. We don’t know what all our
successes are, if you look at our numbers we weren't successful but success isn't just about getting elected.”

For the core activists within the party, such an evaluation is the product of a deep religious and moral commitment to the traditional family and protecting the sanctity of life. Mr. Herwig thinks “most people are motivated by their beliefs, especially when a party like ours has little chance of success at this point you must have motivation not linked to success.” For Mr. Toth and the rest of the executive, this motivation is “the strong belief in Judeao-Christian principles” which in turn constituted the core of the answer the Toths offered to the question of involvement. At its foundations, the party exists and carries on because of its members faith and the executive’s commitment, however inconsistent, to politicizing their beliefs through the FCP.

This transformation however, requires a collage of political expertise that at present is largely missing from the FCP. Certainly there is a quantity of journeyman experience within the executive, but lacking is the sophisticated knowledge of experts regarding the critical processes required for a party to mature. From their activism in the pro-life movement and their involvement with Social Credit, the Toths bring to the party a wealth of practical knowledge, perhaps none more important than the understanding that a project like the FCP is one of long term commitment requiring patience and quiet tenacity. The Stilwells bring an equally substantial body of experience to the party with their involvement as founders of the Christian Heritage Party, and their experience in the Social Credit Party, and with Pro-life. Gerhard Herwig, after years with Social Credit as a constituency association president, as well as active in the Pro-life movement, is another knowledgeable resource. Other executives bring similar, if not as extensive, portfolios of activism to the party as well as at least a
superficial knowledge regarding matters of government policy development. This knowledge of policy tends to be linked to member’s occupations and, like that of party structure and mobilization, is practical in nature. Deputy Leader Jim Hessels for instance, owns and operates a dairy farm and so is the party’s expert on agricultural matters, while Norm Herriott is knowledgeable about provincial infrastructure through his work.

Besides handling the media and increasing the membership base, policy development has been identified by the party as critical if the FCP is to present itself as a maturing and capable party to the electorate. In the past, individuals have been assigned to track a ministry of their interest with the purpose of criticizing government policy and slowly developing FCP policy in that area. Committees have also been formed to address party policy, but to date these efforts have produced only enough information to enable the party to form only a superficial position on any particular issue. The party lacks the personnel capable of formulating detailed policies over matters of the economy, labour, health, education, taxation, federal/provincial relations, the environment and other issues of concern to the people of BC. Mrs. Toth acknowledges that policy development is a project that evolves over time, and as Past-president John O’Flynn remarked, “Very few people have a taste for that and you have to have a gift for it.” This reality is born out by the inconsistency with which party executive have attended to serious policy development. One executive member, in discussing their role in policy formation remarked that “with policy development, yeah, I think I got assigned with something, I’ve forgotten now; shows you how much I’ve done with it.”
The executive recognize that if they are content to foster the image of the FCP as a minor protest party with the goal of merging or influencing other political parties over pro-family and pro-life legislation, then such admissions become less consequential to the party’s future. However, they know that if they decide to continue along the route of developing the FCP into a party capable of electoral success, they will have to address these personnel deficiencies. As Mrs. Toth realizes, “we need a thousand more members - a pool of resources - people from which to draw. We need people with skills, political skills.” To that end, they understand that commitment from the current executive will have to be elevated to a consistent level and expertise will have to be developed or imported to manage the party’s resource development, media management, image, election strategies and policy formation. Moreover, they recognize that the core activist base must be broadened to prevent burnout and allow progress in preparation for the next provincial election. Past circumstance where people have multiple responsibilities it is agreed, must be avoided. In commenting on the time when Mrs. Toth was party President, Leader and Secretary Norm Herriott said “that was absolutely too much for her to handle and that slowed us down.”

Board members all acknowledge these realities in one way or another, but also admit to a sense of loss as to how to elevate the party to this next stage of development, beyond identifying one important goal. Attracting charismatic people with some public name recognition to the party it is believed, will draw the attention of the media, increase the public awareness of the party and, in turn, increase its membership, financial stability and political viability. To that end, the party has in the past sent letters of recruitment to such notable Socreds as Peter Dueck and Cliff Serwa. Heather Stilwell’s name currently offers a small modicum of name recognition for the party,
particularly in Surrey, but it was during Bill Vander Zalm's involvement with the party that the FCP enjoyed its greatest period of public profile and membership growth.

Bill Vander Zalm, FCP member and spokesman

After failing to gain the immediate support of the Pro-life and Pro-family communities in the 1991 election and witnessing months of slow membership growth for the party, the founding members recognized the need to generate profile for the party. It was decided that a series of fundraising rallies should be held to promote the party and increase its membership. In discussing keynote speakers who would draw a crowd, Mr. Vander Zalm's name came naturally to mind. Mrs. Toth recalls that

"We reasoned the people who would come out to hear Mr. Vander Zalm would be sympathetic to the FCP, and he made no hesitation about talking about this during his speeches, that this was a very worthwhile cause, that it was badly overdue and we needed to get back to family values. It was a way of getting these people in one place and we could reach them."

The ex-Premier agreed to speak on behalf of the party with the provision that he also be permitted to discuss matters of taxation, initiative, referendum and recall. Originally ten rallies were to be planned, but due to scheduling difficulties this was reduced to three.

The rallies were planned for late April and early May 1993 in Prince George, Kelowna and Surrey. They attracted 250, 300 and 356 people respectively and from that over 250 people took out FCP memberships. Constituency associations were subsequently formed in Prince George and Kelowna. The FCP also began to enjoy increased media attention, particularly with the speculation that Mr. Vander Zalm might formally return to politics as an FCP candidate.81 Alec Marshall remembers receiving a phone call from a well known BCTV reporter within hours of the rallies
being tentatively scheduled, wanting information about the ex-Premier’s involvement
with a group the reporter described as Vander Zalm’s “natural constituency.”

This was not an incorrect observation. In discussing his motivation for
becoming involved with the FCP Vander Zalm said,

“I could feel at ease and receive some gratification in promoting values and principles
not with a view of winning a political election, but just as someone helping to raise the
voice about those issues that FCP was associated with and strong on. ... I met many of
my staunchest supporters, those that rallied behind, particularly in times of trouble ... so that in itself for me was gratifying.”

His speech in Prince George, although beginning with a commentary on taxation,
shifted focus to the dangerous erosion of the traditional family by liberal attitudes and
government interference:

“There is however, an even more dangerous, though very, very subtle and persistent
attack on the traditional family ... we must all assume some blame for this ... we’re too
busy to protest or we’re afraid to offend, neighbour or friend or we fear the threat of
being categorized as bigots or “intolerates” [sic]. The attacks are usually first brought on
by a special interest group ... then encouraged by the Left in government ... and the
Left in media ... it’s a subtle persistent attack - which, if allowed to continue will
destroy the strongest unit of traditional society ... the family.”

The sociomoral and economic affinity between the FCP and its most celebrated
member nearly resulted in the ex-Premier returning to mainstream politics via the 1994
Matsqui by-election, the result of Socred Harry de Jong stepping down to provide a seat
for the newly appointed Leader of Social Credit, Grace McCarthy. At the urging of the
FCP and in particular the financier of the FCP rallies, Louis Matte, Mr. Vander Zalm
gave serious consideration to accepting the party’s candidacy before finally declining.
Again, the associated media speculation over a battle between Vander Zalm and
McCarthy brought the FCP into the political spotlight.
Such benefits to the FCP because of Vander Zalm's involvement with party came to an end when he left to join the Reform Party. Mr. Vander Zalm remembers his involvement with the FCP and the switch to Reform this way:

"I attended several of their [FCP] conventions to help debate some of the issues, and to give my views as to what direction they should take and in what manner in order to be a greater influence in the political community, so I stuck with it for several years. But when the provincial election appeared closer, I felt I should at least for a time associate myself with a political party that would be a greater influence. Even though they didn't have all of that which the FCP stood for, they were a part step and that of course was the Reform Party."

In actuality, the motivation for this switch appears to have been a drive by Louis Matte and several other Pro-life supporters to nominate Vander Zalm for the Reform Leadership. Discouraged by the FCP results in the Matsqui by-election, the party's major benefactor left the FCP to join Reform and convinced Mr. Vander Zalm that he had equal, if not greater support there than in the FCP. This support however, did not materialize and Mr. Vander Zalm has since dropped his Reform Party membership. Since this time in 1995, Vander Zalm has kept in personal contact with some of the FCP executive, but has declined to become involved politically with the party.

Evaluating Mr. Vander Zalm's involvement with the FCP, the benefits are clear, but it was an association not free of cost. Two of the party's founding five were opposed to the ex-Premier's involvement because of his politically tainted image, one to such an extent that he left the party. The loss of Alec Marshall's knowledge and support the Toths have identified as one of the two major setbacks the party has suffered in its six year history. The other came as a result of Louis Matte leaving to join the Reform Party. In doing so he wrote to all of the FCP members that had joined because of the FCP rally in Prince George, encouraging them to join Reform and offering to pay their new membership fees. While no FCP memberships were turned in as a result of this
action, the three constituency associations in Prince George have since been de-registered and there has been no activism from the area's membership in two years.

Electoral History

By October 1991 the party had managed to register nine constituency associations and eight candidates to run in the autumn election. In total, a little over 1,200 people voted for the FCP in this election, with Mrs. Toth's 249 votes the highest collected by any of the party's candidates (Table 3.4). Despite the party being only four months old, the results were discouraging enough for the executive to hold a meeting to vote on the FCP's dissolution. Those in favour of dissolving the party harboured a continued belief that their efforts would be more fruitful if they attempted to work within more established parties to promote "family friendly" legislation. The work required to maintain a political party structure was felt to be too great a burden for the meager rewards that could be obtained under the FCP banner. Those opposed, like the Toths, had abandoned any hope for this form of activism. Pro-family and Pro-life issues were being deliberately suppressed because of their controversial nature and politically incorrect language and the only avenue left to allow free speech on these matters was the continuation of the party. By a narrow margin, the 6-4 vote favoured keeping this avenue of free speech open. This vote was a product of an unrequited desire for immediate gratification by some members for their efforts over the months leading up to election. There had been no expectation of electoral victory, but far greater support from the Pro-life community had been anticipated. The Toths too, were disappointed with the results, but their years of activism had given them an understanding of the need to define success in small incremental terms. That the party existed and had
engaged in a provincial election was heralded in its own right as a success for Pro-
family forces in the province. After six years this continues to be a strongly held
opinion throughout the membership.

In May 1994, the party ran candidates in two by-elections and enjoyed what
continues to be their greatest "success." In her 1993 Leader's Report, Mrs. Toth stressed
that "we must run a candidate in Quilchena because it will bring issues before the
public that are not being discussed by the other parties. It will give the FCP exposure
which it needs to become better known. Although our candidate won't win, it will be
worthwhile." The campaign by Darren Lowe was a small one which was reflected in the
scant 89 votes he received, but from the party's viewpoint, it did at least place the
Family Coalition Party name on the ballot.

It was in the Matsqui by-election however that the FCP's first significant piece of
political folklore was created. Leading up to the by-election, there had been rampant
media speculation about the return of Mr. Vander Zalm to politics as an FCP
candidate. This was of particular interest because it would have created a scenario
whereby Mr. Vander Zalm would have squared off against Grace McCarthy, who was
running in order to gain a seat after winning the Leadership of the Social Credit Party in
late 1993. After Mr. Vander Zalm declined to run, Mrs. Toth accepted the nomination
and while filing her nomination papers at the BC elections office ran into Mrs.
McCarthy. After introducing herself, Mrs. Toth remembers Mrs. McCarthy accusing her
of 'telling lies' about her role in the removal of the Christianity Clause from the Social
Credit constitution. Mrs. Toth reminded McCarthy of her presence at the meeting and
the issue was dropped. Although an isolated incident, it reflected the antagonistic
relationship between McCarthy and religious conservatives who had left the Socred party.

In a press release before the election, it was reported that: “Social Credit Leader Grace McCarthy admitted Thursday it would be a “political disaster” if she loses an upcoming byelection.” For religious conservative Socreds who joined the FCP, there was tremendous satisfaction when McCarthy lost the byelection by less than 50 votes, and Mrs. Toth collected 275 for the FCP (Table 3.6). After the election, Mrs. McCarthy’s campaign manager made a passing remark to Mr. Toth saying, “I hope you’re happy now.” Despite the satisfaction this small victory brought however, Mrs. Toth’s focus had been FCP exposure: “we were running to have a presence more than anything else. We felt we had to run to maintain credibility.” Nonetheless, there appears to be an inescapable truth to John O’Flynn’s comment that

“The FCP in a way contributed to the final nail in the Socred coffin because of the Matsqui by-election where Grace McCarthy lost by 30 or 40 votes. I do believe the party was instrumental in sealing the fate of the Socreds.”

For a short time later that year, it appeared as if this may have been the FCP’s last political campaign. With Grace McCarthy’s defeat, hope for a Social Credit resurgence was lost and the Reform Party of BC (RPBC) began to aggressively recruit Socred supporters in an attempt to become the new right wing party in the province. Part of this strategy included a formal offer to the FCP from Reform leadership candidate Ron Gamble to merge with RPBC. Initially Mr. Gamble had approached Mrs. Toth at a conservative forum with an informal suggestion that a merger would be beneficial to both parties. Later, during the RPBC Leadership convention, Mr. Gamble again contacted Mrs. Toth and asked if the FCP executive would meet to formally
Family Coalition Party of BC - Provincial Election Results

**General Elections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral District</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th># Votes Received</th>
<th>% Riding Total*</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Langley</td>
<td>Barrie Norman</td>
<td>175</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Nanaimo</td>
<td>David Bentley</td>
<td>143</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Delta North</td>
<td>Paul Formby</td>
<td>137</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Oak Bay - Gordon Head</td>
<td>Kathleen Toth</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Parksville - Qualicum</td>
<td>Gus Cunningham</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Saanich North &amp; Islands</td>
<td>Tom Aussenegg</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Surrey - Cloverdale</td>
<td>John Onderwater</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Vancouver - Kensingt</td>
<td>John O'Flynn</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>0.82</td>
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Table 3.4: FCP election results from 1991 provincial general election  *approximate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral District</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th># Votes Received</th>
<th>% Riding Total*</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Comox Valley</td>
<td>John Krell</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Fort Langley - Aldergrove</td>
<td>Lila Stanford</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>1.17</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Delta South</td>
<td>Jim Hessells</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>1.35</td>
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<td>4 Matsqui</td>
<td>Kathleen Toth</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>1.79</td>
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<td>5 Nanaimo</td>
<td>Vicki Podetz</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Nelson - Creston</td>
<td>Brian Zacharias</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>1.84</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Oak Bay - Gordon Head</td>
<td>Alan Idler</td>
<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Surrey - Cloverdale</td>
<td>Heather Stilwell</td>
<td>709</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Surrey - Green Timbers</td>
<td>Gerhard Herwig</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>1.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Surrey - Newton</td>
<td>Bill Stilwell</td>
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<td>11 Vancouver - Kensington</td>
<td>Mark Toth</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 Vancouver - Point Grey</td>
<td>Eamonn Rankin</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 West Vancouver - Capilano</td>
<td>Jim Kelly</td>
<td>174</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Yale - Lillooet</td>
<td>Ed Vanwoudenberg</td>
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<td>0.74</td>
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</table>

Table 3.5: FCP election results from 1996 provincial general election  *approximate

**By-elections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral District</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th># Votes Received</th>
<th>% Riding Total*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Matsqui</td>
<td>Kathleen Toth</td>
<td>275</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Vancouver - Quilchina</td>
<td>Darren Lowe</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.6: FCP 1994 by-election results  *approximate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral District</th>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th># Votes Received</th>
<th>% Riding Total*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Abbotsford</td>
<td>Kathleen Toth</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 3.7: FCP 1995 by-election results  *approximate
discuss a merger. With FCP members seeing no difference between the two parties other than the FCP’s two core principles and RPBC’s reliance on referendum to determine party policy on social issues, the offer was eagerly accepted. In fact, in anticipation of a merger with another free enterprise party, the party had passed a special policy resolution calling for a mandate to pursue the possibility of forming a coalition with another right wing party.86

Initially Mrs. Toth recalls, the possibility of a coalition seemed to exist with RPBC’s preliminary agreement to include the FCP’s clauses protecting the sanctity of life and the traditional family. However, Mr. Gamble later withdrew the sanctity of life clause and Jack Weisgerber, who took over the RPBC leadership, removed the operative phrase “to enact social, educational and economic laws and policies” from the traditional family clause. Since that time, while the FCP executive continues to support a merger, they remain doubtful about such a possibility. After this failed attempt to merge with the RPBC, the executive returned to the slow development of the party’s public profile and Mrs. Toth ran in the FCP’s only other by-election, a 1995 campaign in Abbotsford in which she collected 194 votes (Table 3.7)

In preparing the party for its second provincial election, Mrs. Toth sent out a letter to FCP constituency executives that laid out the platform on which the FCP would run:

“There will be a provincial election in the Spring of 1996. Between now and then, we must find the best candidates to speak for the values that marriage-based families believe need protection, values like lower taxes for families with children, parental choice schools, removal of Medicare funded abortions and government support for abortion clinics, repeal of the ‘bubble-zone’ legislation and the Human Rights Act, abolish the Women’s Equality Ministry and replace it with a Ministry for the Family, changes to the Adoption Act to prevent same-sex couples from adopting infants and children ... These are only a few issues which the Opposition parties are not anxious to support. Unless our candidates are there to introduce controversial issues like this, they
will be deliberately left out of the election campaign. ...We must see our participation as a chance to show the voters of B.C. that returning to traditional family values is the only solution to the chaos and disorder in society.”

In the May 1996 election, fourteen candidates ran on this platform, collecting over 4,000 votes throughout the province (Table 3.5). Heather Stilwell’s 709 votes was the highest total of any FCP candidate, while Alan Idler’s 56 was the lowest. Bill Stilwell’s 577 votes was the second highest total, and as Mr. Stilwell and other members noted, likely a result of name recognition because of Mrs. Stilwell’s community profile. The most pleasant surprise for the party was John Krell’s Comox Valley campaign. Registering as a candidate at the last minute, Dr. Krell had only nine days to campaign but with 398 votes, provided the FCP with its third highest total. The controversy he created over his remarks that homosexuals should be discriminated against during an all-candidates meeting may have bolstered his support, but this is unclear.87 Mark Toth’s Vancouver-Kensington campaign, included the deliberately controversial sign beside the Everywoman’s Health Clinic reading: “Your Taxes Pay for Killing Unborn Babies Next Door. The Family Coalition Party would stop such funding. In Vancouver/Kensington vote for Mark Toth,” resulted in only 119 votes. Meanwhile Brian Zacharias, in Nelson-Creston, received 360 votes on a campaign in which he parked his pickup truck on Nelson’s main street with a 4X8 foot sign reading “The Family Coalition Party. Homosexuality and Abortion are Against God and Nature. Take a Stand. Love will tell the Truth.”

Beyond these incidents, candidates ran small, quiet campaigns in which were spent a low of $250 (Alan Idler) to a high of $3,000 (Heather Stilwell). Candidates reported funding most of their campaigns themselves, with supplemental money being donated by individual members to the candidates. No financial help was given by the
party. Candidates reported that most of the help they received to run the campaigns came from their immediate family or friends. Only four candidates identified volunteers as people who were supporting the party without personally knowing the candidate. Campaign strategies primarily revolved around the distribution of party flyers, the use of a small number of party signs and attending all-candidate meetings. Ed Van Woudenberg, the Yale-Lillooet candidate and past-President of the Christian Heritage Party, remarked that he and his wife incorporated the distribution of his flyers into their evening walks.

This was an image characteristic of the FCP campaign, one in which only Heather Stilwell reported having a genuine interest in running for political office. The other candidates ran out of a sense of obligation or necessity. Some, like Jim Kelly who ran in West Vancouver-Capilano for his father, did so out of a sense of obligation. Others, like Gerhard Herwig and Lila Stanford, admitted to not having the time or career interest in being a candidate but entered the election because the party needed the exposure and no other viable candidates could be found. Beyond the Toths, Stilwells, Mr. Herwig, and Mr. Van Woudenberg, the candidates were for the most part political neophytes. Six had never before run for any type of political office or been seriously involved with the political process.

Similar to the 1991 election, there was an overall sense of disappointment with the results of the election, but unlike the case in 1991 candidates and executives have maintained a sense of optimism. In a post-election debriefing meeting, only the vote totals and lack of media attention were commonly identified as points of frustration. Recognizing their political handicaps, candidates overwhelmingly believed that the process was a valuable learning experience and that given more expertise, money and
practical experience their results could improve dramatically for the next election. Agreement was also unanimous that the presence of the party brought at least some attention to Pro-life and Pro-family causes during the election and for that reason, it was vital that the party continue. Despite what Heather Stilwell describes as the "doglike determination" effort required at times to maintain it, she echoes the current feelings of the FCP membership in saying that it is "absolutely essential for the political history of this province that we maintain the party, that we maintain a right to speak out."

Current Status

Maintenance of the FCP in its present form does not seem to be a difficult proposition. It seems the party will always be able to find enough people to come to meetings and discuss the problems facing traditional families and the erosion of Christian morality in Canadian society, and there is enough interest in it that there will always be a few supportive enough of the cause to let their names stand as candidates during an election. But to develop into a political organization capable of wielding social and political influence in the province, the executive know they must address their shortcomings and this will be predicated upon one important question: "Where is the party going?" It is a question that Darren Lowe posed to the board members at a recent executive meeting, and one that will shape the party's future.

The executive are well aware that party membership growth has stagnated at just under the one thousand mark, the party has a tenuous financial base, its core activists are dedicated but showing signs of tiredness and that its electoral record has been "very dismal and depressing" as one member described it. To move beyond this moribund evaluation, the executive know they must establish the party's primary goal.
Unanimity exists around the necessity of the organization's political party structure, but two strains of thought exist regarding its principal function. First is the role the party can play in bringing awareness and information to the public about Pro-life and Pro-family matters particularly during election times; it fosters the image of the party as an educator and haven for free speech on these politically incorrect issues. Additionally, this role includes using the tactics of persuasion on other political parties in order to have them adopt the FCP's two core principles and support the enactment of "family friendly" legislation. In discussing the goal of electoral success, Mrs. Toth reflects this strategy:

"That is the first thing in our constitution, to elect people to the B.C. legislature. In order to carry out all these things we need to elect people, but there are other ways to skin a cat. If we can get other parties to see the good things we stand for and we can get it in that way, that's fine."

Yet others shift emphasis about the party's function more exclusively to the goal of electoral success. Mrs. Stilwell sees the FCP "at that point where we are party oriented. I think the people who are really active right now are really focused on it being a political party" with the goal of electing someone. Because of the growing frustration some executive feel over the party's inability to influence other parties, this has by exclusion become for them its proper function. One board member commenting on the educational aspect of the party said

"That's about all we're up to right now, but we have to get serious and do whatever is necessary to get someone elected in the next election. Until we do that we can't have any effect. I know some of the parties are talking about what we are because of the noise we are making but it's not enough because they'll never do anything about it."

Reflected in these remarks is the dual nature of the FCP. Part social movement, part political party, its members are in pursuit of social change along both avenues and have yet to decide upon which they will concentrate. Mr. Toth sees this duality in as
much as the FCP is a “a political party structurally, it is also a movement because of our main concern.” Mrs. Stilwell sees it as “a political party that is part of a social movement.” This duality to date has prevented party executives from establishing a clearly defined goal for the party, something they understand must be done if it is to be an effective educative voice for the family or an avenue of political power for those in other pro-family movement organizations.

The party’s ideological trajectory is another concern for the executive. Two dominant factions have emerged within the FCP over the last several years surrounding its Christian roots. While not denying a Judeo-Christian foundation, the Toths have deliberately avoided any open Christian references in the party’s constitution or policies for fear of appearing dogmatic and sectarian. About the CHP, Mrs. Toth said “Christian Heritage is a religious movement, they have a very strict code of conduct I am nervous about.” Another board member said the “CHP, some people felt it was too much and we should leave it out of the constitution.” A majority of the membership currently support this position of leaving out any constitutional reference to Christianity, believing that the principles of the party, if presented properly could be attractive to a broad range of the population, including Sikhs, Muslims, Hindhus and Asians, all of whom it is pointed out, have strong family traditions.

Nonetheless, it is recognized that the FCP is walking a thin line. In describing the situation member John O’Flynn said

“The party has tried to stay away from parties like the CHP which are more openly religious. There is intertwining, but the party has been successful in not following what the CHP does. The FCP has from the beginning tried to keep a distance from that but not always successfully because the FCP has been brushed by the media with CHP.”

Another supporting board member, in describing what the FCP stands for has said
"I hate to say it in this manner but really it’s high moral ground, having strong moral fibre ... and hopefully that would be Christian or Judeo-Christian principles. Everyone want to steer it away from calling it Christian but sometimes I think we should just put it out front. There are a lot of Christians out there and we may gain a lot of support."

This ambivalence is given strength by those within the party that feel it should pursue precisely such a tactic. Presently a minority of the membership hold this position, but among them are Heather and Bill Stilwell respectively:

"I still think we are going to get down to a disagreement about foundational principles which in my mind are religious and the party is trying very hard not to be religious. I don’t mean religious in the sense of talking dogma, or official religions but the bottom line statement is that these policies have been developed because of this basic kind of understanding that comes from, for example, the Christian religion. When the time comes there will be a battle and there will be fallout because of it."

"The people who have started the party here have tried to stay away from it and this is going to become a dividing line I think. They are going to come to the realization that it is going to have to become to a greater degree more like the CHP. That is where my sympathies lie."

Party executives know that this issue, and the challenge of escaping the public perception of the FCP being solely the ‘right to life’ party, will have to be met and handled with dispatch if they are to establish a solid image upon which to prepare the party for the next election.

Arguably, these matters point to an identity denial by party executive. Their sociomoral positions parallel the Christian Right in the US. There is often admiration and reverence articulated for Alan Keyes, Pat Buchanan, and the Christian Coalition. Economically they look favourably upon the work of Ralph Klein in Alberta and Mike Harris in Ontario. They are religious conservatives, part of the Canadian Christian Right, yet they deliberately attempt to distance themselves from that political, social and ideological image. One founding member said they “fear the media will label us the religious Right.” Mrs. Stilwell commented that the party should attract “a great mass of
folks, ordinary Canadians because we are talking about the kind of things that ordinary people talk about over the coffee table." The party is grappling with this issue as they try to decide what image the party will have its future foundation built on.

Party executives recognize that strategies for resource accumulation are linked to these preparations. Once the party is able to identify itself, they believe it can begin to properly target and recruit potential adherents. They know membership and financial support will have to be improved dramatically for the party to become influential socially or politically and that the party will have to pursue this support vigorously. The executive are also aware that the process of acquiring support is presently a largely passive enterprise. One executive says the party gets new memberships slowly and there were "Thirteen last month, but I think it's just the fact that people are so fed up with politics that they hear there's an alternative but I don't think it's the result of any great effort on our part. Our effort isn't anywhere near good enough."

By addressing this recruitment situation the executive believe that the party should be able to begin building a resource base that would provide it with the influence it seeks, whether that be in Victoria, within a conservative party coalition, or increasing people's awareness about the social importance of preserving life and the traditional family.

In the language of social movement theory, these are matters of political process, of framing, and of resource mobilization for the Family Coalition Party. The FCP may be a political party, but its origins are in the activism of the Pro-life movement and its existence depends on the laboured efforts of committed activists who have exhausted all other routes that held out the opportunity for change. The FCP is a core of activists, not politicians, and their goal is change, not power. Their frustration and determination
have brought them reluctantly to this point. The FCP is a movement in party clothes, but this political garb has burdened these activists with the realities of party politics as they try to resurrect ideological support for the traditional family. They acknowledge that theirs is certainly not the path of least resistance. As Gerhard Herwig pointed out, "preferably the route would not be to have to go and form your own party. It's a last resort."

The social and political history of the FCP which has been presented in this chapter lays the foundation upon which the analytical focus of this dissertation can rest. Having a thorough understanding of the party's origins, its electoral and movement records, as well as the motivations, perceptions and efforts of its members is critical to analyzing its party/movement nature. While the first chapter laid the broad sociohistorical milieu in which the FCP is embedded, this chapter has demonstrated that the FCP is British Columbia's political manifestation of that milieu. What has emerged over the course of this sociomoral and political exposition of the Family Coalition Party is that the FCP and the Pro-family movement in general are firmly entrenched in a modernist, conservative, free market and quasi-religious ideology. It might at first, given the predominance of a capitalist hegemonic order in Canada, be tempting to simply assume that an organization like the Family Coalition Party would face fewer obstacles in pursuit of its goals than a more social democratic movement. The upcoming chapters address this possibility in three ways. The next chapter analyzes the FCP as a social movement, arguing that it can be understood as such because of its educative and mobilizing objectives, regardless of its party form. Following that, the party is analyzed as such: a minor political party engaging in institutional politics. Particular attention is paid to the systemic and cultural challenges that small parties
such as the FCP face. Finally, the FCP will be examined in terms of its true party/movement nature, and the unique difficulties this presents for them will be discussed. The first step however, is to unlink form from function and recognize the movement character of the FCP.
Chapter 4

The Function of Form: The Family Coalition Party as Movement

As a collective action form, the Family Coalition Party is the historical product of frustration and disaffection amongst its adherents towards not only mainstream political parties and processes but also the ineffectiveness of other movement forms in the pro-life and pro-family industries. Since the decriminalization of abortion in 1969, the pro-life movement, and now more recently the pro-family movement, have been confronted with ever diminishing political opportunities which can be exploited to reaffirm the traditional life and family values its activists hold sacrosanct. They have also been confronted with a social milieu resistant to the messages the movements carry. The cultural beliefs and sociopolitical policies of Canadian hegemony in the past twenty five years have shifted continually, albeit slowly, towards the integration of previously marginalized citizens. The movement activism of women, gays and lesbians, racial and ethnic minorities as well as other historically disenfranchised groups have broadened and diversified the popular image of the Canadian cultural landscape to the point where tangible gains have been achieved by these movements. This progress can be identified in the two spaces critical to achieving social change: the legislative/juridical and the popular consciousness of daily life. As the first two chapters have shown through profiling PFM activism, in BC this progress has included among other things the legal right of gays to adopt children, the broad availability of safe, legal abortion services for women, and the emerging acceptance of familial structures other than what is understood as "traditional."
For the Canadian Christian Right, the witnessing and subsequent opposition to this continuing cultural shift has been an extended period of frustrated attempts to mobilize active support from their seemingly natural constituency of Christian communities and to influence party and legislative policy through federal and provincial state mechanisms and parties. The FCP, like their namesake in Ontario, and the Christian Heritage Party federally, is an attempt by pro-family activists to create a political space using a party form to gain access to the polity for the purpose of achieving their movement goals: the legislative and cultural re-establishment of a pro-life and pro-family ideology for Canadian society.\(^2\) It is this tactic that gives the FCP its party/movement character and highlights an intimate yet highly viscous relationship between the form/function of an organization like the FCP. Its party form is the result of a tactical decision, a movement strategy to deliberately and overtly engage the political system in order to provide the pro-life and pro-family movements another avenue for activism. In this sense its form becomes a tool, an organizational crowbar with which to pry open a political access point for entrance into the mechanisms of legislative power. It also implicitly acknowledges the premise that every movement is ultimately political, and that at some point in their life cycle, movements, to attain their goals, must in some way engage the state.

More specifically, within the pro-family movement industry, the FCP can be understood as a specific and unique social movement organization (SMO) that has emerged at a particular historical moment of the current protest cycle, now characterized by a slow but progressive reversal of the movement-countermovement roles previously played by the New Social Movements (NSMs) and their conservative opponents. The legalization and popular support for the availability of safe abortion
services in Canada for instance, signals a victory for Pro-choice forces in the country and casts them now in the role of a counter-movement, defending these changes against Pro-life attempts to limit the availability of abortions. On the other hand, the Pro-life movement, with this shift in sociocultural attitudes and politico-legal safeguards, has become the movement rather than the counter-movement in this battle, as they attempt to promote acceptance of their desire to restrict these services.

Using the analytical concepts made available by social movement theorists in the areas of framing (Snow and Benford, 1988; Snow et al., 1986), resource mobilization theory (McCarthy and Zald, 1973, 1977), and political opportunity (McAdam, 1982; Tilly, 1978; Eisinger, 1973; Tarrow, 1994), this chapter will establish the FCP as an SMO and evaluate the problems it confronts as such. Beyond appreciating the movement function and character of the FCP, this chapter will also argue that conservative movements have, to date, been under attended to by social movement researchers, which has limited the capacity of social movement theory to fully reflect the temporal dynamic that mediates the interactive relationship between opposing movements and the state during cycles of protest.

**From Counter to Resurgence: The FCP as an NSM sub-type**

For understandable reasons, the bulk of social movement research over the last thirty years and before has focused primarily on the collective action attempts of disenfranchised groups to improve their social, political and economic standing within democratic polities. To this end and their great credit, social movement theorists have developed an impressive body of work capable of analyzing and understanding various facets of a movement's life cycle: its emergence, the social psychological requirements of
its supporters and mobilizers, its structural requisites and strategies for survival and success, and to a lesser extent their outcomes and the end of their life cycle. Since the early 1960s, when research of this kind tended to depend primarily on social psychological explanations of collective behaviour (Smelser, 1962; Gurr, 1970) social movement theory has gone through a period of emphasis on macro and meso-structural factors such as that found in the work of McCarthy and Zald (1977) on resource mobilization and McAdam's (1982) political process approach, and currently finds itself in a time of theoretical convergence. Movement scholars have recognized the great utility of a multivalent approach to the study of social movements and consequently there has been a recent surge of work attempting to bring together micro and macro perspectives as well as European New Social Movement theory with the American dominated resource mobilization approach (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1988, 1996; Morris and McClurg-Mueller, 1992; Buechler, 1993; Jenkins, 1983; Klandermans and Tarrow, 1988; Canel, 1992).

This theoretical trend is in no small part likely a result of the changing character of the social movements themselves and the sociopolitical culture in which they do battle. As capitalist accumulation strategies continue to adapt and defy Marx's prognostications, cultural hegemonic programs have concurrently broadened, providing ideological space for previously suppressed systems of belief and providing opportunities for groups to challenge the historically dominant Western patriarchal Christian ethos. In the post-industrial age, "classic" protest movements typically associated with class struggle and attempts at structural socioeconomic transformations in the base of the hegemonic order, have largely been supplanted by the "new" social movements, with their reformist, anti-institutional and particularistic focus on a variety
of single issues that find more prominent articulation in the upper hegemonic domain of culture, lifestyle, ideological belief and consciousness.

Regardless of the historical form or focus, definitions of what constitutes a social movement tend to reflect consensus about them being a form of collective action by a group of like-minded people that exhibit a degree of organizational formality while operating in an uninstitutionalized context to promote or resist social change. Definitions like this abound in the literature (Heberle, 1968; Wilkinson, 1971; Zurcher and Snow, 1981; Scott, 1990; Marx and McAdam, 1994; Tarrow, 1994), but for the present purpose, Alan Scott’s (1990) definition has been chosen for reasons that will emerge throughout the chapter. Scott writes that

“A social movement is a collective actor constituted by individuals who understand themselves to have common interests and, for at least some significant part of their social existence, a common identity. Social movements are distinguished from other collective actors, such as political parties and pressure groups, in that they have mass mobilization, or the threat of mobilization, as their prime source of social sanction, and hence of power. They are further distinguished from other collectivities, such as voluntary associations or clubs, in being chiefly concerned to defend or change society, or the relative position of the group in society” (Scott, 1990:6).

For most movement scholars, this satisfies as a description of what West German sociologists dubbed *Neue soziale Bewegungen* (Dalton, 1990:4), the New Social Movements, the study of which has largely dominated the field for the past twenty years. The claimed novelty of these movements has been their characteristic turn away from institutionalized and representative politics, their attention to a diverse range of individual issues, their emphasis on localism and extraparliamentary action, and their predominant concern for culture and lifestyle over the economic (Boggs, 1986; Macionis, 1994; Scott, 1990).
The NSMs are largely a form of citizen politics concerned with the expression and validation of identity. With these movements, as Alberto Melucci has observed, "what individuals are claiming collectively is the right to realize their own identity: the possibility of disposing of their personal creativity, their affective life, and their biological and interpersonal existence" (Melucci, 1980:218). This means these are struggles not simply about gender and sexuality, but the full spectrum of cultural forces that mold, mitigate and manage the daily lives and identities of people. Ecological concerns, the peace movement, anti-consumerism, tax revolts, student protests, and opposition to television all share the common feature of trying to reconfigure popular culture in such a way as to free the individual from the workaday corporatist ideology of capitalist social relations. The celebration of personal autonomy, increasing individual control over one's existence, and improving the quality of personal and collective life are the cultural goals of these movements. These movements are about breaking out of a narrow sociocultural and political mold that valorizes above all else the relations of production and offers the paycheque as its highest reward.

In rebuking the homogenizing effects of capitalism on social identities, NSMs have taken up an operational locale in civil society, focusing on local issues and forms of mobilization. This emphasis on direct action and participatory styles of engagement reflects an inherent distrust among NSMs for the corporatist practices of the modern state. The outgrowth of state involvement in the everyday lives of citizens has blurred or, as some argue, eliminated (Melucci, 1980) the line separating the spheres of public and private, resulting in a creeping strangulation of democratic autonomies and freedoms. Carl Boggs points out that this state expansion is demanded by the
"structural transformation of capitalism - the collapse of market mechanisms giving rise to monopoly control, extensive planning networks, and socialization of production requires massive state initiative, even where (as in the United States) the myths of free enterprise remain" (1986:24).

Regardless of arguments concerning autonomy and whether the state operates on behalf or at the behest of capital, corporatist practices of social control mediation are rebuffed by NSM activists because the goal of such processes remains the maintenance of systemic conditions favourable to fostering new or continuing patterns of accumulation, not the retreat of state mechanisms from private life or the democratization of society in general.

In a recent article, Boggs argues that the dominant and common theme among all NSMs has been "the commitment to participatory democracy. What galvanized all social forces was a passionately anti-authoritarian ethos, a preoccupation with direct action, community and self-activity that carried into virtually every arena of struggle" (Boggs, 1995:333). This has necessitated a disavowal of traditional political party systems of representation. "Essentially" writes Melucci, "they [NSMs] are not oriented toward the conquest of political power or of the state apparatus, but rather toward the control of a field of autonomy or of independence vis-à-vis the system" (Melucci, 1980:220). The goal of direct action and full political participation cannot be met if the locus of power is transferred from the individual to a representative of conglomerated interests, so NSMs have deliberately stressed the interdependence of the personal and political (Scott, 1990) and the importance of understanding civil society as a politically engaged space.

For the categories of NSMs that have been generally identified, those being concerned with issues of gender, sexuality, race, youth, peace, and ecology (Boggs, 1986;
Miliband, 1989; Johnston, et. al, 1994), these attitudes and tactical traits can be accepted as readily applicable. However, the important question at hand is whether an organization like the Family Coalition Party, decidedly conservative and seemingly accepting of traditional protocols of political engagement, can be understood and accepted in similar fashion. Certainly the FCP is working to resist social change which squeezes them into the definitional end of a social movement, but they are also directed to promoting social change. Cultural and political gains made by various NSMs have come at the expense of the FCP's belief system and political security. For example, the FCP is not fighting to prevent the passage of legislation legalizing abortion or adoption by gays; they are fighting to promote support for changing extant laws they view as inherently wrong and unjust. What they are seeking in other words, is the re-establishment of the ideological and political supremacy of the Western patriarchal Christian ethos which the NSMs have been slowly and successfully eradicating. That the FCP is attempting to “return to the past” with this goal may be, but this is a political and ideological judgment and not the point of concern here. Attempting to change cultural beliefs and influence legislative decisions are goals of any movement, regardless of form or ideology.

As Chapter 2 made clear, the FCP's traditional family value platform is not that similar to the type of complete political package commonly associated with institutionalized parties. Their mandate is driven by a narrow, particular set of issues that constitutes a specific politics of identity. Preserving and restoring the traditional family identity within BC's cultural hegemony is the goal of the FCP and attempting to acquire parliamentary standing through the electoral process is considered by its executive as only a method by which to achieve this goal. Apart from Heather Stilwell,
none of the executive or the candidates in the 1996 provincial election expressed any interest a political career or even the opportunity to wield political power beyond that needed to achieve the goals of their movement. Indeed, the entire membership considers the role of the FCP at this point in its life cycle to be more that of a movement focused on increasing awareness and educating the general public about the benefits of traditional family values and the dangers of secular humanist forces in society. Election periods are viewed only as additional opportunities to raise these issues and the FCP is considered to be a specialized vehicle within the pro-family movement for that purpose, but also as a potentially effective educative body in off-election years. Like the NSMs, the FCP executive operates under the belief that successful social change will come about through the process of value identification by people, and this will primarily be achieved through the institutions and daily life of civil society. Those in the pro-family movement and the FCP believe that only when this shift in values has occurred, only when people have become "cognitively liberated" to use Doug McAdam's term (1982), will the party have the potential to become a viable political force in the province.

Despite their structural form, the FCP as a collective group harbours a deep disaffection for representative politics. Years of broken promises, slammed doors of political opportunity, and backroom party dealings have left the membership with a jaundiced view of the political process. While FCP executives and supporters believe that politicians and their parties should work to represent the wishes of their constituents, they share a strong sentiment that in practice the case is quite the opposite. It is believed that the parliamentary system under which Canadian governments operate provides little opportunity for accurate or free representation. The Toths and Stilwell's experiences working within political parties, the examples of pro-life
politicians like federal Liberal’s Tom Wappel and Roseanne Skokes and provincial Liberal Mike de Jong being consistently silenced by party whips, are regularly used to demonstrate the dangers and ineffectiveness of representative politics. On the other hand, PFM activists and FCP members view the Family Coalition as a party capable of providing the opportunity for direct, open and principled political participation for pro-family supporters.

With their reformist goals, distrust of representative politics, concern for traditional family issues and identity, and belief in direct political participation, it would seem the FCP should fall somewhere in the rubric of the New Social Movements. The danger lies in overstating their fit. The FCP is still the ideological antithesis of what are commonly understood to be NSMs. They embody a form rejected in principle by most NSMs, they are not pursuing the goal of radically restructuring the democratic process, and they have taken a strategically deliberate turn towards the political.

Part of the solution to appreciating the New Social Movement qualities of the FCP is to first recognize the anti-political idealism of the NSMs as rather illusory. The NSM’s “flight from politics” as Boggs (1986) describes it, may be an act of self-distancing from traditional political institutions, but it is equally as much an expansion of what constitutes political terrain and as such an ontological denial. Identity and issue politics of these modern movements politicize what were previously non-political spaces by mobilizing around issues of sexuality, gender and culture. L. A. Kaufmann writes that “the overall effect of this new identity politics was a major shift in political thinking, deemphasizing the role of institutions in perpetuating discrimination and exploitation and highlighting the role of extra-institutional culture” (Kaufmann, 1990:71). This shift in turn, Kaufmann argues, has resulted in the NSMs pursuing a
number of "disturbing directions: away from engagement with institutionalized structures of power, toward a kind of apolitical introspection, and into a cycle of fragmentation and diffusion of political energies" (ibid., 68). What emerges is an interpretation of 'the political is personal' that equates consciousness-raising and self-transformation with political engagement and therefore "the tendency to claim political content for changes in lifestyle encourages the view that politics need not necessarily involve engagement with external structures of power" (ibid., 77). 3 So deluded, NSM activists risk falling into the trap of denying what they are - political movements. This denial is what David Plotke considers the most serious problem NSMs confront because it prevents them from effectively pursuing their goals of social change. He writes that "movements are thoroughly political, concerned not only with winning reforms but also with gaining and employing power ... concerned with shaping social relations - at the level of the state and elsewhere. They politicize previously uncontested relations, or repoliticize previously settled relations. In doing so, they become involved with the national and local state, with legislatures and courts, with all the routine forms of political decision making" (Plotke, 1990:100-101).

For all their anti-political idealism, this is precisely what the NSMs do. For all their novelty, NSMs share the same goals and problems as traditional working class movements, whose "aim was not to refuse power, much less destroy it, but to take and reshape it. The problem of identity was in theory already settled ... What remained was the problem of enhancing and guarding identities in practice" (Plotke, 1990:92). This is the juncture at which the NSMs find themselves. Identity established, they are now searching for avenues to secure political power and unifying themes that may allow a coming together of disparate interests, what Boggs (1986) has termed a "conversion project." That the New Social Movements represent a thematic shift rather than an ontological break from traditional class-based movements has been well argued (Plotke,
1990; Miliband, 1989; Cohen, 1983; Tucker, 1991; Calhoun, 1993). In the end both types of movements are concerned with issues of citizenship, social distribution of power and resources, and the opportunity for political participation. The pursuit of a radical democratic politics by the NSMs (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Sandilands, 1992), the entrance of the Greens into the political mainstream (Boggs, 1986; Kitschelt, 1989; Sandilands, 1992) and the general pursuit of rights through the legislative and juridical spheres, are all deliberately political acts engaging the state. Indeed, in their examination of the NSM’s principled rejection of the state as a locus of power, Mooers and Sears conclude that

“The radical democrats’ bold claim to have theoretically transcended the crude Marxist preoccupation with the centrality of state power masks the peace they have made with the state at the level of practical politics. To the extent that much of the baggage of traditional liberalism is smuggled back into radical democratic discourse, its political prescriptions begin to sound like minor variations on an old theme. ... This type of politics represents a new form of reformism ... all social movements come up against the state” (Mooers and Sears, 1992:60,68).

Like the FCP then, the NSMs, despite the illusion, have not simply taken a decided turn towards the political in their pursuit of social change, they may in fact have never really turned away.

For present purposes, it is with the Canadian Greens that this similarity of engaging the political can be most readily observed. In Ontario, the Green Party is pursuing a goal of introducing a form of radical democracy through its tactical entrance into provincial politics (Sandilands, 1989), but it is in BC that politics is making the strangest bedfellows. In the pursuit of electoral reform for the province the Green Party and the FCP (along with other small parties) have joined forces under the “Coalition for Electoral Reform” label in an attempt to press for a system of proportional representation within the province.4 Dissatisfied with the current form of
representation, these parties are pressing for this more directly representative type of electoral system, the likes of which has not been seen since WAC Bennett's Social Credit Party came to power in British Columbia as a protest party in 1952 under a proportional representation type of electoral system. Despite occupying opposite ends of an ideological continuum, this pursuit of electoral reform and participatory democracy vis-à-vis a structural form brings the environmental and pro-family movements onto common tactical ground and closes the taxonomic gap between the NSMs and the FCP.

What remains however, is the ideological orientation of the FCP. In certain respects, it would be inaccurate to describe them as a New Social Movement. In their analysis of modern movements, scholars have tacitly (albeit accurately) accepted NSMs as ideologically and politically left wing, something the FCP most assuredly cannot claim. In analyzing the use of the term New Social Movement, it has been pointed out that a tendency has arisen to ontologize the characteristics of these collective action forms (Johnston, et. al, 1994; Melucci, 1989); that is, the nature of these movements is exclusively embedded in these descriptive characteristics. Beyond the traits described above, this argument can also be extended to their political orientation. Through years of analytical focus and discussion, popular use of the term now carries with it an implied and accepted understanding that to speak of New Social Movements is to speak of a leftist political ideology. This is not necessarily an analytical fault, although it needs to be recognized more overtly than the current literature does, but it does little to properly situate a conservative movement like the FCP in this theoretical frame.

Typically, when an organization like the FCP is encountered or analyzed, it is labelled as a countermovement and situated somewhere on the perimeter of serious social movement research. As Meyer and Staggenborg (1994) point out, there is a
paucity of theoretical work available on countermovements, something which can also be said of empirical research on such movements.\textsuperscript{5} This circumstance is an understandable product of movement history over the last three decades, a period which has seen remarkable mobilization by forces on the left and lesser, but growing resistance or counter-mobilization from the right. To use Tarrow's (1994) observation, the social movements that arose in the 1960s in North America constituted a third cycle of protest for the modern age and these movements, the NSMs, have resulted in a number of manifest gains in the Canadian and American polities. Cultural attitudes and acceptance of alternate lifestyles, minority rights, abortion, and the need to protect the environment have grown and this has been reflected in various legislated bills and applications of law. History in other words, is not the present. Time has passed and social norms have altered as this cycle of protest has marched on; the sociomoral and juridico-political status quos in 1997 are not what they were in 1967, or even 1987. These changes have in many regards reversed the roles of left wing movements and their adversarial conservative countermovements, making the past practice of automatically labelling right wing movements "counter" outdated.

McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1988) have pointed out the limited utility of this traditional labelling practice and the importance of timing on the targets of countermovement action, but did not stress the importance of the historical moment in situating a collective action form as movement or countermovement. Like other descriptions of countermovements (Heberle, 1968; Benford, 1992; Macionis, 1994), theirs highlights the fact that any movement will invite opposition (countermovement), they will interact with one another, and that countermovements attempt to defend the status quo or existing social order. To their credit and unlike these other descriptions, they did
not include the inference of inherent conservatism in a countermovement. Mottl’s (1980) formal definition of a countermovement avoids the same pitfall: “It is useful to define a **countermovement** as a conscious, collective, organized attempt to resist or to reverse social change” (Mottl, 1980:620, emphasis in the original). Lo (1982) correctly identifies this definition as “opposing not another movement, but rather social change” and suggests instead that a “countermovement may be defined as a movement mobilized against another social movement” (Lo, 1982:118). Both these definitions have analytic utility for the field, Mottl’s because it emphasizes the countermovement’s relation to the broader social and historico-temporal context and Lo’s because it allows one to sort out the players depending on which side you find yourself. Yet neither of them is adequate to fully reflect the temporal dynamic that comes into play as gains are made by any particular movement during the increasing interplay between opposing movements and the state. What is needed is a point of reference from which the determination of whether a movement is “counter” can be made. Such apt criteria can be found in Gale’s work (1986) on state-movement interactions because it provides an opportunity to use the state’s actions in response to a movement’s success (the passage of favourable laws, the increase of social sanction against the movement, etc.) as a crude indicator of the historical and cultural moment in which opposing movements find themselves. Zald and Useem’s (1987) work on movement/countermovement interaction provides the same opportunity, as well as stressing the importance of recognizing that “mobilization and interaction of M/CM must be nested in a historical context” (Zald and Useem, 1987:254). Nonetheless, their starting supposition that “movements of any visibility and impact create the conditions for the mobilization of countermovements,” while true enough, makes the labelling process a product of
something akin to ‘who threw the first punch’ and does not account for actual changes that have occurred in the everyday world. For instance, the current historical moment in BC is one that has seen the legislative expansion and cultural acceptance of gays increase, while popular tolerance for the beliefs of the pro-family movement has diminished. Thirty years ago, the reverse would have been true and the FCP would have truly been a countermovement, attempting to resist change, but today, their situation has reversed because of the successes of the gay movement and so in the current moment they find themselves in the role of the movement. In comparing the mobilization capacities of the pro-life and pro-choice movement, McCarthy alludes to this type of role reversal, and the mediating function of the state in this process when he writes “When pro-choice was the movement, rather than the countermovement, before the 1973 Supreme Court decision, it was not, with the exception of a few areas ... a grass-roots movement” (McCarthy, 1987:64). Of course, these roles could change again (and in fact for the PFM they have not entirely changed now) as the next historical moment is approached and entered. The implication is that the use of the term countermovement is moment and standpoint specific. It can apply to left or right wing movements (Lo, 1982) and can be used by one movement to describe its opponent; but ultimately the determining labelling factor must be the historico-cultural moment in which the opposing movements find themselves. To use the term across historical time and through varying cultural and social norms can only result in a situation that calls forth unwieldy terms such as “counter-countermovement”.

While the most popular, countermovement is not the only label that has been used to describe conservative movements like the FCP. Habermas (1981) has called them “resistance” movements for their attempts to defend traditional conceptions of the
social order, and Eder (1985) has called them a middle class form of political protest guided by the "petit bourgeois consciousness" that supports "the orthodoxy of the classical ideal of the family, of deterrence and economic growth" (Eder, 1985:877-78); in other words, "moral crusades". The difficulties with this term are that it is more an ideological description than theoretical definition, and with it Eder denies they are social movements:

"The NSMs manifest a form of middle-class protest which oscillates from moral crusade to political pressure group to social movement. ... The moral crusade is the form most favored by the petite bourgeoisie. Petit bourgeois radicalism is of a primarily moral nature. The petit bourgeoisie are predestined by their social situation to be protesting moralists. ... The point of reference of this protest is the set of moral principles which have become the basis of modernity. The moral crusades of the NSMs are collective reactions to the cultural modernization which has increasingly widened the gap between morality and the lifeworld" (ibid.: 888-89).

Habermas' "resistance movement" comes closer to the mark, but is not inclusive enough. The FCP is certainly attempting to resist change, but it can be seen that they are also attempting to promote change as do other movements of its type (Lo, 1982). The question here becomes why they are trying to effect social change. It may be more than the fear of losing status privilege or experiencing "status frustration," since these motives might only lead to attempts to prevent social change. To pursue the promotion of social change, the group must be seeking the acquisition of something it perceives as socially good or beneficial - something not currently reflected in the social and political milieu. In the case of the FCP, this is the pursuit of a value system it is losing and in some instances has already lost. The FCP, in fact the entire pro-family movement, is engaged in a kind of cultural reclamation project as they attempt to forestall any further losses and regain lost ground by trying to generate a surge of support among Eder's "petit bourgeois". In this sense, the FCP and the pro-family movement can be
understood as a sub-type of the New Social Movements, specifically a *Resurgence Movement*: a modern movement attempting to resist social change while simultaneously promoting social change by working towards the re-establishment of lost, but previously dominant and popularized cultural beliefs.

Introducing this term into the lexicon of social movement taxonomy creates a theoretical space for an organization like the FCP. By extension, the entire pro-family movement can also now be conceptualized and subsequently analyzed as a modern movement, independent of its ideology but not stripped of its privileged social history. So conceived, a movement like the PFM can more accurately be assessed not in an absolutist, ahistorical frame that dichotomizes its position into one of either simple dominance or marginalization, but in one that avoids reification by acknowledging that such clearly demarcated battle lines cannot exist in the dynamic arena of modern social struggle.

**A Sketch of the Pro-Family Movement in British Columbia**

Before assessing the FCP for its framing, mobilization, and political process efforts, it will be helpful to situate it as an SMO within the broader pro-family movement industry. To date, the limited work available on the pro-family movement in Canada (Eichler, 1985; Steuter, 1992; Erwin, 1993) has used REAL (Realistic Equal and Active for Life) Women as the dominant example of the movement. Other organizations in the industry have tended to be mentioned only briefly in the main text, or documented in a footnote. In order to build on this valuable work and better understand the movement's full spectrum, these organization's need to be brought from the footnotes fully into the main text in order that the functional relationships and
operative dynamics of this neophyte Canadian movement can be identified for future exploration.

In British Columbia, similar to the rest of Canada (Steuter, 1992), the pro-life movement currently constitutes the core of the pro-family movement. Of fourteen organizations identified as “pro-family,” in this project, six of them are also, and primarily, part of the pro-life movement. This is unsurprising in light of the fact that among supporters and activists of the two movements, there is an overwhelmingly dominant view that the relationship between being pro-family and pro-life is natural and inevitable. Interview respondents consistently described life as emerging from family and the function of family as being the source and protector of that life. Consequently it was argued, those who hold a pro-life position naturally extend that to include support for the pro-family movement. Also, and of particular note, respondents had consistent difficulty identifying specific organizations that they considered “pro-family.” While pro-life organizations were immediately and accurately identified, pro-family organizations were described in vague terms like “anyone who supports pro-life,” church groups, supporters of home and traditional schooling, groups seeking tax relief for families and “anyone but the NDP.” One activist said of this trend that “pro-life is an important issue and it can be even with pro-family but pro-family requires all kinds of definitions which can be hard to articulate, so defining what is the pro-family movement is more difficult to tackle, but being pro-life is a subset of pro-family.” Perhaps surprisingly, this trend held even with those interviews done with directors of provincial pro-life and pro-family groups. The only exceptions to this general pattern were the consistent identification of Focus on the Family Canada as a PFM group, and the occasional reference to REAL Women. Nonetheless, when
prompted, respondents did agree that the following organizations do work towards the promotion of the pro-family agenda in the province: Focus on the Family Canada, REAL Women, Christian Coalition of British Columbia, Westcoast Women for Family Life, Catholic Civil Rights League, Citizen's Research Institute, Compassionate Health Care Network, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition BC, Respect for Life, Campaign Life Coalition Canada, BC Prolife, local right to life associations, Birthright and Vancouver Right to Life.11

Excluding the pro-life organizations, the PFM in British Columbia is a relatively young movement. Focus on the Family, Citizen Research Institute (CRI) and REAL Women have existed since the mid-1980s, but the Christian Coalition, Catholic Civil Rights League, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition are less than two years old in the province. Most are affiliated with extra-provincial, national, or international parent organizations. This is the case for Focus (an outgrowth of James Dobson's US based Focus on the Family), REAL Women, Westcoast Women for Family Life (started by those involved with the Alberta Federation of Women United for Families), the Catholic Civil Rights League (operative since 1985 in Ontario), and all the pro-life organizations. The Christian Coalition, the Compassionate Health Care Network, the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition and CRI all claim organizational independence at present. Respect for Life is attached to the Vancouver Archdiocese and through that, other Catholic organizations throughout the country.

As a movement industry composed of these organizations, the PFM is best characterized as one that is underdeveloped. Overall there is a strong emphasis placed on organizational autonomy. A general belief exists that the movement is best served by each organization maintaining its independent focus and that aggregating into a
more functionally interdependent organism would not only be strategically damaging but a practical impossibility. The tendency for PFM activists to be independent and strong minded and the issue of charitable status are cited as the primary reasons for this impossibility. The connections between these organizations is best thought of as a pattern of loose informational relationships with a small degree of board membership crossover and a high degree of personal association or knowledge between organization directors and activists. At times, the organizations do work together or draw on each other’s strengths when dealing with particular issues. CRI for instance, is acknowledged to have a good working relationship with the mainstream media and as such, its director, Kari Simpson, sits on the board of the Christian Coalition as its communications director. Also, the appellate case last autumn in which the province sought to have the ruling which had gutted its “bubble zone” legislation overturned, saw Respect for Life, BC Pro-Life, Campaign Life Coalition, Feminists for Life and Physicians for Life all act as legal intervenors on behalf of the original defendant, Maurice Lewis.

A similar pattern prevails between provincial and national organizations. While provincial representatives do attend annual general meetings and other special gathering of the national organizations, for the most part there is a high degree of organizational autonomy and independence. REAL Women, Campaign Life Coalition, and the Catholic Civil Rights League for instance, receive little top down direction other than the requisite maintenance of the organization’s principles. Issues of importance are identified and acted upon with local initiative and with little interference from national boards. Inter and intra-organizational channels of communication seem strong although there is an underlying opinion that information exchange at this level could be
strengthened. As with the provincial situation, interpersonal knowledge of, and connections between activists throughout the country appear to provide a strong element of cohesion for the movement.

Cross-nationally with the United States, there exists no formal organizational associations at this time. Directors described relationships as friendly but restricted to the informal exchange of information, general developments within the movement and the occasional use of guest speakers from the US. Jim Sclater, Vice-President of Public Policy for Focus on the Family Canada, perhaps best described the overall nature of intra-provincial, national and cross-national relationships between pro-family organizations when he commented that

“We have informal networking with them, we are on the phone with them, and talking about various issues. We often show up at the same meetings or public forums together and we network with other groups in regards to court intervention, in coalition with three or four of them, or alongside them. We call them together in Ottawa and have a conference on these concerns. Send each other briefs, that sort of thing.”

In calculating their support base PFM organizations in the province use either direct membership totals or mailing list size. Focus on the Family and CRI for instance, claim mailing list sizes throughout Canada of 145,000 and 80,000 respectively (with 40,000 of CRI’s total in BC). Respect for Life’s director Peter Ryan said there is no solicitation of members for his organization but the assumption is made that “everyone who is Roman Catholic and goes to church is our membership.” Campaign Life Coalition of BC has a mailing list of 2,200 but this includes churches and other religious organizations that have their own membership base. The Euthanasia Prevention Coalition of BC organizes exclusively around this concept of member organizations. Dr. Will Johnston, an EPC co-director, believes there to be “twenty-nine member organizations who could be said to represent maybe 300,000 in BC.” Membership
groups were identified as ranging from various religious groups, the Roman Catholic Church, and several secular groups, to pro-life organizations such as Nurses for Life. The Pro-life movement as a whole (BC Pro-life, Vancouver Right to Life, etc.) has a membership of over 20,000 province wide. As a confidential counselling service, Birthright keeps no records of its clients which would constitute its membership, but the organizations does boast a total of 600 centres throughout North America, with 16 of those in BC.

REAL Women’s current BC president, Doris Darvasi believes their national membership total stands at 50,000 and the provincial total runs at roughly 3,000. She pointed out that their membership totals

"fluctuate quite a bit - it seems that when issues come up that people are shocked by, then they join, but then they let their memberships lapse after two years. It’s not so much lack of support, but people not remembering to renew. If you phone them they remember."

The Christian Coalition’s membership stands presently at only 300, but being a new organization, current Chairman Clyde Vint says they have only just begun a serious membership drive in the last several months. Westcoast Women for Family Life’s membership total also stands only in the hundreds, as does the Catholic Civil Rights League (CCRL). Michael Markwick, a co-director of the CCRL in BC, admitted that the organization’s membership records are poorly kept at present, but thought there was a total of about 500 members across the country. In terms of tracking memberships and generating new support, John Hof, president of Campaign Life Coalition BC also lamented that “We’re a very disorganized group."

The mobilizing resources of money and personnel come virtually exclusively from this constituent pool for the pro-family movement. Financial resources are
claimed to be entirely by individual or organizational donation, membership dues, and
the occasional large anonymous donation. Particularly important to the movement as
a whole is that each organization operates without any government funding. This is a
source of both pride and strategy for the PFM. Strategically, it is generally felt that to
receive such funding would tether the movement to the state, limiting its freedom of
activity. As John Hof of Campaign Life puts it “we receive no government funding.
Some say it would be nice, but I’d say it would be a millstone around our neck. I think
when you’re independent you don’t have anyone telling you what you can or can’t
say.” It is also a generally held belief that their opponents (feminist, pro-choice and
gay rights groups, etc.) would be unable to sustain themselves as movement
organizations if it were not for the large amount of state funding they receive. One
director commented on their years of involvement, “It’s cost me, we sacrifice a lot in this
movement. It’s cost me money, if the other side didn’t get their funding from the
government, they’d soon go away.” PFM organizations take pride in their financial self-
reliance, believing that if the playing field were level, their conservative combination of
self-reliance and community focus would prevail over the socialist forces of secular
humanism. Most of the organizations operate on per annum budgets running from
$3,500 for the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition to Respect for Life’s $80,000 which is
supplied by the Vancouver Archdiocese. The Archdiocese also donates collections from
one day during the year to the Pro-life movement, the proceeds of which are divided
between the various provincial organizations. CRI’s budget has dramatically increased
from less than $10,000 per annum in past years to over $200,000 this year, while Focus
on the Family’s budget stands at $6 million per annum. Although some donations in
kind are made on occasion to these various organizations, this is acknowledged as a minor, sporadic and therefore unreliable type of support.17

These organizations are predominantly headed by directors and board members who work on a voluntary basis except for some who receive the odd small stipend. Only Focus on the Family, Campaign Life Coalition, and Respect for Life have paid directors and/or staff. Organization workers and personnel are also volunteers and are recruited primarily through word of mouth, which is overwhelmingly felt to be the most effective form of recruitment. There exists a chronic shortage of manpower within the entire movement and a pattern of consistently calling upon the same people during times when an organization is recruiting help to work on a particular issue. Directors asked about volunteer recruitment consistently cited a rough figure of ten percent when identifying the percentage of their constituents who are regularly active in the movement. Volunteer recruitment seems best described as haphazard and most concentrated when an organization is actively engaged in promoting/resisting a issue that has arisen. Only three organizations said they try to recruit help on a regular basis while four said they did no active recruiting whatsoever, preferring to let “people come to us.” Expertise in a specific area of activism is accepted when offered, otherwise it has been developed by individuals within organizations through years of trial and error. One long time organizer in the movement summed up the human resource situation of the PFM like this:

“We struggle. There’s only so many sources for most of these movements and we find that all these groups are going to be going to the same well for water all the time and there’s a limitation on how many people are willing to participate in this even if they’re sympathetic to the movement. I think for those who consider themselves pro-life you’re lucky to get 5% of them active in any way. You might get 15% out to meetings once in a while, 35-50% of them willing to contribute now and then in some financial way or another, either buying an xmas cake or whatever, but its because most groups count on
the same general population, whether its FCP, Campaign Life, Pro-life or Citizen’s Research. ... you do struggle, it’s a constant battle.”

The goal of all these efforts is similar to that of other pro-family movements in Canada and the US: the promotion and re-establishment of an ideology valorizing the traditional family and defending an unmitigated respect for human life from conception to natural death. Jim Sclater says that Focus on the Family is “primarily concerned with the whole definition of the family, and we see this eroding by various initiatives, or threatened by various initiatives that have come down the legislative road the last few years.” Kari Simpson sees the “feminist movement as destructive, it’s robbed the nation of a very important arena, the family. It’s robbed women of the right to be women.” One of the Catholic Civil Rights League’s objectives is to “continue to defend the traditional family as the basic unit of society” and “make Canadians aware of what is going on” in response to the fact that “the Canadian delegation to United Nations Conferences actively promoted pro-homosexuality and pro-abortion policies and is implementing them with taxpayer’s money and without the knowledge or consent of the Canadian public or Parliament.”18 The Christian Coalition seeks to “affirm the value of protecting the sanctity of all human life, from the point of conception to the point of natural death [and to] represent the pro-family, pro-community point of view before local, provincial and federal governments.”19

For BC Pro-life and its forty-five provincial affiliates, Vancouver Right to Life, Birthright and Campaign Life Coalition, the first of the Christian Coalition’s objectives is their prime concern.20 The pro-life movement has been described as a “spider web with ten arms on it,” and as a “body” with BC Pro-life being the head, Campaign Life the legs and Birthright the heart. Functionally, they each work towards their goal via
different avenues: Birthright provides counselling services for expectant mothers and remains staunchly apolitical, maintaining such a low profile that other pro-life activists commented that they often “don’t know what Birthright is up to most of the time”; BC Pro-life, its affiliates, and Vancouver Right to Life also maintain an apolitical focus with emphasis on serving as educative bodies that act as information resources; Campaign Life Coalition is designated as the official non-partisan political body of the pro-life movement and as such acts at different times as a direct political lobby group, legal intervenor, evaluator of political candidates, and distributor of political material concerning the pro-life issues. Respect for Life meanwhile, pursues a six point mandate (education, non-partisan political activity, working with social services, engaging with the broader pro-life movement, working with other churches and dealing with spiritual activity) towards the pro-life goal in a strategy described as pro-active because it is not about “waiting for things to happen but rather getting out and getting members involved in the pro-life movement on a regular basis” as director Peter Ryan says. The Euthanasia Prevention Coalition works to oppose the promotion and legislation of euthanasia and assisted suicide as well as to promote palliative care for the dying. In their quest, this fledgling organization is also educational and politically non-partisan. Commensurate with these concerns however, is an actively sympathetic standing among these organizations for those that are pursuing the broader pro-family agenda.

This includes the Citizen’s Research Institute, the Christian Coalition, REAL Women, Focus on the Family, Westcoast Women for Family Life, and the Catholic Civil Rights League, all of which refer to the defence of the traditional family as one of their organizational purposes. Directors of all these organizations cited education as their primary strategic initiative, followed by some type of formal or informal political
lobbying. Consensus exists among pro-family activists that the most important step for this resurgence movement is to disseminate information and educate the public thereby empowering the average citizen to make informed political and social decisions. Increasing awareness among adherents and by-stander publics through educational means and extra-parliamentary avenues was identified as the primary function of a social movement and the most critical to generating social change. Kari Simpson for instance, sees CRI's mandate as one of “making sure people have factual information and giving them a license to use their voices to allow healthy debate to take place. Canadians have to be informed with factual information to make informed decisions rather than just casting ballots. ... Bad politicians only occur when good people don't cast ballots. There's more to voting than going to the polls and this is a new realization in our psyche.”

Michael Markwick of CCRL argues that before direct political engagement can occur, a base in civil society must be solidified through increasing people's awareness of pro-family issues and so “In terms of a specific agenda [for CCRL] it is to build bridges within the community and also with like-minded organizations and religions. It's sort of a strengthening of the flock and then when we're secure in our faith and identity, then to get out there and bring the faith out into public affairs.”

Politically, all the organizations have adopted a non-partisan stance, believing that working within existing parties at the level of the individual politician, and concentrating on changing the attitudes of the general voter, will prove to be more effective in the long term than backing a single political party. This is despite a belief that mainstream parties and their politicians consistently exhibit opportunism and careerism, and pursue the adoption of social policy by "sniffing the wind" as one pro-family activist put it. This trend of power maintenance through populism among mainstream parties leaves pro-family advocates feeling that they are without a
representative voice that will maintain an uncompromised position on social issues. Clyde Vint of the Christian Coalition for instance, believes “there are a lot of good Christians in all parties, but unfortunately the mandate of the party doesn’t give them a mandate to speak. If the party as a whole doesn’t embrace their ideas, then they have no voice.” In part, this seemingly paradoxical situation may be explained by an underlying belief that despite any legislative victories that may be won, there is an intrinsic impermanence to the political, so significant and durable social change can only come about with an ideological transformation at the level of the individual. Michael Markwick points out that in Ontario, Bob Rae’s NDP party came to power and “got loose in the candy store, brought in labour laws and all sorts of things and in the space of four years it’s been dismantled. So that indicates to me it’s just not a permanent fix, political alignment is not a panacea.” Nonetheless, as an entire movement, the organizations do believe that formal political representation is imperative to achieving their goals. Years of experience working on the pro-life cause has taught John Hof that

“There has to be a law. Education in the schools is only a part of it. ... one reason they haven’t been [politically] activated is because they haven’t caught the vision of how effective they can be. In an election, 20% of the population votes, so Christians only need to increase their numbers by 5% and we could swing an election. They have to be shown that vision.”

Articulating the paradoxical relationship resurgence and new social movements have with the state Kari Simpson states that:

“Certainly there has to be [formal political representation] because there is still respect for authority in this country, which is good but not necessarily deserving because government has gotten into areas where it has no business. The only way to get out is through the political process. Because these issues have become political it’s been necessary to use the arena to curb them, so it’s necessary to have political representation.”
It was the hope of the FCP that they would be the manifest vehicle for this vision of necessary political representation and that they would gain the unilateral support of all those in the pro-family movement. By its electoral results, this clearly has not been the case. While the presence of the FCP on the provincial political landscape is regarded as beneficial or potentially beneficial to the movement, its utility at present is reserved for its movement rather than party function. Unanimity exists within the movement that the FCP offers a unique opportunity during election times to bring up pro-family issues in a forum where they would otherwise not be, and most feel that the party can be another pro-family voice during non-election times. At present the party is generally regarded within the movement as having no more or less potential institutional influence than any other politically focused pro-family group, but nonetheless as a potentially valuable movement organization working for the pro-family cause in BC.

Regarding its potential for effecting change through the legislative and electoral process as a political party, opinions range from that of hope to immediate rejection. The most optimistic see the FCP as an opportunity lying in wait for the moment of critical awareness or "cognitive liberation" among pro-family supporters. Should that moment arrive - the realization that other parties will not attend to pro-family demands - and people look to cast their ballot for a party of pro-family principles, the FCP will be ready. One long time activist said the FCP "represents our political aspirations ... we have to have a presence, a state of readiness, we have to have that." Another said they would "love to see them become the political arm of a bunch of groups, but pro-life and pro-family groups would have to realize what you can do from a political view versus a societal view." Still another sees their "primary function is one of having faith; the candidates, the issues and their time will come." This support comes from within the
membership of the party, which by virtue of their membership, acknowledges the value of the party’s presence and the potential benefit it could have for the movement.

Beyond the membership however, a more critical view of the party’s potential can be found. Directors of other pro-family organizations offer some immediate and pragmatic assessments of the FCP’s party potential that highlight the dangers of having a “single issue” image and the importance of presenting themselves as a party capable of running the province. Clyde Vint observed that the “FCP needs to educate its people and the people of BC that they can govern the province” and another director expressed concern that “they might be going the wrong way. I question the effectiveness of their strategy. With a pro-life party you’re really developing an isolationist mentality because you put yourself in a corner.” There are also those in the movement who extend this doubt to full rejection. One activist simply stated that the best the FCP could do was to “Stop being itself - it’s just not the way to go. ... If I was them I’d have one last pancake breakfast and then take them swimming.” Another critic of the FCP approach said of them “It’s an issue of tactics ... but they can’t appoint themselves as the only pro-life, pro-family party in the province. You can’t self-appoint yourself and then expect people to vote for you - it’s not a moral issue, it’s about political freedom.”

What is implied with these observations is that as an organization within the pro-family movement, the FCP’s function as part of the overall movement has been tentatively accepted, but the utility of its form for opening further political spaces for promoting awareness of pro-family issues has yet to be acknowledged or fully appreciated.

This sketch of the pro-family movement in the province, rudimentary as it is and by no means presented as comprehensive, nonetheless exposes several characteristics of the movement which are limiting its vision in this regard. These include a tactic of
maintaining political non-partisanship, an embedded disaffection with mainstream politics, an emphasis on generating awareness within civil society while maintaining a distance from institutionalized politics, and a focus on specific social issues rather than general political economic concerns. In other words, the very characteristics of this resurgence movement, like those of NSMs in general, prevent a ready acceptance of mobilizing political power through institutionalized forms. As a pro-family organization with a movement function however, the FCP must not only address these hurdles on their way to gaining party legitimacy for the PFM, they must also attend to matters of framing, mobilizing resources, and creating political opportunities as a resurgence movement organization.

**Selling the form: Framing Issues of the FCP**

Beginning this look at issues concerning the FCP as a movement by focusing on framing is perhaps to choose an arguable starting point but presumes that framing is crucial in mobilization initiatives which in turn benefits the FCP’s political process efforts. Since David Snow, et. al. (1986) adopted and extended Goffman’s (1974) work on frame analysis, framing has emerged as a critical aspect of analyzing and understanding the mobilizing potential of social movements. Work in this area (Snow et. al., 1986; Snow and Benford, 1988, 1992; Klandermans, 1984; Benford, 1993) has produced a conceptual lexicon permitting study of a movement’s efficacy at constructing the meaning of a social grievance in such a way as to garner support for its cause. Originally conceived as such, framing refers to the “conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action” (McAdam, et. al, 1996:6).
At the core of the framing concept is an appreciation that ideas, meanings, and ideology are not passive or impermeable entities *sui generis*, but dynamic constructions constantly being reconfigured in an effort to maintain an understanding of the social world favourable to the experiences and cognitions of a potentially sympathetic target population. Snow and Benford for instance

"Do not view social movements merely as carriers of extant ideas and meanings that stand in isomorphic relationship to structural arrangements or unanticipated events. Rather, we see movement organizations and actors as actively engaged in the production and maintenance of meaning for constituents, antagonists and bystanders or observers" (Snow and Benford, 1992:136).

Understood this way, master frames, collective action frames, frame alignment processes, vocabularies of motive and other associated ways of conceptualizing aspects of collective belief systems of protest "are constructed and reconstructed over and over: in public discourse, during the mobilization of consensus, and in the process of consciousness raising during episodes of collective action" and the "interpersonal networks submerged in multiorganizational fields are the conduits of this process of meaning construction" (Klandermans, 1992:99). Implicit in this conception is that nothing can be taken for granted by movement activists. Meanings and values are never static and are constantly vulnerable to the interpretive character of interpersonal communication. This means cognitive terrains must be battled over and actively pursued through the construction of collective action frames that generate a reality that makes enough sense to people that they will in some way come to actively participate in the movement. Snow, et. al. warn that "initial frame alignment cannot be assumed, given the existence of either grievances or SMOs. ...Frame alignment, once achieved cannot be taken for granted because it is temporally variable and subject to reassessment and renegotiation" (Snow, et. al., 1986:476). By applying these concepts to the
experiences of the Family Coalition Party, the value and applicability of such framing analysis can be seen to be particularly helpful in identifying and understanding any movement organization's mobilizing weaknesses.

Taking frame alignment for granted was, and continues to be, one of the most significant errors committed by the FCP. As was pointed out in Chapter 2, it was assumed by the party executive that the existence of the party would be enough to gain the electoral support of the pro-family and pro-life constituency in the province. Party membership and electoral results however, have demonstrated otherwise to the executive. Simply laying out the welcome mat and waiting for people to knock on the party's door seems to have stunted not only the FCP's political potential, but also its movement potential. It became apparent, as reported in the last chapter that the party has yet to develop a clear vision of who it is and where it wants to go. The executive's denial of the party's ideological identity and their failure to lay out a specific course of action has it seems, left the party unable to properly develop a collective action frame that might appeal to supporters of the pro-family ideal. In a less conceptualized fashion, party executives know all of this: that only by coming to terms with their party's identity (that is, resolving the debate over being an overtly Christian party), can the party hope to proceed with a framing process that might increase its mobilizing and party/movement potential.

Master and Collective Action Frames

The FCP draws its specific collective action frame from a broader master frame guided by a Judeo-Christian heritage that valorizes traditional family and social orders and above all else the creation and preservation of human life. As conceived by Snow
and Benford (1992) the generic function of master frames is to provide a broad orientation of perspective analogous to "linguistic codes in that they provide a grammar that punctuates and syntactically connects patterns or happenings in the world" (Snow and Benford, 1992:138). For the FCP and the rest of the pro-family movement, it is this Western Christian ethos that provides these linkages and provides its movement organizations with a common source to blame for the problems that beset modern society. This "attribution function," as Snow and Benford call it provides the "interpretive medium through which collective actors associated with different movements within a cycle assign blame for the problem they are attempting to ameliorate" (ibid., p.138-9). In the case of the FCP, the breakdown of the traditional family and the diminishing belief in God which have been brought on by gays, feminists and the general rise of secular humanism are the causes of the social pathologies they see as so prevalent in modern society. It would seem that this ethos should provide the movement with an "elaborated master frame" that would permit the movement to incorporate a broad range of interests and groups given the dominance of Christian beliefs in Western society. However, the FCP (and to a lesser degree the entire movement), with its narrow definition of family and protection/valuation of life, has, according to Snow and Benford’s scheme, created a "restricted master frame."

The final feature that Snow and Benford identify as impacting a master frame’s efficacy is its “mobilizing potency.” Affected by the master frame’s restrictive or elaborative status and its resonance, they argue that “hypothetically, the greater the resonance, the more potent the master frame” (ibid., p.140). Evaluating potency is a matter of determining the frame’s empirical credibility, experiential commensurability, and its narrative fidelity. As a whole, the PFM’s empirical credibility, “the apparent
evidential basis for a master frame's diagnostic claims" appears high (ibid., p.140). Interview respondents pointed to the breakdown of the family as the cause of the current social 'crisis' and believed the messages that organizations like the FCP spread were important to remedying this crisis. "Experiential credibility" also runs high for the movement and the FCP, particularly around issues like taxation, universal daycare, and the Infants Act. Respondents repeatedly cited these as examples of state interference into their daily lives. Finally, the movement's "narrative fidelity," the way the frame "strikes a responsive chord in that it rings true with extant beliefs, myths, folktales and the like," also runs high for the movement and the FCP (ibid., p.141). Respondents point to their families and communities as examples of the benefits to following a Christian lifestyle and have by and large made folk devils out of feminists, gays, and socialists. Consequently, the PFM master frame can be seen to exhibit a high degree of resonance giving it a good mobilizing potency which is diminished only by its restrictive character. This assessment holds also for the FCP. Its executive and candidates, as was noted in the last chapter, have been told innumerable times "I agree with everything you stand for, but I can't vote for you."

Continuing to follow Snow and Benford's logic, specific collective action frames of an SMO derive from these larger master frames. They have the purpose of generating mobilization for a particular organization within a movement and are the product of three core framing tasks undertaken by the SMO: Diagnostic framing, prognostic framing and motivational framing (Snow and Benford, 1988). It is at this point that the FCP's mobilizing difficulties with its collective action frame can be clearly understood using these concepts. Its diagnostic frame, which "involves identification of a problem and the attribution of blame or causality" is largely satisfactory (ibid., p. 200). Identical
to the attribution assessment of the PFM master frame, the FCP’s diagnostic frame enjoys a high degree of resonance with other movement organizations; there is agreement on what the problem is and who is to blame.

It is by using the idea of a prognostic frame that the disagreements between PFM organizations and the FCP can be identified. This frame “is not only to suggest solutions to the problems but also to identify strategies, tactics and targets. What is to be done is thereby specified” (ibid., p. 201). It became clear in what was reported in Chapter 2 that the FCP is a product of frustration and disaffection amongst this small group of PFM activists. After exhausting all other avenues and forms of collective action, the party structure was adopted to pursue social change through the direct path of electoral politics. For the FCP, what is to be done is to use this form to educate, agitate, cajole, and lobby the public, the government and other political parties into adopting pro-family ideology and legislation. At the same time, the party believes pro-family forces should cast ballots during elections in their favour in an attempt to elect an MLA or at least to send up a political flare by collecting a large number of province wide votes. The pro-family movement in BC however, utilizes a prognostic frame that advocates an educational and distinctly non-partisan, multi-party approach. This lack of alignment between the FCP and other organizations likely carries down to rank and file pro-family supporters, a situation the FCP definitely believes to exist. Joining the FCP as a member and/or working/supporting them in some capacity (not simply voting for them during an election) may not be considered a productive use of scarce manpower resources by activists who believe success will be achieved by maintaining a broad based approach.
Finally using these concepts of framing, the FCP's motivational framing efforts, which aim to transform consensus into action mobilization (Klandermans, 1984) can also be evaluated. Snow and Benford point out that this is in effect a frame constructed by Mills' concept of a vocabulary of motives that often constitute moral rationales for action (Snow and Benford, 1988). The principal decision confronting the FCP in this regard is whether or not to invoke an overtly Christian vocabulary in the efforts to mobilize support. Some, like the Stilwells feel such a move could only benefit the party, while others, like the Toths, believe it would severely restrict the FCP's capacity to attract movement and electoral support. It is a situation characterized by Snow and Benford's observation that "in some instances these components unwittingly render existing frames impotent or the development of new ones particularly difficult" (ibid., p. 203). This is the fear of the The Toths as they and the rest of the executive search to improve this frame and avoid the dangers of such "framing hazards" (Benford, 1993).

Frame Alignment Processes and Framing Battles

To construct an effective collective action frame along these three indices is to ensure that they exhibit an ideological and structural congruence with the extant beliefs of as wide ranging a potential adherent pool as possible. Snow and his colleagues have called this a matter of frame alignment, "the linkage of individual and SMO interpretative orientations, such that some set of individual interests, values and beliefs and SMO activities, goals, and ideology are congruent and complementary" (Snow, et. al., 1986:464). Of the four processes they identify as critical to frame alignment (bridging, amplification, extension and transformation), the first three hold some relevance for the FCP.
Frame bridging, "the linkage of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem," is something the FCP can be seen to have engaged in minimally. By using this concept, it can be shown that the error they have committed thus far is the assumption that ideological and attributional congruence, ceteris paribus, is sufficient to mobilize support for their action form. Their bridging efforts in other words, have largely been a passive enterprise, except during election periods. Snow, et. al. identify the targets of frame bridging as those "aggregates of individuals who share common grievances and attributional orientations, but who lack the organizational base for expressing their discontents and for acting in pursuit of their interests" (ibid., p. 467). At present, the potential PFM adherent pool do not regard the FCP's form as a legitimate vehicle to perform this latter function. As party activists realize in this regard, what confronts the FCP in its bridging activities then, is to not simply use bridging techniques to increase their profile by reaching out to potential adherents, but to also convince them that their form is as valid and effective (if not more so) for performing movement functions as any other organization's structure. This of course, as the executive well understand, is contingent on the executive first coming to a decision as to whether their primary function will be that of an SMO or a party seeking electoral success.

With the matter of frame amplification, however, the FCP is confronted with a large barrier to developing an appealing PFM collective action frame. Frame amplification, "the clarification and invigoration of an interpretive frame that bears on a particular issue, problem or set of events," Snow et. al. identify as important because "support for and participation in movement activities is frequently contingent on the clarification and reinvigoration of an interpretive frame" (ibid., p. 468). At present, the
FCP is predominantly associated with the pro-life cause. Media, the general public and other political parties all initially identify the FCP as the ‘right to life’ party. The value and belief components of this amplification process have over-identified the party with the pro-life movement which has concomitantly diminished their broader pro-family agenda. In order to shift the FCP’s collective action frame into closer alignment with the pro-family adherents, the party executive are aware that they need to not only amplify the frame’s pro-family character but also actively engage in a process of frame de-amplification, whereby its pro-life character enjoys less frame dominance. While this strategy has been discussed by the executive, it remains a highly contentious issue for the party. Some members feel this is a strategically necessary step, while others, including the Toths, feel this would dilute the ideological purity of the party.

These acts of amplification and de-amplification could be assisted by a frame extension effort, in which “an SMO may have to extend the boundaries of its primary framework so as to encompass interests or points of view that are incidental to its primary objective” (ibid., p. 472). It may well be that the FCP’s primary goal is the legislated protection of life from conception to natural death, but as the Toths and others in the party have pointed out, this is proving to be insufficient in mobilizing support. Their suspicion is that by actively extending its frame and amplifying its pro-family concerns, the party could broaden its base of potential adherents and improve its overall frame alignment with the PFM. For instance, several PFM activists and FCP members pointed to euthanasia as the next pro-life issue likely to concern the general public. Unlike the abortion issue, which they suspect the general public has tired of, euthanasia they believe has the potential to directly touch the life experiences of people in an ever increasing way, thereby having the capacity to reinvigorate support for the movement.
as a whole. Like the Christian Right in the US, it is clear the FCP has a range of issues to which it could extend its frame: child care, family taxation laws, parental control over education, traditional and home schooling, euthanasia and palliative care, electoral reform, homesteading opportunities for young couples, etc. While all of these are pro-family concerns, none is inherently linked to a staunch pro-life position like the FCP’s and any one of them has the potential to increase the FCP’s adherent pool. All of this framing work is something the FCP knows it must undertake aggressively, rather than simply assuming, as they have thus far, that individuals will make these connections and efforts themselves. The importance of this task is underscored by Philip Converse’s observation that:

“For the truly involved citizen, the development of political sophistication means the absorption of contextual information that makes clear to him the connections of the policy area of his initial interest with policy differences in other areas; and that these broader configurations of policy positions are describable quite economically in the basic abstraction of ideology. Most members of the mass public however, fail to proceed so far” (Converse, 1964:246).

Of course, all of these framing efforts are focused on internal considerations and presumed to be socially free standing, unaffected by external contingencies. Obviously this is not the case. Movement interactions within the broader social context with countermovement, the state, the media, other oppositional groups or individuals creates an environment where “framing contests” occur (McAdam, et. al., 1996; Zald, 1996). McAdam and his colleagues point out that these contests emerge during later framing stages because at the outset the “political establishment is apt to be either unaware or amused and unconcerned by initial framing efforts, their reaction is expected to change if and when the movement is able to establish itself as a serious force for social change” (McAdam, et. al., 1996:17).
This is the situation the FCP currently perceives itself as in. Executives and members hold the opinion that at present they are so small and ineffective that potential opponents are dismissive of the organization and this is why to date they have faced no active resistance to their activities. Nonetheless, should they grow into more of a political force, it is likely they will have to engage in these framing contests. These are not so much contests however, as they are *framing battles*. They are tactical manoeuvres by adversaries, not friendly rivals; the goal is conclusive domination of one opponent over another rather than just efforts of casual one-up-man-ship. This requires developing the skills to manage a dynamic interactive process in which the FCP's *offensive frame* (essentially its collective action frame) is *counter framed* by its opponents in an attempt to generally discredit its message and dissuade potential adherents and bystander publics from action mobilization on behalf of the FCP. (At the same time, these efforts will in part constitute attempts to gain active support by this oppositional movement for its own cause.) This counter framing in turn necessitates a *defensive framing* effort by the FCP in which it attempts to deflect and resist the labels its opponents hope to affix to its public image.

This is the framing battle that has been underway for years between the pro-life and pro-choice movements. Both groups counter frame the other as an "anti" group, refusing to acknowledge any merit to the other's position in an effort to diminish the potency of their respective offensive frames. Both groups also attempt to resist this label by presenting a defensive frame that broadens the issue from simply foetal status and rights to ones including individual rights within a democratic polity and sociomoral concerns for the common good of such a society. These acts help diffuse the impact of the counter frame by exposing the connections of the primary framing concern to other
less amplified issues which are nonetheless salient and can positively contribute to the
case image of the movement. The pro-family movement in BC appears to be only at
the cusp of this kind of framing battle. Still in a predominantly emergent state, the
movement has yet to encounter much publicized resistance other than some scattered
grumblings about their stands on various issues. However, the current conflict over the
Surrey schoolboard’s banning of several primary aged books that depict gay family
structures does appear to have the makings of a framing battle.22 The Citizen’s Research
Institute has been labeled “anti-gay” in the local media and by Education Minister Paul
Ramsey as a result of Schoolboard Chair Robert Pickering’s involvement with the
institute.23 It seems a defensive frame has yet to be developed by CRI other than what
could be considered an attempt by Director Kari Simpson to normalize the Institute’s
views. After speaking with Simpson, a Vancouver Sun article reported that “her group
would help any gay student who was facing discrimination in school.”24

The impact of such framing battles is not limited to a specific organization. In
this instance, the counter-framing of CRI as anti-gay, coupled with Heather Stilwell’s
vote as a trustee to ban the books, could easily have a negative impact on the FCP. The
web of interpersonal connections, cross board directorships, and communication
networks that provides a movement with much of its infrastructural cohesiveness and
micromobilization potential can also act as the conduit through which counter-framing
efforts against one organization can spread to impact the entire movement.

Mobilizing Resources and Looking for Political Opportunities

It is recognized by the FCP executive that the most formidable mobilizing
challenge they face is to demonstrate to its potential adherents and the bystander public
in general that its political form can provide a unique and effective movement function for the pro-family cause. As Mrs. Toth pointed out, the FCP’s form allows it political access not granted other PFM organizations. The most prominent example of this comes during election periods, but less obvious opportunities also present themselves. The FCP’s recent presence at meetings of the Enterprise League of British Columbia, which aims to unify right wing parties in the province, provided the party an opportunity to lobby for the adoption of its core principles, and stands as an ideal example of such access.

The importance to any social movement organization of meeting this challenge for mobilizing resources lies with the link that exists between the legitimacy of an organization’s structure and goals and its mobilizing or recruitment opportunities (Snow, et. al., 1980; Klandermans and Tarrow, 1988). As McAdam et. al. (1996) point out, an SMO relies heavily on its goals for a healthy interactive relationship with its broader movement environment. This in turn is vital to resource mobilization activities. There appears to be no lack of what have been called micromobilization contexts, mesomobilization actors or recruitment networks within the PFM (McAdam, 1988; Klandermans and Tarrow, 1988; Gerhards and Rucht, 1992; McAdam, et. al., 1996) which the FCP could exploit for recruitment purposes, but what has yet to develop fully is the recognition of Zald and Ash’s (1966) observation that the viability of a movement increases as different organizations with different functions and strategic initiatives arise. This argument suggests that were the necessary microstructures in place, and if the FCP could further expand this latter realization through its framing activities and thus legitimize its form as congruent with movement functions, its mobilizing efforts might at least be partially rewarded. It is a situation consistent with Tilly’s (1975)
observation that the mobilizing potential of a movement organization is limited by its structural features.

It has been noted that mobilizing efforts are in effect attempts at generating solidarity and commitment to the means and goals of the organization (Zurcher and Snow, 1981; Jenkins, 1983; Bagatta and Bagatta, 1992). Assuming this to be true, and continuing to borrow from the resource mobilization lexicon developed by McCarthy and Zald (1987), the FCP cadre's commitment to the organization's structure and strategy should be absolute. Zurcher and Snow point out that

"To be committed in this sense is not only to follow a line of action consistent with the expectations of the movement, but it is to follow a line that rigidly circumscribes or cuts off other possible lines of action" (Zurcher and Snow, 1981:458).

The Toths, the Stilwells and other long time executives and supporters of the party constitute the moral core of the organization to which Zurcher and Snow refer when they state that "within most movements there is usually a corps of participants who are devoted to advancing the cause on purely "moral" grounds. Simply put, they think it is right. They see it as the "one way"" (ibid., p. 460). This does in fact describe the FCP cadre's commitment, a commitment of resolute dedication that drives their donation of time, money, energy and other valuable personal resources to the organization's goals. Time, money and family commitments were all cited among this group as the primary costs to them for their deep involvement with the FCP and the PFM. As Heather Stilwell puts it, "when I'm an old woman, I want to be able to say I did what I could. Truthfully, it's not very practical with the family, but the job needs to be done and I can do some of those things."

Yet this kind of dedicated commitment does not extend beyond this core group. While it has been enough to have kept the organization alive to this point, the last
chapter exposed the executive’s awareness that the FCP needs to improve its recruitment efforts, not only for the purpose of organizational growth, but also to rejuvenate the spirits of these core constituents. Like others, Mrs. Stilwell points out that “there’s not much recruitment. We really need to get into a whole different level of activity, people to do phoning get out and bang on doors, that sort of thing. It requires a concerted effort and we don’t have that level of work available.” To reach this next level, this group knows it must develop a mobilizing strategy that makes it clear to potential constituents that “commitment is not dedication. Commitment is the willingness to take risks or entertain inconvenience,” though not necessarily to the extent of the core constituents (Freeman, 1979:173).

That is, the party knows it needs people to do things for it: take out a membership, donate some money, make some phone calls to promote its objectives, bring its name up in casual conversations, promote it to supporters during events like the Surrey Schoolboard’s decision to ban books portraying gay families, organize a bake or rummage sale, etc. Using Jo Freeman’s (1979) division of resources into tangible and intangible, all of these activities require people, the primary intangible resource available to a movement, for the generation of tangible resources such as money, space, office equipment and the like. According to Freeman, there are two types of intangible resources people can contribute, specialized and unspecialized, and the FCP is keenly aware it needs both.

By “specialized” resources, Freeman is referring to those skills which activists bring to the movement and help it in specific areas which may include media relations, fundraising, accessing politicians, and intermovement networking. Of particular note, included in this category is status. The FCP cadre’s activist and political past gives the
group a wealth of collective action experience in most of these areas, but as noted in the last chapter, they know they desperately need expertise in the area of governmental policy development because of their form. The thin policies they have on matters of health, labour, economics, and other areas are proving unsatisfactory for mobilizing pro-family political support under the FCP banner and there is no one within the party with the necessary skills to guide and develop this area. The executive have also identified their own limitations with regard to media relations, advertising, and membership recruitment, and the need they have to consult with experts on how to effectively pursue these activities.

The importance of status to a movement's mobilizing potential could be emphasized in no better manner than with Bill Vander Zalm's involvement with the FCP. During his time with the party, it enjoyed not only its greatest period of membership growth, but public profile and media coverage. The party also benefited from his political expertise and advice on policy development. Although his involvement may overshadow Mrs. Toth's status within the pro-family movement, it must not lead to underestimating it. The immense respect and admiration the pro-family community have for the FCP's founder provides a great, if not greater, source of mobilization potential than did Mr. Vander Zalm's. Pro-family directors and FCP members constantly cited Mrs. Toth as a source of inspiration for their continued involvement with the movement and/or reason for joining the FCP. These contributions suggest status as a valuable specialized resource can take on different forms and functions. Mrs. Toth provides the organization with its principled foundation, everyday work ethic, and long term vision, all of which help the FCP
project the image of serious organization which would not squander any resources potential constituents may wish to provide.

Mr. Vander Zalm on the other hand, provided the organization with a charismatic and populist presence as well as linking its political roots with the history of the Social Credit Party in BC. Validating Weber’s (1946; cf. Zurcher and Snow, 1981) work stressing the importance of charisma to organizational fortunes, Vander Zalm’s involvement demonstrated the mobilizing power charismatic leadership can bring to a movement. A legitimate authority figure within the pro-family work because of his extensive political background, in 1993 Vander Zalm was able to mobilize more support for the FCP in a few weeks than the party had been able to secure over the previous two years. However, this support or consensus mobilization did not translate into any significant action mobilization. Prince George and Kelowna, two areas in which the Vander Zalm rallies were held and the bulk of 250 memberships taken out, have been dormant since 1993. The support attributable to Mrs. Toth on the other hand, seems to generate a consistent level of action mobilization. These different effects point to a need to distinguish between the different mobilizing functions status types perform for an organization.

Also, Vander Zalm’s involvement confirmed Oliver and Maxwell’s warning that “dependence on large donors usually forces activists to change strategies as elite concerns and resources shift” (Oliver and Marwell, 1992:260). As the last chapter showed, Vander Zalm’s involvement was intimately linked to a large donation to the FCP from a pro-Vander Zalm supporter. Originally, this donation was contingent on Mr. Vander Zalm taking over the leadership of the party and as such rejected by the party. When this condition was dropped, the money was accepted, but the ensuing
relationship between the donor and the party was characterized by the party receiving constant demands from the donor regarding strategy on how best to proceed with their goals. When Mr. Vander Zalm declined to run as a candidate in the 1994 Matsqui by-election against Grace McCarthy, the donor left the FCP to join the Reform Party and actively encouraged other FCP members to do the same. While no memberships were turned in as a result of this tactic, neither have any renewals been received from the targetted region. Mr. Vander Zalm's subsequent departure from the party also lends support to the general criticism that resource mobilization theory "overstates the extent to which powerful people are willing to challenge the status quo" (Macionis, et. al., 1994:633). While willing to speak on behalf of the organization at membership rallies, Mr. Vander Zalm agreed with a proviso: that he would also have the opportunity to 'tell his side of the story' regarding his leaving the Social Credit Party. And when the possibility of pursuing the leadership of the Reform Party of BC arose, the social issues that concern the FCP fell victim to political opportunity.

Moving to the other source of intangible resources, those that are "unspecialized," Freeman considers them to be time and commitment because "any participant could contribute them if so inclined" (Freeman, 1979:173). These are the resources that the FCP have identified as needing in particular, and which they must develop a strategy for acquiring. Generating commitment through the development of its collective action frame has been dealt with, but time is a different matter. As Oliver and Marwell (1992) point out, time is the most precious of resource commodities, "the ultimate resource for collective action. The entire collective action sector is labor-intensive ... the basic production activities always involve people doing things" (Oliver and Marwell, 1992:257). The basic tension for potential constituents however, is that the
demands of being a movement participant and the demands of being a parent or employee may at times be incompatible” (Bagatta and Bagatta, 1992:1883). Certainly limited time due to family responsibilities was the most frequently cited reasons for respondents’ limitations on becoming involved, or more involved, with the FCP.

To help ease this inevitable tension for potential constituents, and in order to more effectively engage in what Oliver and Marwell call “mobilizing technologies,” the FCP is aware that it must develop active networks of communication and some kind of formal action schedule. The former already exists with the PFM micromobilization contexts and the FCP’s list of some 10,000 who wish to see a referendum held on abortion funding in the province. This list, with its names, addresses and phone numbers is what McCarthy (1987) has called a “thin structure,” a list that has “been gathered initially for other purposes” (McCarthy, 1987:59). But to effectively utilize these microstructures, the party cadre knows it must develop the latter, a specific schedule of activities, jobs and duties that need to be done on behalf of the party during a specified period (including, but not exclusive to election times), along with the demands each task requires. Party cadre recognize that “a lot of technological knowledge about mobilizing volunteer time is about organizing and dividing labor and structuring events and jobs so that people can be invited to participate in well-defined and limited ways” (Oliver and Marwell, 1992:266). Darren Lowe is one executive member that is stressing the importance of having such an understanding. In commenting on how to get people involved he stated that, “I think its helps to have specific jobs for people to do. ... You give people small manageable projects to work on. If you have someone who wants to be an activist and there is nothing to do, they will drift off into something else.” This is the type of specialized knowledge that years of
activism should have allowed the cadre to gain. What is involved, for instance, in phoning to solicit new memberships or renew old ones, or the time necessary to organize an information campaign on a particular pro-family issue, are vital ingredients this group should already know from past experience and what they are trying to pass on through strategies like Mr. Lowe’s.

The actual mobilizing technologies currently utilized by the FCP are unremarkable and fall within the types described by Oliver and Marwell. Annual General Meetings, auctions, calls for donations through newsletters, requests for assistance on special projects, small social gatherings to generate funds and other similar activities constitute these efforts by the FCP. Most donations of time or money outside such activities tend to be small in nature, most of the people that turn up or help out at FCP events tend to be the same ones, and most of these events are similar to those held by other movements. It is a situation summed up by Oliver and Marwell this way: “Volunteer activists try to think up new attractive events or execute the ritualized ones well. They mobilize through the people they know: the same people go to the same events, and they exchange the currency of mutual obligation - I went to your event, so you come to mine ... This is not the stuff of transcendent social change ... This is the world as it looks most of the time” (ibid., p. 270). In this regard, the FCP is no different from any other pro-family movement organization, or any other organization in the entire social movement sector. The difficulties of mobilizing resources is ubiquitous and the work mundane and the FCP have compounded this challenge by choosing a form they hope will provide the entire pro-family movement with a legitimate political access point.
Creating a Political Opportunity

The deliberate adoption of an institutional form for the FCP is an attempt by its founders to establish a political beachhead which they hope will provide the pro-family movement an alternate form of political opportunity to those already available. It is a tactical decision which implies these other forms of political access have proven inadequate in the eyes of the FCP membership for effecting the social change they are pursuing. The unresponsiveness of the government and other provincial political parties to the pro-family concerns of the FCP, as the last chapter made clear, is the very reason for the party’s existence. Although British Columbia’s parliamentary system has various mechanisms in place which movement organization’s may use to access the policy making process - legal intervention opportunities, presentations at standing committee and policy review boards for instance - supporters of the FCP have found these avenues to be largely dead ends. Working from within other political parties has also proven to be frustrating and fruitless. The structural dynamics of the current party system in BC makes it virtually impossible for a cause to be promoted and supported within that party without the support of the party leader and executive board. As indicated in the preceding chapter, this became obvious to the Toths, the Stilwells and others as changes within the Social Credit Party took place, as Jack Weisgerber vetoed their core principles in the failed attempt to merge with the Reform Party of BC, and as pro-life MLAs and MPs were routinely silenced when attempting to take a pro-life position within their parties. It is a situation that has been described elsewhere, one in which formal policy access has not translated into substantive policy gains for the movement in question (Jenkins, 1983; Rochon and Mazmanian, 1993). The political structure and climate of BC is hence perceived by the FCP as one offering no substantial
political opportunities for collective action that can actually bring about social change.

This perception was most recently stimulated by the NDP's replacement of elected hospital board officials with government appointed ones. In pursuing this action, Health Minister Joy MacPhail was quoted as saying

"In the communities where certain special-interest groups have made it their goal to impose an anti-choice point of view, those communities' activists were not put forward to be appointed to the board. Basically, everybody on the board was required to support our government's view that all legitimate health-care services, including therapeutic abortion, be provided." To this point, elected hospital boards had been a prime political opportunity site for the pro-life movement in BC, but now, one less leverage point exists for the movement. Freeman argues that this is not an unusual situation: "not infrequently, the structure of available opportunities for action presents no feasible alternatives. This may be because a particular SMO constituency is too alienated, or too ignorant to take advantage of what is available" (Freeman, 1979:186). The latter point does not apply to the FCP, they are well schooled in the extant opportunities, although the former is doubtless a contributing factor to their plight; they are not a popular bunch, even with conservatives. What the FCP's experience points to however, is another reason for failure: exhaustive use of available opportunities without achieving goal attainment. Regardless of the cause though, the problem remains the same, the lack of an effective political opportunity structure which can be exploited to promote pro-family policy in BC.

Since Eisinger (1973) operationalized the term "structure of political opportunities" to emphasize the impact of political climates and structures on movement development and mobilization, the bulk of this type of macrostructural analysis has focused on systemic facilitation. McAdam, McCarthy and Zald's definition
reflects this analytical trend when they write that "by structure of political opportunities we refer to the receptivity or vulnerability of the political system to organized protest by a given challenging group" (McAdam, et. al., 1988:699). The important work that has followed this path includes that by Eisinger (1973), Gamson (1975), Jenkins and Perrow (1977), and Piven and Cloward (1977). Their commonality lies in the emphasis they place on the importance of recognizing the influence political and state variables can have on the emergence and potential success of a movement. Using Tarrow’s (1988) analysis of these works, this can be seen to be true for Gamson’s focus on political alliances, Jenkins and Perrow’s focus on shifting political trends and economic alignments, Piven and Cloward’s view of resources as being political as much as organizational, and Eisinger’s emphasis on the importance of the permeability of the general polity. What is problematic about this approach however, is that it hides the dialectical relationship that exists between a movement and the state, risking a view of the movement as a strictly passive actor in this process. Consequently, the possibility that a movement might be able to create its own political opportunity also tends to remain hidden. Yet this work makes the critical point that social movements are eminently political regardless of their claims and as Tarrow points out “what has been learned about the importance of political opportunities and the links between the social movement sector and politics suggests that both individuals and organizational choices are conditioned by the political process” (Tarrow, 1988:435).

Political process theorists (Tilly, 1978; McAdam, 1982; Kitschelt, 1986; Tarrow, 1983) have built on this tradition but expanded it to include a sensitivity to the historical moment and the structural opposition that movements generally face. McAdam’s
description of political opportunity structures broadens to accommodate these recognitions:

“By “structure of political opportunities” we mean the distribution of member support and opposition to the political aims of a given challenging group. Characteristically, challengers are excluded from any real participation in institutionalized politics because of strong opposition on the part of most polity members. This unfavourable structure of political opportunities is hardly immutable, however ... Challenging groups can count on facing very different levels of support and opposition over time” (McAdam, 1988:128).

Certainly this reflects the experiences of those involved with the FCP. Political opportunity existed within Social Credit under Bill Vander Zalm for pro-family activists to at least have some institutionalized representation for their concerns, but with the elimination of the Christianity clause, the announcement by then Premier Rita Johnston that the party was ‘pro-choice’, and then the ascension of the NDP to power, this political access point disappeared. It is a scenario similar to McAdam’s description of the reverse impact the Nixon presidency had on the political opportunities the gay rights movement had enjoyed to that point in the US. He writes that the movement was “preceded by a highly significant electoral realignment that can only be seen as disadvantageous to gays. ... If anything, then, it would appear as if the movement arose in a context of contracting political opportunities” (McAdam, 1996:32).

The permeability of the state in terms of political opportunities for collective action by movements has been described as a cycle of thawing and contraction (Tarrow, 1983) and the opening and closing of political space (Gamson and Meyer, 1996), but as Gamson and Meyer point out, these historical patterns are more dependent on the volatile (rather than stable) aspects of political opportunity. These volatile elements, “shifting with events, policies, and political actors ... are at the heart of explanations of mobilization and demobilization that emphasize the interaction between movement
strategy and the opening and closing of those oft cited windows of opportunity" (Gamson and Meyer, 1996:277).

Again, the diminishing opportunities of those who founded the FCP are well captured. Micro events such as these were responsible for closing this window of opportunity, but it is at the macro level, the “stable elements” of political opportunity as Gamson and Meyer call them, that the reason for the FCP’s form can be found.

Cross-national observations and studies have highlighted the important role a nation’s political structure plays in the development of movement activist’s attitudes, and strategies as well as an organization’s political opportunities (Nelkin and Pollak, 1981; Kitschelt, 1986; Klandermans and Tarrow, 1988; Kriesi, 1996; McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1996). In his study of the anti-nuclear movement in four countries, Kitschelt concluded that “the mobilization strategies and impacts of social movements can, to a significant degree, be explained by the general characteristics of domestic political opportunity structures” (Kitschelt, 1986:84).

Christopher Soper’s (1994) comparative study of the pro-life movement in Britain and the US amply demonstrates this point. He notes that while “the market for conservative morality” was virtually identical in the two countries, the New Christian Right in America has enjoyed far greater success at influencing policy than Evangelicals in Britain because of differing state systems. The British organizations, he notes “were frustrated in their efforts less by their lack of size than by the absence of support from key political elites and the paucity of opportunities for meaningful activism which their political system afforded them. The British state dominate the policymaking process on abortion, which meant that pro-life groups could not succeed against state resistance and without state support. With its concentration of power in the hands of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Britain’s parliamentary regime placed few obstacles to abortion reform if the Conservative Party leadership had political or ideological reasons to support them” (Soper, 1994:130).
Conversely,

"America's weak state allowed them [the NCR] direct access to the policymaking process at local, state and national levels. It became apparent in the aftermath of the Roe decision that the national state did not have the capacity to impose policy coherence on abortion, a sign of state weakness which provided pro-life groups the opportunity to organize their efforts against a number of state officials and institutions" (ibid., p. 130).

Canada and British Columbia's parliamentary systems, born of the British empire as they are, present the same obstacles to the pro-family movement that are experienced by the pro-life movement in Britain.

As discussed in the first chapter, the American pro-family movement, because of the permeable nature of the American state and the good political opportunities it provides, has been able to mobilize within the Republican Party with striking effectiveness. The structure of the American political system is such that PFM forces are able to develop mobilizing strategies that utilize various lobby groups and Political Action Committees and target the GOP as their sole point of political access and influence. Meanwhile, the PFM in British Columbia continues to face a political structure that concentrates state power to such a degree that any political opportunities which are available turn into mirages of political access. Yet the predominant strategy continues to be a multi-party non-partisan approach to gaining political access and influence. In response to this chronic situation, the founders of the FCP, after being confronted with the "suddenly imposed grievance" (Walsh, 1981) wrought by changes within Social Credit, decided to create their own political opportunity by taking on the institutionalized form of a political party. What they hope is that, to use Tarrow's words, they have pried "open institutional barriers through which new demands can pour" (Tarrow, 1996:58).
The challenge now facing the FCP is one of convincing others in the PFM that its party form is a legitimate vehicle for pursuing these demands. It is an effort characteristic of what Rochon and Mazmanian suggest when they write that the "task of any social movement may be that it takes an unlikely idea, makes it seem feasible, and then puts it into practice" (1993:87). This implies that the FCP, and the entire movement must acknowledge three requirements in particular. First, pro-family activists must come to recognize the benefits of institutional form for creating political opportunity, and that "protesting groups can increase their opportunities by expanding the repertoire of collective action into new forms" (Tarrow, 1996:58). Second, the tendency of movements in general to overestimate the degree of political opportunity available to them (Gamson and Meyer, 1996) must be incorporated into their mobilizing strategies. For instance, despite pointing to and supporting pro-life and pro-family politicians in various parties, the movement as a whole appears to have placed too much faith in the power of these politicians to achieve any real change from within these existing parties. Third, the FCP itself must determine its primary function, movement or electoral party, independent of its form. At various levels of awareness, those in the FCP and the broader pro-family movement seem to have an understanding of all these points. That is, they know that certain decisions may help develop within the movement an appreciation for the importance of keeping form and function separate, thereby improving the mobilizing potential of the FCP and possibly the entire movement.

Returning to Alan Scott’s definition of a social movement that was offered at the beginning of this chapter, by separating form and function this way, an organization like the FCP, despite both its position on the formal end of Scott’s movement continuum and its party form, can legitimately be understood as a social movement. It must also be
remembered that this is a resurgence movement reluctantly cum political party. Scott's definition of a successful movement is that it disappears having achieved its goals. Should the FCP achieve its goals, disappearing is precisely what the FCP promises to do. Until such time however, it is clear that this organization faces the same problems that any movement faces in terms of developing an effective collective action frame, mobilizing resources, and finding political opportunities to exploit as it pursues its goals. Additionally, in taking the bold step to create its own political opportunity through adopting an institutionalized party form, the FCP has compounded the challenges and obstacles it faces. The party knows it must now manage not only the difficulties associated with functioning as a social movement, but the challenges of convincing pro-family activists that its form offers legitimate opportunities of political access for the entire movement and that as a whole the movement's interests would be well served by adopting a more partisan approach in its political strategies.

Finally, the FCP is becoming aware that they must attend to the popular expectations which accompany its form. Despite its function as a movement, the FCP is a formal provincial political party in British Columbia. When it became registered as such in June 1991, the FCP became a potential representative body for those who would cast a vote in its favour, and for the voter governmental representation includes far more than support for pro-life and pro-family issues. Like the many minor parties that have preceded it, the FCP is faced with some formidable obstacles if it is to be accepted as a legitimate political entity within the institutionalized realm of provincial politics. Understanding the FCP as a minor political party in British Columbia and these challenges it must confront within the confines of the Canadian political system and the expectations of Canadian political culture are the focus of the next chapter.
Chapter 5

The Potential of Form: 
Family Coalition as a Political Party

When the founders of the Family Coalition Party chose to construct a political party in their attempt to create a political access point for the Pro-family movement in British Columbia, they also brought upon themselves the popular and systemic expectations that accompany such an institutional form. Most importantly, there is the reasonable assumption that registered political parties set as one of their primary goals the attainment of legislative office for the purpose of representing the broad spectrum of political wishes held by those who voted for the party during an election. Systemically, political parties, unlike social movement organizations, are required to abide by a rigorous set of mandates and formal procedures, usually set out in some type of legally binding Elections Act. For a small party with a narrow issue focus like the FCP, the cultural and structural challenges these expectations present can be formidable. With limited resources and political expertise at their disposal, as well as a questionable commitment to the ultimate goal of actually attaining political power, small political parties in Canada generally find it difficult to gain not only electoral support from their supposed ‘natural constituencies,’ but political legitimacy for their cause in general.

Despite these obstacles, in 1991 the Family Coalition Party, in their effort to provide more effective representation for the Pro-family movement in BC, became part of the long political bloodline of minor political parties in Canada. At both the federal and provincial levels, Canadian political culture has been characterized by the presence of minor or protest political parties. Federally this has existed from the time of the
Progressives in 1921 and continues most recently with the emergence in the 1990s of the Bloc Québécois and the Reform Party of Canada. Provincially, William Aberhart's Social Credit Party of the 1930s in Alberta represents one of the most successful efforts by a minor party to succeed politically, while the Toth's Family Coalition Party in B.C. represents one of the most recent efforts. The focus of this chapter is to explore the challenges confronted, and benefits to be derived, by a party/movement such as the FCP joining the ranks of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), the Social Credit Party, the Green Party and other minor political parties in Canada.

In liberal democracies like Canada, the issue of representation is paramount to understanding the nature and role of any political party and the challenges it faces in establishing or maintaining its political viability and efficacy. Beginning with some of the views Edmund Burke had on the subject of political representation, this chapter inquires into the strengths and weaknesses mainstream political parties exhibit in terms of their capacity for effective representation, the constraints Canada's Westminster style electoral system places on representative politics, and the crisis of representation and legitimacy that mainstream parties currently find themselves facing. This crisis, political scientists argue (Covell, 1991; Phillips, 1996; Tanguay and Gagnon, 1996), has led to a rise in alternate forms of representation, including New Social Movements, interest groups and minor political parties like the FCP. The nature and history of these minor political parties in Canada will be discussed, with particular attention paid to the challenges they face, operating in a first-past-the-post electoral system. The 1997 federal election once again brought forth opposition to this electoral system, based on concerns similar to those that brought about the 1992 Royal Commission on electoral reform. With major parties being seen as increasingly dysfunctional and unable to satisfactorily
aggregate and represent an ever-increasing number of interests, there is growing support for the abandoning of this electoral system in favour of some type of proportional representation format, similar to that found in Germany or, for a short time in the 1950s, British Columbia.² Specific to the concerns of the Family Coalition Party, it will become apparent that in BC a comparable political situation can be found - from calls for electoral reform to an unrepresentative political system to the experiences of the FCP as a minor political party in the province.³

**The Political Representation of Issues: Is the Party at Westminster Over?**

Use of the term democracy often evokes the ideal vision of full citizen participation in the political process. Images of the Greek polis alive with debate over the daily concerns of ancient city-states come to mind as thoughts concerning the democratic process are pondered. Yet in modern liberal democracies like Canada, sheer geographic mass and population size prevent the practical implementation of any such kind of direct democracy. David Elkins points out that there is an “impossibility, on practical grounds, of direct democracy in countries ... Hence, one has to delegate authority to representatives who can, for a period of time, speak on behalf of those too numerous to attend the place where decisions are made” (1991:16). It is this delegation of political authority that is the cornerstone of what is commonly understood in Canada as representative democracy. As Elkins (1991) goes on to point out, this issue of political representation is fraught with argumentative questions surrounding who should qualify as a representative, on what basis of authority is this role bestowed, and what types of issues should be represented.
With a primary aim of liberal democracies such as Canada and Britain being the maintenance of social stability and order, there is an inherent conservatism to the political systems of both countries and so to grasp the historical depths of this still pervasive character, it is once again useful to return to the work of Edmund Burke. Sitting as a Member of Parliament in the House of Commons for close to thirty years, Burke opportuned to not only comment on the issue of political representation, but act upon those beliefs. As became clear in the second chapter, Burke fully supported political and social orders based on traditional hierarchies. Not surprisingly then, he viewed classical democracy as an anathema and opposed any notions of political representation based on direct citizen participation (Kornberg et. al., 1982). According to Canavan, political authority was for Burke, correctly understood as a delegated authority “set in the framework of the Christian doctrine of creation,” for despite the social contract basis of government, “God, as the Creator of human nature, is also the ultimate author of the state” (Canavan, 1987:117). The proper recipients for this mantle of divinely ordained authority Burke believed, were those demonstrating a strong capacity for exercising solid reasoning and good judgements that would benefit the whole of society. Michael Freeman (1980) argues that Burke had in mind here citizens of high social status, education levels and occupations that promoted the development of leadership qualities, such as landowners, merchants, professors and clergy.

What emerges in Burke's prescription for the exercise of good government with these points is a belief that political inequality is a natural and desirable feature for democratic societies and that there also exists a natural and traditional ruling class (Kornberg et. al., 1982; Freeman, 1980). Burke's advocacy for this type of elite democracy, as Kornberg and his associates (1980) refer to it, is an approach to politics
that Eulau describes as "a kind of pragmatic aristocracy" and has as its root a deep commitment to the belief that only the virtuous and wise members of the aristocratic class have a true understanding of the function of government and its relation to those it represents (Eulau, 1978:45). In his oft quoted passage from a speech in 1774, Burke commented that the function of Parliament

"Is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests; which interests each must maintain, as an agent and advocate, against other agents and advocates; but parliament is deliberative assembly of one nation [sic], with one interest, that of the whole; where, not local purposes, not local prejudices ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole" (Burke, 1774; quoted in Eulau, 1978:113).

This vision demanded, Burke believed, that reason triumph over will in matters of political decision making and that representatives, although acting as instructed delegates of their constituencies, be nonetheless free to act upon their judgements regardless of constituency opinion (so long as the representative acts in good faith for what they believe are in the best interests of the constituency and the nation as a whole). "This right and duty of the Member of Parliament," Michael Freeman observes, "to follow his independent judgement against the wishes or instructions of his constituents is one of Burke's most famous doctrines ... [and] ... it is often cited today, typically with approval, when similar problems of the relation between M.P. and his constituents arise" (1980:124).

To effectively pursue these duties and to protect "honest men" from potentially corrupting extra-parliamentary influences, Burke became a reticent supporter of the political party. Burke thought of a political party as "a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed" (Burke, 1770; quoted in MacPherson, 1980:23).
This was a definition based upon Burke's faith in the ability of each socially qualified politician to exercise reason in combination with their individual judgement to arrive at a commonly deduced principle which would guide the policies of the particular party; reason, in other words, would produce unanimity over collective decisions (Amyot, 1996). Parties could successfully represent the populace and work towards the common good of society, Burke believed, as long as their members had the individual freedom to exercise their good judgement. Yet despite his recognition of parties as necessary and potentially beneficial to the political process, Burke was not a strong defender of them, seeing in parties the potential danger of usurping the powers of individual political reason (MacPherson, 1980; Amyot, 1996). Amyot for instance, argues that Burke's view of the political process with its emphasis on individual reason holds no space for the strong party disciplines exhibited by today's modern parties, and MacPherson pointed out that in supporting the idea of parties, Burke "was proposing no more than a way out of the decay he saw around him: it was a short-run expedient for the immediate situation ... the claim that Burke thus charted and assisted the wave of the future [for parties] can scarcely be sustained" (1980:23).

It should also be noted that Burke in general opposed the democratic reform movement of the eighteenth century, which sought to bring a greater degree of representation to the majority Britons who were underrepresented in the House of Commons (Canavan, 1960; Freeman, 1980). Freeman argues that Burke considered "reform ... not merely unnecessary, it was fraught with great peril ... [and] ... the system worked and most of the people were satisfied with it" (1980:127). Such opposition was likely a product of Burke's concern over the potentially destabilizing effects on the social order by increasing the opportunities for direct democratic
participation by the masses, as well as his trenchant belief in the merits to freedom of maintaining a hierarchical political and social order.

It is perhaps a little surprising (or then again, perhaps not) that even with the passage of more than two hundred years, many of the issues concerning political order and representation that Burke confronted, remain. As Heinz Eulau observes, while "Burke's notion of political party is far removed from our own notion of the party as an agent of interest aggregation in a pluralistic or polyarchic society ... it is an astounding fact, now confirmed by many empirical studies of representational roles, ... that Burke's conception of the representative as a trustee is widely held" (1978:47). Burke's concern over the danger that political parties pose for the individual freedom of politicians has also persisted, at least in British Columbia. As was pointed out in chapters three and four, certainly members of the Family Coalition Party have consistently expressed frustration at the consistent party suppression of individual pro-life politicians such as Federal Liberal Roseanne Skoke and provincial Liberal Mike de Jong. As well, the issue of reforming the political system to make it more representative and participatory is enjoying a re-invigorated level of support. Perhaps the most significant testimony to the durability of Burke's political philosophy on representation in Canada is the socioeconomic makeup of the House of Commons in Ottawa. Despite attempts to have the House be more reflective of the nation's social character and the ideal vision that a "representative should be a member of the group represented, should share personal and social characteristics with those represented" (Elkins, 1991:18), a study by Guppy, et al. (1987) concluded that Members of Parliament and overwhelmingly those of Cabinet, have backgrounds of high social status, education, and privileged occupational status.
Mainstream Canadian Political Parties Today - No more “loose fish”

In Canada, as in other Western liberal democracies, political parties have, over the course of the twentieth century, developed into sophisticated, disciplined organizations that claim the virtually exclusive right to politically represent a nation’s citizens. While Burke might have found favourable the predominantly upper-middle class character of Canada’s House of Commons, the limitations that today’s strict party discipline places on member’s freedom to vote according to their individual judgement would surely exemplify the inherent dangers he saw in the adoption of a strong party system. Under the Westminster first-past-the-post electoral system however, modern political parties in Canada do reflect such a disciplined rigour. In its defence, advocates argue that only through a strong party system can the diverse range of issues that characterize heterogeneous societies like Canada be effectively aggregated and represented. Opponents deny this, claiming that modern party dynamics concentrate power in the hands of leaders and other party elite, thereby denying the opportunity for viable representation of issues beyond those deemed important by a party’s executive and an endemic system of ‘brokerage politics’.

Canada’s parliamentary parties did not take on this current disciplined form until late in the nineteenth century. Before that, party processes and election dynamics reflected a more Burkean tradition based on the freedom of the individual politician. Elected candidates often aligned themselves not based on party loyalty, but on the basis of which party or “leadership clique” promised to win material benefits for the candidate’s constituency (McMenemy, 1976). This problem of “loose fish” as Sir John A. MacDonald called them, was a product of the fact that the precursors of Canadian political parties were loosely knit coalitions of local leaders representing local concerns.
of the dominant class (McMenemy, 1976; Covell, 1991; Lyon, 1992). Originally held together by various acts of overt patronage, the class-based character and regional power bases of these early coalitions still exist within the major parties today. For example, the Liberals and Conservatives continue to find their support among the economic elite of central Canada and the recently dominant Reform Party has its support exclusively in Western Canada. The history of the development of Canadian political parties, in fact, is in many respects a reflection of Antonio Gramsci’s observation that

“If it is true that parties are only the nomenclature for classes, it is also true that parties are not simply a mechanical and passive expression of those classes, but react energetically upon them in order to develop, solidify, and universalise them. ... Classes produce parties, and parties form the personnel of State and government, the leaders of civil and political society” (Gramsci, 1971:227).

Regardless of class bias or regional origins, modern parties must fulfill two primary functions within the Canadian polity: the aggregation of diverse interests and the institutionalized representation of those interests. These responsibilities, beyond any others, are widely understood and accepted to be the primary function of any legitimate political party (Covell, 1991; Chandler and Siaroff, 1991; Lyon, 1992, 1996; King, 1969). Certainly there is validity to a claim such as Carty’s that

“Political parties are principally electoral machines. Their central tasks in the political system are to nominate candidates and then to conduct electoral campaigns in order to get them elected. ... ultimately, the parties’ organizational life starts, and ends, with their electoral vocation,” (Carty, 1991:190).

Yet without the capacity, or at least the appearance, of being able to perform aggregative and representative work, a party has little chance of electoral success. Modern parties are also generally held to the Burkean expectation that their representation will reflect a responsibility to the needs of the entire provincial or
national community, not simply factional interests (Lyon, 1992). This expectation of course is compounded should the party form the government, since then, as McMenemy points out, “the parliamentary system requires the governing party to act in the name of the crown and be responsible to the legislature rather than to act in the name of ... a party convention” (McMenemy, 1976:103).

Beyond representation and aggregating interests, Anthony King (1969) has identified five other general functions performed by political parties in liberal democracies. In performing these functions, King makes the important observation that “parties and party systems play a large part in creating and maintaining the political culture and political structures which characterize political systems as a whole and in the context of which particular situations develop” (King, 1969:118). With this in mind, it is worth briefly reviewing what King described as these “alleged functions of party” and their potential impact on a polity (ibid:120).

Structuring the vote is the first function King identifies, which he equates with opinion-structuring and what Vaughan Lyon likely means when he notes that parties “exist to persuade people to accept their definition of what is good for the community” (1996:534). Should a party be successful in this task, it would be expected that they would be rewarded at the ballot box. Next King discusses the integration and mobilization function of parties. These are the acts of political socialization by which people come to develop psychological and social attachments to parties. In this regard, McMenemy observes that, “parties acquire potent institutional memories and socialize new generations of members and supporters to the myth of the group” (1976:10). If parties are performing these functions effectively, partisan activity on their behalf should remain constant or be expected to increase as the myth is embraced. Leadership
recruitment is a function King sees parties as deeply implicated in, given that leaders are elected through parties, but questions the centrality of their role in actually recruiting them by suggesting that extra-party influences often play a dominant role in the selection process. The organization of government and policy formation are also two functions that King believes parties have been over-identified with. Although parties that have formed the government are in a position to alter some aspects of the parliamentary system, this is the responsibility of the government acting on behalf of the crown, rather than the party acting on behalf of its supporters. Finally, in terms of policy formation and influence, King argues that parties tend to take policy stances, but this does not necessarily mean that the party itself developed the policies it is seen to support. Similar to the leadership recruitment process, parties are often subject to internal factional and external social pressures that drive a party’s platform.

Canadian political parties, both at the federal and provincial levels, it may be argued, claim to perform all of these functions in their quest to gain access to the halls of legislative power. Yet it must be remembered that the execution of these functions (and even a party’s raison d’être and goals) is not free of structural constraints. Just as King observed that parties assist in the creation and maintenance of the political system in which they exist, so to does the system influence the character and actions of the party (Chandler and Siaroff, 1991). In fact, it may well be argued that this dialectical relationship between parties and the electoral system has a greater and more immediate impact on the nature and fortunes of a party than on the structure of the political system itself. Pelletier (1996) for instance, argues that the concentration of power in the hands of a party’s leader and its executive elite is a direct result of Canada adopting Britain’s Westminster parliamentary system which sought to transfer power from the monarch
directly into the hands of the Prime Minister, rather than to the legislature. Also, the shift in 1878 from an open to a secret ballot vote format (McMenemy, 1976), combined with a simple first-past-the-post electoral system, had the eventual effect of casting a tight party net around those “loose fish,” effectively making the party, rather than the individual candidate, the central figure in the election process.

In summarizing Canada’s Westminster style parliamentary system, Chandler and Siaroff (1991) identify the following seven structural features: general elections central to the determination of government; a majoritarian, first-past-the-post electoral system; a predominantly (although not exclusively) two-party system in which these two parties alternate in power; a one-party cabinet government; a powerful Prime Minister; a weak legislature; and a formal opposition that has little input to governmental policy formation and implementation. In making this assessment of the Westminster model, Chandler and Siaroff make three observations which are critical to the issue of effective political representation in Canada. First, they note that while this system provides a “strong institutional basis for party government ... parties themselves are not organizationally strong, and lack deeper penetration into civil society” (Chandler and Siaroff, 1991:209-10). Second, the “system dynamics and party discipline” which the Westminster model demands, “ensures that individual deputies are constrained in their behaviour and have little policy influence” (ibid:202). In other words, individual legislative members are forced to ‘tow the party line’ rather than act on behalf of the wishes of their constituencies. Finally, they remark that “the Westminster version of party government does not require a perfect two-party system” (ibid:200). This implies that while Canada’s political history has been dominated by the exchange of power between the Liberals and the Conservatives, there is room for the
existence of other parties without jeopardizing the stability or functioning of the entire system.

Chandler and Siaroff's analysis of Canada's political system and its parties suggests, like King and Burke's observations before them, that political parties may not be the best of representative vehicles for democratic societies. Indeed, Amyot (1996) argues that there is in fact little theoretical justification for parties and that they owe their existence to the "more mundane functional characteristics of our political systems," rather than any vision of them as an ideal type of representative body (1996:518). Nonetheless, as Carty points out, "parties tie Canadians together in a way that shapes the most fundamental political relationships of our system of representative democracy and responsible government" (1991:3). It is a situation that has traditionally resulted in Canadians giving parties a place of preeminence in their political activities and thoughts, despite that fact that "the influence of political parties on the daily experiences of Canadians is not great" (McMenemy and Winn, 1976:152). In the end, it may be that parties, empirically and theoretically, may not deserve their billing as effective representatives of the people.

Vaughan Lyon (1984) has gone so far as to suggest that political parties in Canada today may be thought of as "dysfunctional" with regards to their capacities for interest aggregation and articulation as well as their other purported functions. Regarding recruitment for instance, he points out that many constituency organizations "need mouth-to-mouth resuscitation at election time to play their role. Its results are often quite bizarre and have led to questions about the right of parties to control access to elected office" (Lyon, 1984:114). Lyon's comments are part of the debate that has been growing for some years over the representative efficacy of parties. Postmodern
Canadian society, with its emphasis on identity and issue politics, is a long way from the politics based on principle that characterized the parties of Burke's day. Increasing numbers of groups have been seeking alternate forms and forums to represent and articulate their interests, as mainstream political parties remain unable or unwilling to perform these functions for such groups. This has led to what is now commonly referred to by political scientists as the 'decline of parties' (Meisel, 1985) in Canada and other liberal democratic societies.

Crisis of Representation - Decline and transformation of mainstream parties

So extensive is the popular tendency to view politics, parties, and politicians with cynicism and distrust in Canada, that to make such an observation is to state a virtual truism. Such disaffection among electorates towards mainstream political parties and politics is deep and pervasive, penetrating federal and provincial levels as well as other democracies such as Britain and Germany (Covell, 1991; Chandler and Siaroff, 1991; Braunthal, 1996; Amyot, 1996). Opinions held by members of the Family Coalition Party reflect this trend. Asked to give a definition about the function of political parties, a vast majority offered a two part answer: In terms of an ideal type, they defined parties as political organizations with a mandate to govern the nation or province in the best interests of all its citizens while its members simultaneously represent their constituents in a conscientious and accurate fashion. They added however, that in reality parties and politicians are power hungry and opportunistic, willing to say anything during an election to win office after which they either ignore the wishes of their constituents or are forced to 'tow the party line'. This crisis of legitimacy faced by parties is born largely out of their inability or unwillingness to effectively aggregate and then represent
the ever-increasing diversity of interests in post-industrial societies. As Ronald Inglehart (1977) has pointed out, modern democratic societies are increasingly being characterized by populations embracing post-material values, those beyond the basic material necessities of sustenance (economic growth and stability) and safety (social order and national security). The politics of identity and involvement which form the base of many New Social Movements concern the set of post-material values that emphasize quality of life issues (environment, peace, gender and sexual equality, leisure) and the importance of direct participation in the political process. This last point has proven particularly troubling for political parties as their structural constraints and historical patterns of interest intermediation have prevented them from accommodating this demand for direct citizen involvement, which has in turn exposed aspects of their nature as undemocratic and unrepresentative.

Much of the blame for this crisis that mainstream parties are perpetually confronting can be placed at the feet of party dominating elites and their long-standing tradition of practicing 'brokerage politics'. From the early party days of loosely knit local coalitions to current corporate party structures, Canada's economic elite have remained solidly in control of the party system, structuring its operational dynamics to favourably reflect their interests and continued dominance (Lyon, 1996). Elites have, Lyon (1984) argues, consistently overemphasized the importance of parties in the democratic process. "Parties," he writes, "are easily made "inevitable" in a democracy by simply defining "democracy" as a political system characterized by competing parties" (Lyon, 1996:532). An accepted view of their inevitability among the Canadian electorate permits parties to occupy the privileged position in the political process, providing elites with a legitimated institution for the continued representation of their
selective interests. In his analysis of the Reform Party of Canada, David Laycock points out that in the 1920s parties were objects of “prairie populist criticism because they were held to be complicit in the overrepresentation of elite interests in the formulation of public policy” and that today this sentiment is a predominant one throughout not only Canada, but North America (Laycock, 1994:219-220). It is also an opinion that can be found in British Columbia’s Pro-Life and Pro-Family movements general disdain for mainstream parties. Betty Green of Vancouver Right to Life for instance commented that “Our problem in Canada is that the Liberal and the Tory parties are both owned by a few wealthy families in Canada. ... as far as believing that there’s anything along the line of democracy in this country, I don’t believe it anymore.” While this may be a perception elite interests may want to alter, according to Lyon it is certainly not a reality they wish to surrender or modify. He argues that “the elites who controlled the parties had no intention of sharing power more widely with the citizenry and reforming the representative system to make this possible” (Lyon, 1996:533). The failure of the major federal political parties to substantially implement any of the 1992 Lortie Commission’s recommendations on electoral reform (Tanguay and Gagnon, 1996) suggests that Lyon’s argument may in fact not be overstated.

Further inhibiting effective broad-based representation by parties have been the deeply historical practices of ‘brokerage politics’ and what S. J. R. Noel calls “clientalism” in Canadian politics (Noel, 1976). Canadian political scientists have characterized the dominant form of political representation in the country as a brokerage style of politics in which mediation and patronage are used to elicit factional interest support for deals made ‘behind closed doors’. These deals form the basis upon which more general policy packages are developed and then presented to voters as
widely favourable to them in the hopes that these packages will win voter approval during an election (McMenemy, 1976; Elkins, 1991; Covell, 1991; Amyot, 1996). It is a practice based upon a relationship Noel calls “clientalism” in which a party (as patron) bestows material benefits such as patronage appointments, or preferential access to certain economic or political opportunities, upon a potential source of support (the client) in order to secure that support in terms of “voting, campaigning, [or] organizing for the patron or the patron’s candidate” (1976:197). These are the underpinnings of what might be thought of as a kind of party corporatism, a degree removed from the corporatist practices of the state, but nonetheless reflecting a similar approach to the mediation of social conflict and interest aggregation as parties attempt to win the right to wield state power.

The realized danger of brokerage politics via clientalism for mainstream parties has been the loss of representative legitimacy among the Canadian population. The failure of parties to include the growing number of alternate interest groups in their decision-making processes means a “significant number of groups feel that they have been left out because no member of their group is in a decision-making body that purports to speak on their behalf” (Elkins, 1991:19). These groups do not hail from the elite cohort which has historically come to dominate party infrastructures, so in the first place they tend not to be even invited behind the closed door. Maureen Covell argues for instance, that the “overall conservatism of the system can also be seen in political recruitment which underrepresents new groups and those who do not enjoy the advantage of social prestige” (Covell, 1991:69). In addition to exclusion from the domains of decision-making power within parties, the interests or concerns of issue-oriented groups, should they actually receive any recognition from party elites, tend to
disappear in the facile platforms of parties that "try to attract as broad a spectrum of voters as possible by avoiding a distinct and therefore limiting ideological or policy image" (ibid:85). In this regard, a party elected to form the government has executed its brokerage tactics *par excellence*: it has successfully convinced the electorate that its policy packages are in their best interests without having to commit themselves to any overt ideological position or expose its entrenched, class biased and corporatist executed agenda.

Beyond the system-maintenance intentions of elite interests and the issue-deadening practice of brokerage politics, political scientists have identified a number of other factors contributing to the decline of mainstream parties in Canada in the face of their crisis of representation. The best known such analysis is John Meisel's (1985) 'decline of party' thesis in which he identifies nine factors that have contributed to the diminished role of parties in Canada and their eroding reputation among the population: the rise of the bureaucratic state; the growth of interest groups, social movements and other alternate bodies of representation; incipient corporatism; federal-provincial diplomacy; the rise of the electronic media; investigative journalism; opinion polling; the domination of economic interests in politics; and a history of one-party dominance. Others (Tanguay and Gagnon, 1996; Covell, 1991; Lawson, 1988) have identified similar factors, all of which, including Meisel's, can be placed under four general categories.

First, the major federal parties have failed to adequately accommodate the diverse range of regional and cultural interests in Canada. The results of the 1997 federal election make this point with crystalline clarity. While the Liberals maintained their majority, winning 155 seats, the bulk of their support came from Ontario and
Quebec. The opposition Reform Party's 60 seats came exclusively from Western Canada and the Bloc Québécois' 44 seats were, not surprisingly, restricted to Quebec. The meteoric rise in the 1990s of the Bloc and Reform as regional protest parties with the subsequent "fragmentation of the party system along regional lines" is consistent with Meisel's observation that federal-provincial relations were becoming strained with the changing nature of Canadian federalism (Tanguay and Gagnon, 1996:4; Meisel, 1985).

Second, the inability or unwillingness of parties to accommodate the post-material values and concerns of an increasingly well-educated and materially secure public has given rise to a search for alternate forms of representation. Unwilling to accept 'politics as usual', supporters of New Social Movements and other post-material value projects, are seeking, as Tanguay and Gagnon note, "to end the established parties monopoly on political discourse" (1996:5). What is emerging is a new form of politics that reflects not simply a disenchantment with traditional party representation, but a legitimating embracement of other political institutions and practices. Maureen Covell sees

"One characteristic of the new politics [as] a willingness to use political tactics that do not involve links with parties. These include demonstrations, direct mobilization of groups, helped by modern techniques of communication, including the fax revolution, media campaigns, and access to the courts as well as direct links with the bureaucracy" (1991:80).

Covell's mention of communication technology leads into the third general factor contributing to the decline of parties - the roles of media and technology. Opinion polling, direct mail canvassing, televoting and the growth of the Internet have all diminished the importance of a party organization to winning an election (Tanguay and Gagnon, 1996). These technologies have made traditional methods of political canvassing largely superfluous and have generated a party dependency on the services
of professional pollsters and media consultants rather than political strategists. Of all the media and communication technologies available however, it is television which has had the greatest impact on the role of parties in the political process. Meisel points out that

"Until the advent of radio and particularly of television, politicians were the most effective means through which the public learned about political events ... television has, to a great extent, changed all that. ... Public views and public opinion on almost everything is being shaped by television programming and television advertising. Politics and politicians are filtered by a medium in which the primary concern is often not enlightenment, knowledge or consciousness-raising, but maximal audiences and profits" (1991:184).

Meisel continues with the observation that the dominance of the media in the political process is so extensive that the consumer’s focus is directed not towards the political candidates or members, but to the reporter’s and their editorial opinions.

One of the most significant impacts of this reality has been the further concentration of a party’s political power and fortunes into the hands and image of its leader (Tanguay and Gagnon, 1996). Television as well as other political technologies reinforce, write Tanguay and Gagnon, “the traditional leadership fixation of Canadian politics, again to the detriment of the parties themselves” (1996:5). The problem for parties and their representative function in this regard is that it heightens the perception among disaffected electorate that, as current Family Coalition Party president Darren Lowe remarks, “under our Canadian system our leadership has quite a bit of power, more so than in the States.” FCP co-founder Mark Toth reflects the frustration among the party membership and the Pro-family community about this situation in his comment that

“In this country I think there is something wrong with the political system because members of the majority who vote on issues are considered outcasts if their view is
different from the Prime Minister's. Take [Roseanne] Skoke and [Tom] Wappell for example."

Roseanne Skoke in fact, lost her 1997 re-nomination bid in the Nova Scotia riding of Pictou-Antigonish-Guysborough. It was reported that

"Blocked by a "hardcore" party establishment from seeking another term in Parliament, controversial family-rights champion Roseanne Skoke says she will campaign to lead the Nova Scotia Liberals ... [Skoke commented that] ... "As long as our people are there, they're going to continue to be oppressed.""

The fourth and final factor contributing to the apparent decline of parties is the features of Canada's socio-economic and political structures. Corporatism continues to be a dominant characteristic of Canadian politics, and commensurate with its institutional and extra-legislative practices is a diminished role for political parties as "the large organized economic groups such as business, labour, agriculture, and consumers have increasingly been compelled to press their demands through the direct lobbying of the administrative apparatus of the state" (Meisel, 1985; Tanguay and Gagnon, 1996:4). Also, the increased material security and educational levels of the general Canadian population have increased the number of what Mair terms "free-range voters," who attach no permanent loyalty to any party but rather 'shop around' to find one that best reflects their concerns (cf: Covell, 1991:80). Finally, there is the mundane reality observed by Anthony King that the actions or policies of parties may "as often as not, be the product largely of force of circumstances" (1969:137). The realities of economic crises, international policy trends and maintaining domestic social policies all place tremendous pressure on parties to develop platforms that reflect their capacity to manage a country or province's affairs should they form the government. "Governments," Amyot points out, "simply have less money with which to embark on new policies; they now also have less room to manoeuver because of budget deficits"
Amyot uses as an example the neoconservative tide that was sweeping Europe in the early 1980s, which made it impossible for the Mitterand government in France to implement Keynesian measures to stimulate the country’s economy. A similar situation has existed for the Liberals in Canada since they came to power in 1993. Despite promises to restore Canada’s social programmes that had suffered under the Mulroney Conservatives, the Liberals found themselves pressured by the dynamics of the international market to make deficit and debt reduction the top priority, thereby stalling any significant restoration work to the social safety net.\(^{10}\)

In varying degrees of concert, all of these factors have contributed to the dislodging of political parties from their privileged position in the political psyches of the Canadian electorate. Yet there exists a debate as to whether their manifest impact on parties is enough to claim that parties will soon be, or have already become, inert and atavistic political institutions. Vaughan Lyon (1996) argues for just such a fate, believing that democracy in Canada would be well served should government by parties, what he calls “partycracy,” come to end. Yet in debating John Meisel’s ‘decline of party’ thesis, there seems to be an acknowledgement among political scientists that while the influence of parties is declining and public cynicism towards them is rising, this is not an inevitable situation (Paltiel, 1996; Tanguay and Gagnon, 1996; Amyot, 1996; Covell, 1991). Paltiel for instance, takes the position that Meisel overgeneralized with his conclusions and that given consistent levels of voter turnout, competition for party nominations and delegates at party conventions, there is little empirical support that “Canadian parliamentary parties are either moribund or in decline” (Paltiel, 1996:414). Covell (1991) sees the issue confronting parties as one of realignment versus dealignment. The former, she argues, would be fateful for existing parties as they are
replaced by new ones, but not for the political system as a whole. On the other hand, dealignment, or the wholesale rejection of parties as representative bodies, she believes, would threaten the stability and future of the entire political system. Tanguay and Gagnon, along with Grant Amyot, see nothing inevitable about the decline of parties. Tanguay and Gagnon, rather than speak of a decline, prefer the vision evoked with the term “transformation” which they believe more accurately captures the challenges facing parties today.

If parties are not edging towards the political scrapyard however, they are still faced with the very tangible reality that their “sphere of influence and effectiveness is being reduced, by design or not” (Meisel, 1991:192). In a follow-up article to “Decline of Party in Canada,” Meisel points to ten dysfunctions that parties themselves perform, thereby self-limiting their potential. Of the ten, two, limiting political discourse and ignoring important issues, are of particular importance to the emergence of alternate organizations of representation. Party elitism and brokerage style politics have left parties with an inability to provide what Kay Lawson calls “acceptable forms of linkages” between citizens and political parties as well as citizens and the state (1988:17). This failure has limited the opportunities for people to engage in meaningful political dialogue within parties and, argues Peter Merkl,

“A whole generation thirsting for political action found itself denied access by restrictive rules of the game by collusion of the established parties ... and by the longstanding shift of governmental functions to the bureaucracy and to corporatist intermediation” (Merkl, 1988:565).

And for those individuals that have sought political expression from within parties, like the Toths and the Stilwells when they were with the Social Credit Party of BC, they have often found it a very unsatisfying experience (Lyon, 1996). Lyon notes that “Party
leaders recommend joining a party, equating such membership with good citizenship … [but] … For principled, practical, and power reasons, party leaders pay little attention to the policy ideas of members of their party” (1996:536).

These policy ideas often revolve around quality of life issues and demand that a party take a firm ideological stance on the issue, but as one Family Coalition Member observed, “big parties don’t take on serious issues,” an observation mirrored in Lyon’s comment that “parties fail to raise many socially important issues” (Lyon, 1996:535). The result of the tension created by the desire of citizens for more direct political participation over social issues and the reticence of parties to make such an accommodation has been that “an increasing number of Canadians have sought to participate in politics and public life outside the framework of parties” (Meisel, 1991:179). Tanguay makes a similar point in writing that “when the political parties are unwilling to take a clear stand on pressing issues of public policy - abortion and how to reconcile environmental protection with continued economic growth, to name two obvious ones - growing numbers of voters are likely to seek out alternative institutional mechanisms, such as interest groups and single-issue movements, for representation of their interests” (Tanguay, 1992:485).

It seems clear that for a variety of self-inflicted and externally imposed reasons, the crisis of representation faced by political parties in Canada has fostered a disaffected and cynical voter culture in Canada. Among the members of the Family Coalition Party, it is a thriving trend. The vast majority of FCP members, for instance, had never belonged to any other political party before the FCP because of their disenchantment with the disingenuous, opportunistic nature of parties and politicians. One member’s comment sums up their view this way: “I’m suspicious of all parties. Ninety of ninety-five politicians are not concerned to serve the people, they’re concerned with their own interests. … but the FCP is sincere, they do want to serve and
are motivated by what’s right and wrong - by principles.\textsuperscript{12} Another member thoughtfully observes that

“Historically, if you look at the democratic process, it’s supposed to be representation for the people, in pure form, a voice for the people. But over time this voice has been influenced by outside interests with money which has been created by or given to the parties. It’s unfortunate because Canada is supposed to be democratic but I don’t think I’m being represented at the provincial or federal level - and I’m not alone I don’t think. Something’s gone wrong or I’ve turned cynical along the way, but I just don’t feel represented because often times the party that’s in doesn’t share my beliefs. Second, in the past I’ve been lied to - if I’ve voted for a particular person or leader I’ve been let down. Often my requests for answers or action have been completely ignored by my representative in government and they’ve never been ridiculous questions, just ones I want honest answers to.”

For such disaffected citizens, there would appear to be only two options. First, to seek out alternate forms of representation such as those offered by the New Social Movements, interest groups, or political pressure groups in the hopes that they can better articulate the issues of concern for that individual. Second, cynicism and disenchantment may cause people to opt out of the political process entirely. With the increase in social movement organization activity and the decrease in voter turnout over the last three federal elections, it would appear both options are being exercised as Canadians grow increasingly tired and frustrated with parties’ continued practice of ‘politics as usual.’\textsuperscript{13} Yet at the same time, the creation of new political parties appears to be a continuing and viable option in the attempt by politically concerned citizens to find alternate vehicles for the expression and representation of their political ideals. The 1992 Lortie Commission on electoral reform noted that

“In many ways we seem to be in an era of anti-politics, although the rapid emergence of new parties points to the need to exercise caution in drawing conclusions. Canadians appear to distrust their political leaders, the political process and political institutions. Parties themselves may be contributing to the malaise of voters. ... Whatever the cause, there is little doubt that Canadian political parties are held in low public esteem, and that their standing has declined steadily over the past decade. ...[Nonetheless] many smaller parties have developed partisan constituencies of loyal and committed
supporters. ... Further, electoral support for these parties indicates that, despite the increased activism of interest groups, Canadians are hesitant to abandon the institution of party” (Canada, RCERPF, 1991, I:223,228).

It is a situation that suggests Covell (1991), as well as Tanguay and Gagnon (1996), with their respective notions of party realignment and transformation, may well have captured Canadian's attitude towards their political parties and system. Although there is little doubt that the major parties are in serious crisis, the raft of minor and protest parties that have dotted the federal and provincial landscapes of Canada throughout the twentieth century indicate a continued overall faith in the Canadian system and its parties, despite their myriad dysfunctions. Perhaps the important distinction to make here regarding the crisis faced by parties is just that: it is the mainstream or major parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives for the most part, that are in a crisis of representation, not the small parties that emerge from social movements or on the basis of strongly held social beliefs. These minor parties, like the FCP and the Greens, with their grassroots support, issue based and principled platforms, and calls for electoral reform, may well be what keeps the party at Westminster going.

**Keeping the Issues Alive: Minor Parties in Canadian Politics**

One of the most unique and enduring features of Canadian political culture has been the federal and provincial presence of minor political parties of protest. Since the Progressives entered the federal election of 1921, minor political parties have distinguished Canada's Westminster parliamentary model from other first-past-the-post systems by creating a uniquely Canadian hybrid political system characterized by two-party dominance with the continuous presence of minor parties (Bickerton, 1996; Gagnon and Tanguay, 1996). When the Toths and three other founders chose the
Family Coalition Party as their alternate means of political representation, they became part of the historical stream of Canadian political consciousness that has manifested itself in party form and been committed to the belief and pursuit of full democratic participation in Canada throughout the twentieth century. Like the Progressives, the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF later the NDP), the Christian Heritage Party, and Social Credit, the FCP is a membership of aggrieved citizens with strong feelings of political disenfranchisement and disillusionment resulting from the failure of major parties to represent their interests. These parties have been categorized and labelled in a number of different fashions, but consistent through this varied nomenclature have been the characteristic features of such parties having a narrow-issue focus, a strong educational function, electoral victory as a secondary goal, a small but exceedingly loyal base of support and being confronted with a political system and its major parties highly resistant to their presence.

Despite the considerable obstacles and challenges that confront these parties in the face of such resistance, they press on, motivated by past successes such as those of the Socreds in BC and Alberta and the CCF/NDP at both federal and provincial levels. In fact, with the rise of the Bloc Quebecois and the Reform Party of Canada, Maureen Covell wrote that

“It is possible that we are entering another period of party effervescence. The Reform Party and the Bloc Quebecois have been formed to run candidates in the next federal election, and parties such as the Christian Heritage Party have entered politics at both the provincial and federal levels, and in a small number of cases have gained enough votes to affect the result, usually by causing the defeat of the candidate closest to them in ideological terms” (1991:102).

Since this was written in 1991, the Bloc (1993) and Reform (1997) have both formed the official federal opposition to the Liberals, and in 1994 the 275 votes the Family Coalition
Party received in the Matsqui provincial by-election was enough to send Socred matriarch Grace McCarthy down to defeat, losing by only 67 votes. Such victories, large or small and regardless of political stripe, have created a deep well of political folklore and tradition from which neophyte minor parties draw their strength.

In categorizing these small parties, scholars have used a range of terms, calling them minor parties, mass parties, protest parties, third parties, flash parties, and movement parties (Duverger, 1959; Pinard, 1975; McMenemy, 1976; Gagnon and Tanguay, 1996; Carty, 1996). The source of the distinctions between the terms can be found in the criteria which is used to define the origins, size and trajectories of such parties. Tanguay and Gagnon’s use of the term “minor party,” for example, operates on a broad definition formed by exclusion: minor parties are “those political formations that present candidates in federal or provincial elections but fail to obtain one of the two largest blocs of seats in the legislature” (1996:108-09). Pinard’s notion of a “third party” is based on size of the popular vote received by the party and the subsequent threat it poses to the dominant party in the system. That is, for Pinard (1971, 1973), a party must receive fifteen per cent of the popular vote to qualify as a legitimate third party. Carty uses the term “flash party” to describe the rapid emergence and ascendancy of parties like Reform and the Bloc Quebecois. Duverger (1959) and McMenemy (1976) on the other hand, define mass and movement parties respectively, by their origins.

Duverger’s differentiation between mass and cadre parties is one of the most common used to differentiate between traditional mainstream parties and smaller parties like the CCF/NDP or the FCP. Cadre parties, such as the federal Liberal or Conservatives, are professional electoral machines, with extensive financial and technical expertise that have been developed for the express purpose of conducting
successful election campaigns. Mass parties on the other hand, have a grassroots base, arising from civil society and relying exclusively on their membership for support. “The members,” writes Duverger, “are therefore the very substance of the party, the stuff of its activity,” but he stresses that it is not membership size that separates cadre from mass parties, but structure (1959:63). Mass parties for instance, engage in acts of political education to gain support from which the party derives its financial resources, so the

“Party is essentially based upon the subscriptions paid by its members ... In this way the party gathers the funds required for its work of political education and for its day-to-day activity; in the same way it is enabled to finance electioneering; the financial and the political are here at one. ... The mass party technique in effect replaces the capitalist financing of electioneering by democratic financing” (ibid:63).

As became evident in Chapter two, this description of gathering financial support fits the Family Coalition Party well, with its membership dues and annual party banquet comprising virtually all of the party’s revenue sources. Yet the FCP does not have an extensive enough membership base to be considered a mass party in the same way that the CCF/NDP or Social Credit might be. Beyond cadre and mass parties, Duverger indicates that the “concept, ‘minor party,’ deserves special consideration” for its ability to capture the activities of parties that exist and operate at the edges of parliamentary legitimacy and it is here, at this conceptualized margin that a party like the FCP can be more properly situated (1959:290).

Personality parties and permanent minority parties are the two variants of minor parties Duverger identifies. In a parallel discussion on minor third parties in Canada, John McMenemy (1976) classifies them into fragment, movement, and mixed fragment-movement parties, creating a distinction similar to Duverger’s. The critical distinction between both formulations of these party sub-types lies in their point of origin.
Personality or fragment parties are the product of party fractures within a sitting parliamentary party, while permanent minor or movement parties have their genesis in issues that have generated social unrest in civil society; they are, in other words, extra-parliamentary in their origins. Of personality parties, Duverger wrote that they “are purely parliamentary groups having no real party organization in the country, no true social substructure. They are made up of deputies who chafe under the discipline imposed by major parties” (1959:290). In Canada, Henri Bourassa’s Nationalists and H. H. Stevens Reconstruction parties, both of which enjoyed a modicum of electoral success during the first half of the century, were just such parties argues McMenemy, parties that existed “as a result of conflict within the elite of a parliamentary party” (1976:30).

Unlike fragment parties, movement or permanent minor parties originate in civil society and as such enjoy a solid, albeit usually small, base of support. This base of support tends to be a political minority, by which Duverger has in mind “a ‘spiritual family’ quite well marked off, very much in a minority, relatively stable and not reducible to the major tendencies which divide the country” (1959:292). Duverger argues that this ‘family’ comprises a social or political subculture based upon “ethnical or geographical minorities, upon religious minorities and upon political minorities” (ibid:291). McMenemy summarizes the political mobilization and intentions of these movement parties this way:

“Movement parties arise in times of social crises to articulate grievances. Their leaders and adherents may not seek political office wholeheartedly at first. Instead, the aims of the movement party may be limited to obtaining only sufficient representation to impress the governing parliamentary party. If the party is primarily interested in radical social reform, political power is seen as a long-term goal and less important than educating the public” (1976:14).
Three main catalysts of social crisis can be identified in Canada’s historical experience that have spawned movement parties. The first is economic. Norman Penner (1996) argues that it was during the depression years of 1929-39 that parties like the Social Credit League and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation emerged, in part as a protest to the protracted economic crises of the period. He further contends that the chronically sluggish economy of the 1990s gave a similar boost to the Reform Party and the Bloc Quebecois, as the Progressive Conservatives collapsed under the weight of a Mulroney administration unable to halt a downward spiralling economy. The second catalyst is that of regional exploitation and alienation. Much of the strength of parties like the Social Credit League, the Reform Party, the Union Nationale, and the Bloc Quebecois comes from a deeply rooted belief that the demands of Western Canada and Quebec are not satisfactorily articulated or represented by the major parties (Thorburn, 1991). Finally, what can be thought of as ‘the crisis of “post-material” values’ has provided the impetus for several parties that have emerged in the 1980s and 1990s.14 The Feminist Party of Canada, the Green Party (federal and provincial), the Christian Heritage Party, and the Family Coalition Parties in Ontario and British Columbia were all developed on platforms of strong principle relative to quality of life issues. Social and political equality, ecological destruction, the diminishing influence of Christian values in Canadian society, and the erosion of the traditional family - all of these issues (despite obvious political antagonisms) have been identified by supporters as critical to the future social well-being of the country and as being denied effective representation in mainstream parties.

As a way of giving a formal political voice to these issues and simultaneously protesting the constricting nature of practicing ‘politics as usual’ in mainstream parties,
these minor parties of protest have taken form. One Family Coalition Party member reflected a dominant membership belief about the lack of representation for pro-family issues in mainstream parties when they stated that “I think it’s been proven you can’t change anything in an old party” and as two Pro-family activists respectively commented about the FCP, “I think it formed as a kind of protest party,” “the FCP is made up of people disaffected from the parties they worked in before.” While it is acknowledged that the lack of representation offered by cadre parties is the single most important reason for the formation of minor parties of protest (Gagnon and Tanguay, 1996; Pinard, 1973; Lawson, 1988), it must be noted that this is primarily a motivating factor and while crucial, is insufficient for the manifest expression of a party like the FCP. Cultural, systemic and structural variables must also combine if the required socio-political conditions for the emergence of a minor party are to be generated. In their critique of the dominant theories of minor party development, Tanguay and Gagnon (1996) identify the institutional, cultural and structural as the three traditional types of explanation. While advocates of each approach tend to exclude the others, Tanguay and Gagnon correctly conclude that no single perspective has satisfactory explanatory power and that in actuality, “any hope for a general model of minor-party development that would permit the researcher to predict with confidence the times and places in which minor parties will emerge is likely to be disappointed” (1996:127).

Nonetheless, despite this inexactitude, several requisite general conditions can be gleaned from the theoretical and empirical work that has been done on the emergence of minor parties. Beyond a lack of cadre party representation, the next most important factor in minor party development is the presence of a political system conducive to their presence. Although the rules of the Westminster parliamentary game
make it difficult for a party to form and survive, they are not so prohibitive as to make it impossible. The institutional characteristics of Canada's parliamentary system, with its strict party discipline and reliance on constituency focussed elections simultaneously makes working from within an existing cadre party unattractive while offering the possibility of alternate party representation. John McMenemy argues for instance, that

"Under the Westminster parliamentary system employed in this country, the focus of electoral activity is the constituency election. The election of only a handful of Members of Parliament gives minor parties a certain legitimacy and credibility" (1976:29).

Although the challenge of actually becoming elected poses some monumental challenges for minor parties, they are at least able to gain access to the election forum, unlike the American political system where restrictions to ballot access for minor parties are formidable (Gagnon and Tanguay, 1996).

Second, certain socioeconomic and sociopolitical structural factors consistently appear in explanations concerning the rise of minor parties. Three types of social and economic crises (economic, regional exploitation/alienation, "post-material" values) have already been pointed out, but the importance of one or two-party dominance and group homogeneity must also be mentioned. In looking at the rise of the Social Credit Party in Quebec during the early 1960s, Maurice Pinard (1971) argued that a political situation where one party is dominant and no effective opposition is felt to exist will give rise to a third party during times when socioeconomic crises arise. Although Pinard (1973) subsequently reformulated his original argument, making one-party dominance one of several intertwined factors leading to the rise of minor parties, the point remains that the persistent

"Presence of a single dominant party leaves all groups opposing it without viable channels of political representation, ... [and even] ... a strong two-party system ... could
as well be nonrepresentative for groups who feel their central ideology and long-term grievances cannot be accommodated through any of the existing parties” (1973:442).

C. B. MacPherson’s conclusions regarding the emergence and political success of the Social Credit Party in Alberta on the other hand, rested on two different characteristics particular to the province, “one was their relatively homogenous class composition, the other was their quasi-colonial status” (1953:21). Albertan’s sense of regional exploitation with the province’s “subordination to the outside economy ... [specifically] ... the interests of eastern capital” and the heavy predominance of a petit bourgeois, small-propertied class, argued MacPherson, were the principal structural features upon which the United Farmers of Alberta and then the Social Credit Party were able to politically dominate the province from 1921 to 1967 (1953:6). Although MacPherson has been criticized for overstating the homogeneity of Alberta’s class structure (Gagnon and Tanguay, 1996), the importance of a homogenous and unified base of support to minor parties should not be lost. Like Duverger’s ‘spiritual family’ metaphor, MacPherson’s analysis rests on an unstated acknowledgment that the group cohesion which is so vital to a minor party of protest is based in large part on socioeconomic and sociopolitical similarities between members.

Finally, a variety of popular and political culture trends aid the development of minor parties. Most obviously at this historical moment are the cynical and disaffected attitudes of the electorate in Canada. With cadre parties virtually indistinguishable from one another, Amyot argues, “there is a growing sense that parties do not matter, that whichever party wins the election, the actual range of choice open to government is small” (1996:519). Therefore, politicians claiming any moral high ground or speaking of working from new or principled positions tend to quickly be labelled insincere because
“our culture makes such claims deeply suspect, and demands of the politically active
canadas proof of public-spiritedness and self-sacrifice. Respectability is more easily
conceded to those who deny political ambitions” (Magnusson, 1990:526). Such political
disenchantment is both the product and producer of such a cultural norm, which works
to the disadvantage of cadre parties but fosters credibility towards those activists in
minor parties who are working from a position of principle. If Covell (1991) is correct
and the two principle options available in the midst of this ‘crisis of parties’ are system
decay or the formation of new parties, then it is likely these cultural traits would defer
to the latter, not the former. Given Canada’s long history of minor party formation and
relative lack of social and political upheaval over its political system, this would appear
to be the case.

**Minor Parties of Protest - Features and functions**

When the conjunctural moment arrives with all the requisite conditions and
elements for the development of a minor party of protest, what emerges is a movement
party with a set of characteristics and functions common to other such parties that have
become part of this Canadian political heritage. Their potential once they have entered
the political arena is wholly contingent on the mandate they set for themselves and their
capacity to meet the opposition and challenges that a hostile political environment
presents to them. Cadre parties, the media, the general voter, even their natural
constituents can ostracize, ignore or oppose a new party. These challenges, combined
with a first-past-the-post electoral system and demanding Election Act requirements,
create a formidable environment for minor parties of protest like Family Coalition and
the Greens, one in which simple organizational survival is cause for celebration.
Like any political party operating in a parliamentary system, a primary feature of minor parties of protest is that they engage in election campaigns and pursue political office by running candidates during general and by-elections. They also predominantly reflect a typical administrative infrastructure complete with executive boards, constituency associations and formally elected officials to positions such as leader, president, and secretary treasurer. While not as sophisticated or fully developed as professionalized cadre parties, minor party organizations like the Family Coalition Party do utilize this administrative form in pursuing their goals. Beyond this structural similarity however, minor parties, as noted in earlier sections of this chapter, do possess unique qualities that markedly differentiate them from cadre parties.

For one thing, parties like the FCP tend to be extra-parliamentary in their origins, arising in civil society as a result of a social movement cause or some other social grievance that has yet to be institutionally articulated. This intention to give a grievance an organizational form through which supporters can articulate and represent the grievance means that most minor parties have a narrow or single issue focus. The term single issue may in fact be misleading given that most minor parties in fact have a platform based on issue-clusters which can be understood as a small number of inter-related issues that are clustered around one dominant or higher profile issue. The Family Coalition Party, most commonly identified as a Pro-life party, is prototypical given that it has an equal, if not greater focus on Pro-family issues in education, child care, adoption and health-care. The Green Party also reflects this trend with its popular image in British Columbia being a party concerned primarily with forestry and fishery practices, but its broader (and more international) agenda includes other popular environmental struggles including disarmament, anti-nuclear and toxic waste disposal.
Related to their relatively narrow issue focus is another feature of minor parties, their emphasis on principled, value-oriented platforms. Unlike cadre parties that maintain a flexible and populist approach to ideological positions, parties like the CCF/NDP, the Greens and the FCP operate according to a strict adherence of their foundational policies. The Reform Party of BC’s reliance on popular referendum to decide party position on social issues is, for example, the sole issue that prevents the FCP from merging with Reform. One long-time activist within the FCP commented on Reform that “it’s a total waste of time. If a party gets in because they stand for certain principles, then they should be able to act on them. But if they say vote for us and then we’ll have a referendum to decide the issue, you don’t stand for anything.” It is a situation that both helps and hinders these minor parties. Unwavering commitment to their principal grievances ensures the solid loyalty of their ‘spiritual family,’ providing them with a grassroots legitimacy and a source of civil society resource support. This base of support however, is often small, but the uncompromising position taken by these parties denies them the flexibility cadre parties have to adapt policy and organizational directions in their pursuit of broad based support and electoral victory (Winn, 1976). This inflexibility is generally born of the social movement foundations these parties often have. Grant Amyot points out that movement activists “have typically been unable to stomach the fact that established parties which have recognized their concerns have had to compromise them because of conflicting demands from other segments of their constituency” (1996:522). This is not simply the source of a minor party’s commitment to its principles, but often, as in the case of the FCP, the very reason for its formation.
Beyond the uncompromising stance taken over foundational principles, the feature next most cherished by supporters of minor parties is their internally democratic nature. Whereas the leadership and executive of cadre parties tend towards oligopolistic practices regarding the adoption of party policy and strategy, in minor parties

"Legislative leadership is not only formally accountable to the extra-legislative organization, but appears to share power with the extra-legislative leadership of the party. The rank-and-file members of these parties value democratic internal procedures and correct policy more highly than electoral success" (McMenemy, 1976:104).

The CCF/NDP, the Greens in Ontario as well as the FCP in British Columbia all emphasize the importance of the direct involvement of their members in the decision making processes of the executive (Young, 1992; Sandilands, 1992). Past Family Coalition Party president John O'Flynn saw this as one of the most attractive features of the party for him: "I like how it goes through the democratic process as a way to develop policy. It was the only way, I felt, to do it at the political level. At least, it seemed to be the most attractive way for me, even though there are other ways."

This belief in direct democratic participation also extends into a commitment by minor parties to reform the political system in which they exist. The United Farmers of Alberta and the Social Credit Party in Alberta were, observed MacPherson, "based on a novel theory of democratic government, and each was carried into effect by a popular movement broader than a political party" (1953:3). Similarly, the Greens, the Progressives and the CCF, with their goals of implementing a programme that promotes more direct and participatory democracy, all hoped to reform the Canadian political system to allow for more effective articulation, representation and accountability in government (Sandilands, 1992; Covell, 1991). In BC, the Family Coalition Party has
joined the British Columbia Coalition for Electoral Reform in support of the organization's goal of altering the current provincial electoral system from its first-past-the-post style to some type of proportional representation format. A majority of FCP members support this initiative, believing it will help democratize BC's political system and create the potential for a more representative legislature.

The last, and one of the most vital, features of movement parties is their educational aspect. The role of movement parties as political educators is recognized as one of the most important distinctions between movement and cadre parties (Covell, 1991; Lyon 1992; Gagnon and Tanguay, 1996). It may, in fact, be argued that this is the defining feature of a minor party of protest. Elkins (1991) for example, argues that not all political parties are equal, and that parties are what they do. In this regard Elkins credits the Progressives, United Farmers of Alberta and the CCF with full party status, but at the same time relegates the Reform Party, the Christian Heritage Party and the Family Coalition Party to that of an interest group. There is a strong temporal dimension to this classification, for as Elkins writes, "only time will tell if they evolve into functioning parties, wither away or admit that they are only a pressure group, a single-issue group or a lobbying tool" (1991:5). Lyon makes a similar observation when he writes that

"The issues a party promotes, and the way it interacts with the public is determined by its raison d'être and by the context in which it operates. In performing an educational role, for example, the parties focus on issues and information that further their objectives" (1992:128).17

In this way, the identity of a movement party becomes an inseparable melange of its institutional form, educational purpose, electoral hopes and resource accumulation
strategies, but standing out most prominently is a belief in social change through political education. "Parties of protest," write Gagnon and Tanguay,

"Such as the Progressives and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) are usually as interested in effecting social change and undertaking political education as they are in electoral success. These distinctive objectives mean that the leaders of minor parties are often quite reluctant at first to get involved in electoral politics, for fear that political success might dilute the ideological zeal of the movement, or that the trappings of power might seduce those elected to office" (1996:109).

As Chapter two demonstrated, the goals of the FCP reflect a greater concern with social change through political education than with acquiring legislative power. From the outset, the Toths concern was to have "family friendly" legislation enacted, to educate the general public as to the merits of the traditional family and the threat that the rise of secular humanism poses for its future, and to convince larger, mainstream parties to adopt their two founding principles. As Mrs. Toth commented, "there's more than one way to skin a cat," and the ideal situation for the FCP, as was reported in Chapter three, is to achieve these goals so that the party can dissolve as a formal political institution.

To this end, the potential of the party form for organizations like the FCP, the Greens, and the Feminist Party rests less exclusively with their intentions and hopes of electoral success, than with their capacity to function as political agitators and educators from within the institutionalized setting of party politics. Expanding the terrain of political activism from civil society to include the political sphere permits these aggrieved groups to continue their movement functions from within a realm that has been steadily appropriated by cadre parties and their elite supporters for their own purposes. One of the principal functions of movement parties then, is to re-politicize and re-democratize the political process. Where the New Social Movements expanded
the notion of legitimate political terrain to include all aspects of civil society, from institutions such as the family to the individual and corporeal body, now the Greens and resurgent movement groups like the FCP are returning to the political sphere with the intent of re-legitimating it as a site for political debate and social change. In large part this is achieved by mobilizing citizens into active political participants through the party, which not only invigorates the system, but simultaneously strengthens the party (Lyon, 1992).

Beyond acting as political educators and sources of democratic revitalization for the parliamentary system, movement parties are also sentinels of political discontent. Their presence is a political flare, a warning sign signalling the inadequacy of engaging in ‘politics as usual’ and the public’s dissatisfaction with all the practices which accompany that term. “Almost by definition,” Covell argues, “the rise of new parties is a sign that the established parties of a system are not accommodating important shades of political opinion in that system” (1991:91). At the same time, movement parties also signal a deeper malady - disaffection from the entire status quo political system and process (Gagnon and Tanguay, 1996). For the political activists that work within the Greens or the FCP, these discontents revolve around the systemic inability or cadre party unwillingness to tackle social issues. Mr. Toth of the FCP as an example, commented that “I don’t think a political party is doing its job unless it deals with social problems.” The FCP is an institutional expression of this discontent, a sign of cadre party dysfunction and the democratic shortcomings of BC’s political system.

Through increasing citizen involvement, raising awareness through education and engaging in everyday politics (from publishing party newsletters to entering elections), movement parties also perform an accountability function. By a candidate’s
mere presence at an all-candidates meeting during an election, a movement party has
the opportunity to force mainstream parties to confront issues they would otherwise
avoid. During the 1996 British Columbia provincial election for example, Family
Coalition Party candidates were able on at least two occasions to bring their Pro-family
and Pro-life concerns into the debate, forcing cadre party candidates to state their
position or to at least expose an evasive attitude towards such issues. Outside of
election periods, movement parties, because of their form, are often able to participate in
forums not available to other organizational types. As was noted in Chapters Two and
Three, the FCP have made a number of presentations to standing committees on issues
such as financing public schools and child protection. As well, they are involved with
the Enterprise League of British Columbia, which is possible only because of their
standing as a provincial political party. These activities provide opportunities for
movement parties to articulate their grievances in the hopes of winning policy
concessions and also to bring information back to their membership about the current
status of the particular issue, which in turn can be beneficial to strategy development
aimed at achieving the party’s goals. Gagnon and Tanguay call this the “function of
policy innovator,” which overstates the power of a minor party like the FCP, but
nonetheless reflects their potential (1996:110). About small parties, Mr. Toth
commented that “they are a good thing because they tend to bring the large parties into
line. ... It is good for democracy to have small parties that are trying to increase justice
and the fight against the injustice of bad laws.” Presumably, as such attitudes and
activities increase, and as movement parties continue to perform their educative
function, citizen awareness and participation should grow, forcing cadre parties into
greater accountability for the policy actions and more democratic representation of their constituents.

One of the most overt functions of movement parties is to give a political voice to the issue clusters of their platform. John O’Flynn of the FCP commented that the party “gives public visibility to your stance,” an agreed upon belief of the party membership which feels that without the party, Pro-family issues would receive no political articulation whatsoever. Echoing this belief, FCP Leader Heather Stilwell opines that

“If we are not there, and not given the time, the issues will not be talked about by the other political parties. They are uncomfortable with them. The other parties do have Pro-life people within them but they are silent and so you can’t impact upon society if the issues can’t be discussed.”

The Greens, the FCP and other issue-oriented parties all popularize agendas that are downplayed or simply ignored by mainstream parties. By performing this function, such parties are also providing “a haven for the discontented in society” (Gagnon and Tanguay, 1996:110). Citizens who live their lives based on any number or type of inviolable principles can find themselves in the politically untenable situation of having to cast a vote for a party that does not profess a similar degree of commitment to those principles. Whatever the issue, these voters first look to cast their ballots on the basis of social principle. FCP members admit to frequently spoiling ballots or not voting, and disdain practices such as voting purely on the basis of potential economic gains or voting negatively to ensure a particular party does not form the government. For the committed Pro-family or Pro-life ideologue, the FCP provides them an opportunity to vote purely on the basis of conscience. As Mrs. Toth remarked, “I suppose we are an electoral vehicle for people who hold those socially moral values, social conservatives
and moral conservatives - it gives people a place to put their vote.” In this regard, one FCP member, who in 1987 ran as a candidate for the Ontario Family Coalition Party, recalled “a number of people who said to me, ‘if it wasn’t for you, I wouldn’t be able to vote.’”

A final function of minor parties of protest is that they create political opportunities for the broader social movements with which they are related or sympathetic. The form and institutional presence of these parties provides a political access point through which movements have the potential to influence the policy process or other, larger, parties. Although in the case of the FCP this potential has yet to be recognized or embraced by the Pro-family movement as a whole, movement parties create unique opportunities of intrusion into the political process, which can be exploited by other social movement organizations in their work. The most obvious example is during an election when parties have privileged access to public forums, the media, all-candidates meetings and general campaigning, all of which can be used as sites for education, agitation and demands for representation. Utilized in this fashion, movement parties can help transform elections into forums of rigorous political action that addresses their grievances, grievances which have been politically legitimized by the institutionalized form that represents them and so not easily dismissed as spurious election debate rhetoric.

To have fully captured the essence of minor parties of protest or movement parties is to understand that all of their functions and features are not mutually exclusive, nor do they exhibit them to the same degree. At particular stages of a movement party’s development, it will manifest some traits and execute some functions more conspicuously than others, while still others may be entirely latent. For the most
part, these characteristics and functions are readily identified in fledgling organizations like the FCP, the now defunct Feminist Party of Canada, and the Communist Party of BC, as they either struggle through their party infancy or remain fastidiously true to their principles. Other movement originating parties, like the CCF/NDP, the Progressives, and the United Farmers of Alberta evolved to various points of party maturation which resulted in the shifting, masking or abandoning of their original movement traits. Yet they remain movement parties, formal articulations of particular grievances that provided opportunities for the casting of votes based on social principle and political dissatisfaction. In this sense, movement parties embody an inherent paradox. Their existence is symptomatic of system and cadre party dysfunction and as such they can be contemplated as a destabilizing force threatening the operational integrity of the parliamentary system. However, while their presence agitates traditional parties and makes those supporting the political status quo nervous, ironically, these parties are the true sources of system validation. Covell for instance, remarks that

"The ability of a political system to at least give voice to a wide range of alternative points of view is not only useful in that it builds loyalty to the system and its processes, but also in that it is part of the process of liberal democracy" (1991:102).

Rather than posing a threat to democratic politics in Canada as those who practice 'politics as usual' might argue, small parties, in however modest a way, increase citizen involvement and interest in politics, confirm the viability and potential of Canada's parliamentary system, and breathe democratic life back into the political process with each mobilizing effort and strategy they undertake.
The Challenge of Being Small - Beating the system and the problem of the vote

It is widely recognized that any new party, regardless of origin, will find itself confronted by a number of formidable obstacles to survival and success within a liberal democratic polity such as Canada’s (Duverger, 1959; Lyon, 1992, 1996; Lawson, 1988; Chandler and Siaroff, 1991). A first-past-the-post electoral system, restrictive Election Act regulations, lack of organizational resources and political expertise, socioeconomic cleavages among the electorate, and popular conceptions about voting and the role of political parties all combine to create a political climate that is structurally and culturally reticent to bestow political legitimacy on new parties. It is a situation that adds another paradox to the complexities of Canadian politics - the sociopolitical elements that nurture the democratic possibilities of new parties are the same as those that work to prevent their manifest realization and efficacy. The challenges that these elements present for new parties can be generally grouped into four categories: systemic, structural, cultural and organizational.

Systemic obstacles include Canada’s Westminster, first-past-the-post electoral model and the Election Act regulations which set out the rules of the election game, while the political cleavages and sociopolitical characteristics of the province or country are the source of structural obstacles for new parties. Popular beliefs about the role of parties, the concept of the vote, as well as typical voting patterns and decision making processes over casting a ballot make up the cultural obstacles faced by a new party. Organizational challenges refer to a party’s own inadequacies which may include lack of political expertise, operational resources, policy development and lack of leadership. The individual effect each of these factors have on new parties share a common result:
the prevention of vote acquisition by new parties during an election. Regardless of their origin, their issues, or their other functions, the potential and political legitimacy of any political party in a parliamentary system like Canada's ultimately rests upon their ability to attract votes. In the popular consciousness of Canadians, the relationship is a simple one - the more votes a party receives, the greater its potential for wielding political power. In this regard, all the challenges that confront new parties can be compressed into a single conceptual difficulty, what may be thought of as the problem of the vote.

Systems of representative democracy rely on the concept of a citizen casting a single ballot to express their choice for political representation. The inherently reductionist nature of this practice is captured by Lyon's description of voting in which

"All the citizen's formal/authoritative input to government must be compressed into a single pencilled x after a candidate's name on a ballot every four years. With this x the person is, at various times, urged to pass judgement on the performance of the incumbent government, choose the best local representative, express an opinion on various issue before the public, and so on. ... Small wonder that for most citizens voting is a symbolic act rather than a serious attempt to influence policy" (1992:135).

There are two particularly important points concerning the vote embedded in this passage. First, the vote is an act of sociopolitical reductionism whereby the citizen, as Lyon points out, is to cast an opinion on a broad range of social, political, economic and moral issues in an exclusively singular fashion. It is a circumstance that forces compromise as the only option upon the voter; there is little room for the expression of absolutes in the ballot box. Similarly, the process demands that the voter blend sociomoral and socioeconomic issues together in their decision making process, issues the voter may view as mutually exclusive or at least exhibiting some topical autonomy. The result is that the voter must choose between ensuring the continued material
security of their family and personal well-being by voting for a party acknowledged to be competent in managing the affairs of the country or promoting their "post-material" concerns through a vote for a sympathetic new party that has yet to prove their managerial competence. Lyon makes this distinction one of citizen versus private person:

"As citizens, they [Canadians] are concerned about the long-term viability of their nation and world. As private persons living in a competitive and often cold, impersonal society, they are intensely concerned about their own security and standard of living. As citizens, they demand and welcome political action to protect the environment. As private persons, organized in groups, they often bitterly oppose policies, however otherwise desirable, that threaten their well-being" (1992:137-8).

Since most new parties arise on the basis of some issue or issue-cluster that has been under-represented by cadre parties, their implicit request is for the voter in the ballot box to attenuate concerns for their personal socioeconomic security and draw electoral attention to that unrepresented issue. Electoral results of new parties suggest that this is not a request that is readily responded to by voters. Results for the Greens (2.7% of the 1990 popular provincial vote in Ontario) and the FCP for instance, indicate that people are largely unwilling to vote purely on the basis of social issues (Covell, 1991; Sandilands, 1992). In discussing the electoral fortunes and potential of the FCP, one director of a Pro-family organization summed up this tension by saying that

"We wouldn't necessarily vote for a conservative party that only had social issues at its heart because if the economy doesn't work and the nation is not secure and all those other good things, then there is no platform on which the family can flourish anyway."

Second, the cultural importance placed upon voting and the limited systemic opportunities for the average citizen to engage in the political process have combined to compress the legitimate exercising of political power into this episodic and singular act. This restrictive situation gives the citizen only one opportunity every three to five years
via a single avenue by which they are able to participate in the political process. In this way the act of voting becomes a momentary and truncated demonstration of political will into which the citizen must distill all their political opinions. The representative aspect of the individual vote is thereby reduced and diluted to such an extent that it becomes unencumbered by the complexities of the very thing it is supposed to represent: the broad spectrum of desires and concerns that most political citizens hold. Confronted with such a circumstance, and if the act of voting is the one occasion that people have for input into the type of representation they want, the reductive nature of the vote itself demands that the voter exercise this limited power to seek effective socioeconomic representation before addressing sociomoral concerns. Frustrated by the inevitable reality created by the nature of the vote in parliamentary systems, one long time Pro-life activist and FCP member remarked that people “are torn between the ideal and the pragmatic. In a pure sense they want to support the party but they want their vote to count, even if it means holding their nose.”

The problem of the vote for new parties then, can be found in the limited capacity of the vote for political expression and representation. Lyon points out that “general elections are not single-issue referendums” (1992:135), which is true, but there is more to it than that concerning the idea of the vote as political expression. Systems of representative democracy operate on the principles of simplification and reductionism which (perhaps necessarily) force voters to exercise their single act of political power in support of maintaining the material and socioeconomic security that have created the conditions under which activism for sociomoral issues have been able to flourish. Until a new party can demonstrate an ability to ensure the former, it is unlikely they will receive many votes on the basis of the latter. As Maureen Hynes of the Feminist Party
of Canada observed, “the significance of operating on any electoral level is clear -
numbers are needed’ (1980:8), and in the simple world of majoritarian politics, with
greater numbers comes greater political power and the likelihood of greater popular
support.

To achieve this potential, a top priority for new parties is to develop into, and
present themselves, as a legitimate political alternative capable of managing the
governmental affairs of the province or the country. Clyde Vint of the Christian
Coalition of British Columbia observed about the Family Coalition Party for instance,
that “the FCP needs to educate their people, and the people of BC that they can govern
the province,” and Heather Stilwell remarked one of the biggest disadvantages the
party faces is that “people don’t take you seriously ... we will have to get ourselves
organized enough as a real political party so that people outside of the social movement
will consider us as capable to govern.” Meeting the organizational challenges that a
neophyte party like the FCP are confronting is a matter of developing this type of
political respectability. As shown in Chapters Two and Three, the FCP are burdened in
this regard by a lack of financial resources, political expertise, comprehensive policy
development and vibrant candidates with political ambition.19 Chapter Two also
highlighted the importance to a new party of charismatic, politically recognizable
figures with Bill Vander Zalm’s period of involvement with the FCP.20 Gagnon and
Tanguay note the importance of leadership to a new party when they write that “the
success of minor parties, once formed, will depend in no small measure on the quality of
their leadership and the attractiveness of their candidates” (1996:127). Many of the FCP
membership also pointed to this critical variable for the potential of the party. One
founding member of the party believed that to overcome many of the obstacles faced by a small party like the FCP required

"A really charismatic leader, some sort that can really overcome these barriers and really seduce the media and really get up there and sway people when they spoke. I guess that would probably be the big break that we would need."

As Gagnon and Tanguay further suggest, attractive, articulate and personable candidates are also vital to developing a small party’s political legitimacy. From the fourteen candidates the FCP ran during the 1996 provincial election in BC, it was West Vancouver-Capilano candidate Jim Kelly that was consistently pointed to by Lower Mainland members as the ideal type of candidate the party should be putting forward. Personable, handsome, and articulate, he was the only candidate besides Heather Stilwell that received mainstream television and newspaper attention. Other FCP candidates that ran in the election received less favourable evaluations from local members. Of one candidate, members commented that “he was a funny little guy,” “he was a sacrificial lamb ... he was just tongue tied.” Other candidates were also regarded as detrimental to the image of the party as legitimate and serious because of the overtly controversial tactics and the apparent lack of thorough understanding of party principles they demonstrated during the election. The potential harm such candidates could do to the party image was recognized by members with their common belief that candidates need to be selected with care. The importance of running a full slate of seventy-five candidates (one in each provincial riding) was also identified by members as important to the image of the party as a capable alternative, but far and away the most important image members felt the party must project is that of youth. Again, Jim Kelly was pointed to by those who knew the candidate as offering the ideal profile. One thing the party membership is acutely aware of is the danger of projecting an image, as
one member put it, "as a bunch of little old ladies in running shoes who couldn't have a baby even if they wanted to." Another member said

"The last thing we need is men and women my age running for families under this label because people will say 'oh well, that was in the old days.' You need young men and women acting out their beliefs and saying, 'yes, this is the way to go'."

This suggests that a belief exists whereby selecting quality candidates, developing or acquiring political expertise, and attempting to attract a charismatic, committed leader, might enable new and small parties like the FCP to move towards dealing with many of the organizational challenges that can otherwise limit the development of their image as a credible political alternative. Further, without this image, attracting votes might be difficult because as Kornberg et. al. note, "voters must be presented with authentic choices" (1982:110), and this authenticity is founded on a politically mature party organization and all its external trappings.

In terms of systemic obstacles faced by small parties, the benefit of organizational expertise in the area of party administration might help mitigate the restrictive effects of Election Act regulations but meeting the challenges posed by a first-past-the-post electoral system will likely require modifications to the system itself. Institutional resistance to small parties is well acknowledged as a significant limiting factor to their development and potential influence (Lyon, 1992, 1996; Chandler and Siaroff, 1991; Covell, 1991; Paltiel, 1996). Lyon writes that

"All the 'natural' advantages, except novelty, flow to the established parties, and they use the power of the state to restrict what they describe as a 'dangerous proliferation' of parties" (1992:132).

Similarly, Covell, as well as Chandler and Siaroff, share the view that

"Most political systems regulate the entry of new parties into the political system and attempt to minimize their electoral impact" (Covell, 1991:102).
“In Westminster systems such as Britain and Canada, minor parties without regional strongholds are systematically disadvantaged and thus rarely gain any significant influence” (Chandler and Siaroff, 1991:214).

In British Columbia, institutional yokes for small parties are believed to be provided by the Elections Act. One FCP member noted that “the trouble with our electoral system is that it isn’t built for more than two parties ... the Elections Act is designed for two parties.” Mrs. Toth reflects the sentiments of a few FCP members when she says

“The [Elections] Act is terrible. It discourages any small party from forming. We decided if you follow the rules they can’t kick you out, but if you once slip up, well, then they say you are gone. ... I think they want a lot more control, they want to know who is funding you and it works for us as well as for anybody else. Small parties like us might say ‘don’t bother, it isn’t worth the hassle’.”

While there is agreement among the executive and general membership that the Elections Act is problematic, surprisingly, most FCP members do not feel that its design is a deliberate attempt to eliminate small parties, but rather that this effect is an inadvertent result of attempting to make cadre parties more accountable. Similarly, Paltiel (1996) argues that at the federal level, in attempts to increase accountability of major parties, Election Act regulations have further professionalized the party process and that “there is little evidence that minor parties or independent candidates have benefitted from the controls” (1996:418). Such professionalization works to the distinct disadvantage of small parties who have neither the expertise nor the resources to hire consultants to manage the intricacies of Election Acts. Full credit for the FCP’s survival has been given to Mrs. Toth by the membership for her tenacious attention to party requirements the Act demands. As she says, “I am particularly careful about filing everything on time, and doing everything the way it is supposed to be, so they can never use that as an excuse for getting rid of the party.”
The Act is such a contentious matter that the party identifies their ability to adhere to its demanding regulations as one of their few successes. In a recent newsletter it was reported that

"There is no doubt in the minds of most non-socialist party organizers that this Act was meant to rid British Columbia once and for all of small political parties like ours who split the vote and make polling predictions inaccurate and useless ... How the NDP would love to get rid of the Greens who take votes away from them ... You will be happy to know that every one of our fourteen candidates, all eighteen constituencies and the Party met the requirements and survived to fight another day! We've learned to avoid the traps they set and we've deciphered their deliberately-confusing accounting system."23

After two provincial parties were de-registered and forty-one candidates faced a ban for failing to submit the appropriate documentation following the 1996 provincial election, calls have arisen for changes to the Elections Act.24 To this end, meetings sponsored by the Liberal Party have begun and have been attended by representatives of provincial parties to develop a package of Election Act reforms aimed at making compliance to the Act easier.25 Echoing a sentiment of the FCP executive, BC Green Party Leader Stuart Parker was quoted in the Vancouver Sun as saying "A lot of our energy is going into coping with the act. The act has already taken out two parties so we're taking this very seriously. ... We need some changes in the act so that small parties can get on with their activities."26

Where a small party's tactics for managing and combatting Election Acts are predominantly a matter of organizational survival, minor party support for alterations to Canada and British Columbia's first-past-the-post electoral system is more about increasing organizational potency. The history of small parties in Canadian politics is also a history of attempts to increase the democratic potential of the Westminster system and provide minor parties with increased opportunities to become viable representative
bodies. As Lyon wryly notes, “writing about parliamentary reform is an academic growth industry,” and one that has documented reform initiatives from the United Farmers of Alberta and the CCF in the early 1900s to the current efforts of the Greens and the FCP in British Columbia (1984:123; Whitehorn, 1991). Minor party support for reform is a product of the systemic realities that Canada’s “plurality system most often overrepresents, sometimes significantly, the party with the most votes” and it disadvantages parties with diffuse geographic support (Seidle, 1996:283). These factors have the effect of heavily favouring strong, cadre parties and systemically marginalizing small parties like the Greens and the FCP. Of the FCP’s potential under British Columbia’s current system, one long involved member remarked that to get credibility “we have to change the system - we do have enough votes to get people in but with this system we have to change people’s attitudes [about voting]. Under this system, I don’t see the party growing very much.” About the current system in general, another member remarked that “right now you could have it so that more than fifty per cent of the people don’t have a voice in government ... I don’t think that’s very good democracy, certainly not in an ancient Greek way.”

The preferred alternative to a first-past-the-post system for the FCP is some form of proportional representation system akin to Germany’s Hare quota (or Neimeyer method) (Seidle, 1996) or the Single Transferable Vote system used in British Columbia during the 1952 and 1953 provincial elections. The postwar German electoral system “has widely been judged to be ... a well-operating democratic system,” but it must be remarked that this system and German parties in general are also currently faced with crises of representation and legitimacy similar to those found in Canada (Chandler and Siaroff, 1991:192; Braunthal, 1996). Nonetheless, among members of the Family
Coalition Party, there is a belief that such a system would benefit the party. Gerhard Herwig, a long time FCP executive and candidate in the 1996 provincial election, commented that

"In Germany with mixed person representation, there's the five per cent clause - if you had greater than five per cent then you'd have representation. The Greens did jump that hurdle. If this many get behind a movement or issue, there should be a voice in the legislature. The FCP should have this as should others. It could make for better government."

Another active party member remarked that proportional representation would help because "tons of people say I'd vote FCP if they could win," but under the current system this is a faint hope. Even Bill Vander Zalm, the former Socred leader, supports the idea of adopting a more representative electoral system:

"Hopefully one day in this country when we move to a more democratic approach, including perhaps such things as proportional representation, we will see more views represented on our Legislature - including anything from the Communists through to FCP through to Green through to Labour, Business or whatever. I think it is the healthiest type of system. Ours is very unhealthy ... If we had proportional representation then every view could be reasonably represented within the voice of government or within the legislature and the [FCP] results would be very, very different."  

After the 1996 provincial election in British Columbia and the 1997 federal election, debate favouring electoral reform has increased in the popular media and the activities of the Campaign for Electoral Reform (CFER) have accelerated. CFER operates federally and formed provincially in British Columbia in April, 1997 with the principal objective of promoting a more democratic and representative electoral system and pressuring the government to accommodate such demands. Whether these most recent efforts at providing small parties with an opportunity to overcome this systemic hurdle prove effective remains speculative. Duverger argues that such changes provide the largest advantage to those parties currently in the most disadvantaged position, but
“nevertheless this effect of proportional representation is very limited; on the whole P.R. maintains almost intact the structure of parties existing at the time of its appearance” (1959:252). And Lyon notes that elites “will support only those institutional changes which will leave the party/parliamentary system fundamentally intact” (Lyon, 1984:118), which was Bill Vander Zalm’s observation when he commented about his Recall and Initiative Act effort that he could “foresee no change coming within the system as long as the politicians, particularly those governing, had the final say. They would always tend to protect the status quo because they were the status quo.” These observations imply that even with some variation of proportional representation, small parties like the FCP would still be faced with an enormous systemic hurdle to overcome.

There also exist structural hurdles that small parties must not only face, but have virtually no power to control. Traditional political and socioeconomic cleavages play a significant role in a party’s fortune and unless new parties align themselves with these cleavages, their potential remains extremely limited. Federally, Jane Jenson (1976) argues that Canadian political parties have traditionally run cleavage lines based on language, religion and region, a differentiation based on ascriptive rather than class-based economic cleavages. The most prominent of these cleavages in the past has been that between Catholics and non-Catholics, with Catholics strongly favouring support for the Liberal party (Jenson, 1976; McMenemy and Winn, 1976; Irvine, 1991). However, Irvine (1991) argues that religion is no longer a relevant cleavage in Canadian politics and Johnston observes that

“The religious disputes that have divided the major parties, over schooling or property, are ancient and are usually regarded as settled. The religious questions that presently divide Canadians, over abortion for instance, cut across parties” (1991:93).

As early as 1959, Duverger observed that “parties based on religious minorities are gradually disappearing in Western countries, where religion has ceased to play an important part in the life of the state” (1959:292). This is a trend Meisel recognizes in Canada where “religion has been largely (although not completely) privatized and removed from public discourse” (1991:199), and as Bill Vander Zalm observes about British Columbia:

“Short term, particularly, and perhaps long term as well, a party whose strength and future growth is dependent on Christian principles has troubles. This is no longer a predominantly Christian province ... it is agnostic, they have over thirty per cent of the population, the non-religious, and we have an ever increasing influence of people that are either Sikh, Hindu, and Buddhist, so if your whole thrust is based upon being Christian, you’re rowing against some heavy water. It’s going to be an uphill battle.”

For a party like the FCP, the absence of a marked political cleavage based on Christianity, Catholicism, or ‘traditional values,’ coupled with a scattering of sociomoral issues like abortion among all the parties and a general decline in the importance of religion in politics, leaves them without a natural structural cleavage to exploit for electoral support. Additionally, the sharp bipolar cleavage between left and right that has characterised British Columbia politics since the turn of the century is also problematic for the party (Dyck, 1991; Galbraith, 1976; Blake, 1996). Cairns and Wong observe that “The CCF-NDP’s consistent capacity to deliver one third of the vote posed a serious challenge to political and economic elites on the old party side, and thus generated powerful pressures to simplify and consolidate the non-left” (1991:484). These pressures continue to exist for the right in the province, and are currently manifest in the efforts of the Enterprise League of British Columbia to develop a single, united conservative and free enterprise party from current existing ones.31 For the FCP, the presence of such a dominant cleavage may prevent potential supporters from
casting a vote for the FCP because of an elevated concern over the importance of defeating the NDP and returning a right-wing party to power. Bill Vander Zalm sees the practice of negative voting as a systemically created feature of contemporary politics, since “realistically, within the system as we know it today, people tend to vote more against something than for something.” That religious conservatives were engaged in this kind of negative voting practice was certainly the opinion of some FCP members, among them, Mrs. Toth:

“People were so scared the NDP would win ... I don’t know what the logic is behind it. Its a sort of silly way of voting strategically, because if you have principles and you believe in them, then if you can’t vote for them, you might as well not vote at all.”

Overall, there is little a small party can do to increase or diminish the importance of structural cleavages within their polity, but the presence or absence of particular cleavages can dramatically hinder the potential growth of a new party. For the FCP, this is a pronounced obstacle and not one that appears surmountable in the near future; the halcyon days of the Socreds in Alberta and BC are long past, relegated to a political memory that can do no more than draw a fond smile across the faces of religious conservatives.

Finally, a number of cultural trends, beliefs and practices must also be overcome if new parties are to realize their potential. The predominant tactic in this effort is engaging in a concerted commitment to politically educate the electorate about the importance of political participation, small parties as viable bodies of political representation, and the unrepresentative, dysfunctional aspects of cadre parties. In particular, there exist four areas in which cultural attitudes act as a barrier to the growth of new parties. Arguably the most important among these are the limited levels of political participation among Canadian citizens because as Kornberg et. al. argue, they
“tend to be deferential to the "betters" and are content to be spectators rather than players in the "political game"" (1982:56). This tendency towards deference is likely a product of the inherent conservatism in Canada’s political system and tailings of a Burkean attitude that fuels a “contemporary opposition to increasing direct participation” which as Mishler notes, “stems from elitists’ observations that few citizens possess these qualities and their fears that increased participation would, as a consequence, jeopardize the quality of democratic life” (1979:109). In general, the FCP membership think, as one member put it, “Canadians are a little more apathetic than others ... more laid back, they don’t want confrontation, they’re very much ‘live and let live’.” Jim Sclater of Focus on the Family described the attitude towards politics in Canada this way: “Here in Canada the complacency issue - Canadians are a very deferential bunch and believe that normally, authority should be deferred to rather than challenged.” Such attitudes of course, favour the larger more established parties and limit the potential of small parties to generate sympathetic political activism.

Long standing party loyalties are another obstacle new parties face in their attempt to build a credible membership base. Party loyalties and the political cleavages that sustain them are largely a product of political socialization within the family (Kornberg et. al., 1982; Johnston, 1991). As Kari Simpson of the Citizens Research Institute put it while contemplating the FCP’s lack of electoral support, “you know - if you’re born a Liberal, you die a Liberal.” This intractable trend became quickly apparent to the Toths in the early formative days of the FCP. Through their membership recruitment efforts they discovered that while religious conservative members of the Social Credit party supported the Toths efforts, they refused to leave the Socreds and join the newly formed FCP. Again, cadre parties enjoy the benefit of this situation - to
whatever extent Canadians do participate in the political process, they tend to do so through the party their parents supported.

A third cultural obstacle facing new or small parties is the popular attitude towards parties in general. Levels of political alienation, trust, and efficacy all play a mitigating role in the development potential of a minor party (Gagnon and Tanguay, 1996). British Columbia's political culture for example, reflects support for populism, moralistic trends, a belief that individuals can make a political difference, and suspicion of traditional political elites (Blake, 1996). At first glance, this might appear to be a climate conducive to a party like the FCP, but as Blake notes, it is a political culture "crosscut by other value conflicts that have given 'new politics' issues, such as feminism and environmentalism, a prominent place on the political agenda" (1996:3). It also needs to be recognized that new or small parties are still political parties and as such still subject to the cynical, distrustful assessments of a disenchanted electorate; having roots in a social movement, or arising to give principled representation to a social grievance, does not provide immunity from the criticisms of a disenchanted political culture for an organization with party form.

Last, cultural attitudes towards the vote prevent small parties from gaining political legitimacy at the ballot box. Part of the problem of the vote for parties like the FCP is that it is popularly conceived as an instrument not only for political representation, but political victory. Casting a vote for a cadre party that can viably compete for the right to become the government is popularly thought of as a potentially 'winning' vote and therefore a preferred option for the voter. In the case of the Family Coalition Party, this results in votes being cast for the most viable party with the closest ideological orientation to the FCP. A few FCP members for instance, reported that they...
fully supported the party's ideals, and intend to continue their membership, but would (and did) vote for the Reform Party of BC in an election because it was a party that had a better chance of winning. In a political culture that stresses victory and socioeconomic representation as the critical features of the vote, small parties trying to gain a political foothold for their cause through the electoral process suffer a serious disadvantage.

A vote for a small party in a culture where such opinions dominate can only be viewed as wasted, and the FCP executive identified this *wasted vote syndrome* as the single most debilitating factor in their electoral efforts. Unremarkably, FCP members unanimously share Bill Vander Zalm's position that "I personally don't feel there is such a thing as a wasted vote. There is a message in the results." Mrs. Toth feels that "our votes are as individual as our name. If you can't cast your vote with integrity then you have lost your access to the democratic process." Bill Stilwell of the FCP summed up the wasted vote issue this way:

"The vote, the way I see it is, 'who did you vote for in the last election, Liberal? Well then you wasted your vote, you didn't get elected, the NDP got elected. So you still wasted your vote, you may as well have voted for us ... you voted for them because they might get elected - because they had a better chance of getting elected. In other words, you took the lesser of two evils. I can address it from a practical point in that unless you vote for the winning candidate, you waste your vote."

For small parties to increase their electoral potential, they must confront the cultural challenge posed by the wasted vote syndrome and the other aspects of the problem of the vote. If the vote continues to be conceptualized in terms of purely competitive and economic variables, then it seems unlikely that small parties will enjoy much success.

Unlike the structural obstacles facing small parties, these cultural challenges could possibly be addressed through political education. As Mishler (1979) points out, Canadians are not born with political predispositions. Political attitudes and beliefs
which govern a citizen’s political actions are the products of political socialization and education. Mishler even argues that

“Far from being an inevitable consequence of man’s inherent apathy, the oligarchic structure of political activity in Canada appears to be learned - the result of a combination of individual experiences and historical events” (1979:108).

Similarly, Eagles (1996) argues that citizens need opportunities to participate directly in the decision-making processes in a variety of non-political settings if they are to increase their participation levels in the formal political process. Implied here is a recognition that people’s belief in their ability to exert a political influence is something that can be learned and developed through alternate forms of political involvement. For small parties like the Greens, the FCP and others, these are important points. If they are able to develop and engage in effective programs of political education that focus on changing common cultural beliefs about, and practices around, the political process, they may be able to increase their own potential and expose some of the myths that protect current electoral practices and shroud the unrepresentative nature of mainstream parties.

The organizational, systemic, structural and cultural obstacles that new and small parties confront all act as barriers to electoral success. They are formidable challenges, in some cases uncontrollable by parties, and the probability that parties like the FCP will overcome them and enjoy electoral success seems remote given the history of minor parties in Canada. While the NDP has become a major party in Canadian politics for instance, Thorburn (1991) points out that the party is the product of a merger between the CCF and the Canadian labour movement as the CCF sought to escape the obstacles presented to them by a narrow base of support and limited resources. Further, the Green Party, existent federally since 1983, has yet to gain any parliamentary
standing in Ottawa. In British Columbia, only Gordon Wilson’s Progressive Democratic Alliance has had any electoral success among the minor parties in the province, and it must be noted that the PDA’s success is due solely to Wilson’s populist standing in the province and his previous work in the provincial Liberal party.32

With the electoral potential of minor parties appearing so bleak, their value must lie elsewhere. The crisis of representation and legitimacy being experienced by mainstream parties, a cynical and disenchanted electorate, demands for electoral reform, and diminishing voter turnout are all symptoms of an ailing Canadian political system. However it is the continued presence of minor parties in the system that offers hope for democratic representation and participation in Canada. The true potential of minor parties does not rest in their chances of victory during an election, but rather in their mere presence on the ballot ticket at election time. The presence of the FCP, the Greens, the Libertarians and the Natural Law party validates and strengthens Canada’s parliamentary system. Party goals of raising awareness about social grievances their members have, educating the general public about Canadian democracy’s need for citizen involvement, manifestly increasing direct participation in the political process, and injecting principled representation into politics - all of these minor party actions increase the democratic character of Canada, and it is in this ability that the true potential of minor parties resides.

For the Family Coalition Party, this is a conclusion that offers limited hope for electoral success in the near future. Like other minor parties though, the FCP’s potential lies in its unique structural position within its electoral system. Having a party form creates for the FCP a politico-spatial niche from which it has the potential to give formal political voice to the Pro-family movement. Raising awareness, educating the public
about the issues and attempting to influence the policies of the government and other parties are all viable and legitimate activities for a political party. The FCP believes that if they can use their party status for these purposes, the party might be an invaluable aid to the pro-family movement in BC. At the same time, the FCP think that if they are able to meet the overwhelming challenges confronting them in the current electoral climate, then the party may enjoy more success at the ballot box (as might other minor parties who put forth similar efforts); but they know that without a tremendous educational effort put forward by its executives, candidates, and members, this seems unlikely. Compounding this bleak prognosis for the FCP are the additional challenges its origins have presented for the party.

The FCP, like many minor parties, arose as a result of the unrepresentative system that their mere presence is helping to rejuvenate, and it is this presence which has given a formal political party voice to the social grievances of broader pro-family movement in British Columbia. This chapter has made clear a number of challenges that the Family Coalition Party, like any small party, must face in the electoral arena, but unlike fragment parties or flash parties with strong regional bases of support, parties with a movement origin like the FCP must also confront a number of challenges unique to their nature. The most prominent of these is the internal tension that arises from the use of a party form to pursue movement functions. This is a tactical decision which forces an organization's activists to not only develop political strategies that balance commitment to their movement's principles with the demands of party politics, but also resist the powerful lure of the spoils that acquiring political power can bring. The next chapter examines the problems such tensions create for a party/movement like
the FCP, as well as several other challenges that are either created or compounded by fusing party form with movement function.
Chapter 6

The Tensions of Fusion in a Party/Movement

At this juncture, it has become evident that the Family Coalition Party of BC can be understood as both a social movement and a political party, but this is a situation that demands a critical caveat. While it is analytically useful to separate and distinguish these traits of the FCP, it also produces an artificial distinction between them. No different than a child born of two parents, the FCP and similar organizations embody characteristics of both social movement and political party, but ultimately stand as unique entities, their true nature only fully understandable as that of party/movements (rather than movement parties). Blending party form and movement function is largely an act of political movement fusion, one that creates a body of form/function and that is identifiable in this case as the party/movement known as the Family Coalition Party. It is an identity that carries with it some unique challenges, and the purpose of this chapter is to identify some of the tensions that emerge from the creation of a political organization that exhibits such a party/movement duality.

Like the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (although not the current NDP), the Greens, and the Feminist parties before it, the FCP is discovering that a byproduct of fusing party form and movement function is a number of unique tensions that go beyond the challenges already faced by social movement organizations (SMOs) and minor political parties. These tensions of fusion retard the development of party/movements in two main ways: First, their hybrid identity creates for party/movements a number of uniques problems that simple movement organizations
or political parties do not experience. Second, their party/movement duality exacerbates or *compounds* difficulties that exist for SMOs and minor political parties and are common to both organizational types. SMOs and minor parties for instance, both face similar resource mobilization obstacles with limited financial and human resources at their disposal. Party/movements like the FCP have compounded this dilemma with their strategic decision to commingle form and function. In some respects, they have confronted themselves with the worst retardants of both organizational types - not accepted by conscience constituents or potential supporters as either a legitimate movement or political party, the party/movement doubly constrains its resource mobilization efficacy by using a party form to create political opportunities for its movement functions. Conscience constituents of the Pro-family movement become reticent to support what they view as an unviable SMO because of the FCP’s party status, and potential electoral supporters withhold their involvement and vote because of the organization’s narrow issue focus and lack of governmental viability.

Beyond compounding overlapping difficulties, party/movements must manage a number of organizational, institutional and cultural challenges that single identity movements or minor parties do not face. Organizational challenges, which can be found in a party/movement’s risk of compromising movement principle for electoral fortune and resisting the organizational drift to professionalism and bureaucratization among other things, are generally created by the decision to fuse party form with movement function. Institutional and cultural challenges on the other hand, tend not to be so much created by this act but awoken by the presence of a party/movement. Dormant until an organization like the FCP appears on the political landscape, these latent challenges become manifest in the political system’s resistance to the institutional
presence of party/movements as well as in the popular or cultural beliefs citizen's appear to hold about the roles of social movements and political parties in a democratic society. For instance, systemic electoral problems, akin to those identified in Chapter Five, emerge in a magnified form for a party/movement as do the problems of managing the media. Culturally, potential party/movement adherents seem not to have identified elections or voting as a legitimate opportunity for engaging in social movement action that is focused on quality of life issues. That is, attitudes regarding the roles and functions of political parties, social movements and the political system all further exacerbate the challenges that beset a party/movement organization. While some of these difficulties may present the party/movement with a greater challenge than others, in particular the organizational tensions that accompany their duality, they are all in concert, constructing an additional wall that organizations like the FCP must hurdle if they are to effect the sociopolitical changes they are seeking.

**Four Ways of Relating Parties and Movements**

Before considering the specific tensions of fusion to which party/movements must attend, it is worth commenting on the nomenclature distinction between a movement party and a party/movement as well as the approaches that have been used in analyzing and describing the relationship between social movements and political parties. That the parties and movements experience an intimate connection is broadly recognized by political scientists and movement scholars alike, from Susan Phillips (1996) discussion on the systemic relationship between movements and parties to Herbert Kitschelt’s (1989) study on the rise of left-libertarian parties in Europe. As will become apparent in the upcoming discussion on the organizational obstacles faced by
party/movements like the FCP, this research resonates more with Kitschelt’s study, butPhillips’ work provides a useful opportunity to appreciate how party and movementrelations are commonly approached.

The nomenclature distinction between the various descriptors of minor partiesand that of a party/movement is subtle but critical to the proper conceptualization ofthe FCP and similar organizations. In Chapter Five it was remarked that small politicalparties are categorized using a number of different adjectives that reflect their origins ortrajectories. To recall, McMenemy (1976) categorizes small parties as eitherpredominantly fragment or movement and Duverger (1959) uses the terms personalityparty or permanent minority party in an equivalent demarcation. Both categorical setstake as their primary distinction the origins of the parties - fragment or personalityparties originate from within an existing parliamentary party or setting, whilemovement or permanent minority parties have an extra-parliamentary genesis based onan organized social movement or loosely articulated social grievance. Carty (1991) onthe other hand, uses the term ‘flash party’ to capture the rapid ascendancy of parties likethe Reform Party of Canada or the Bloc Quebécois, both of which have very strong basesof regional support and have been able to turn this into significant parliamentaryrepresentation.1 These are apt political categorizations but when using them to classifyparties, sensitivity to the historical moment must guide the process. For instance,Reform and the Bloc may well be ‘flash parties’ at this particular juncture in Canadianpolitical history, but should they maintain their strong showing over a longer period oftime, such a classification will come to refer exclusively to their original trajectory,rather than their current status. It would eventually become inaccurate to describe a
party that has demonstrated consistent success at the polls over a period of time as a ‘flash party.’

The importance of this point to the Family Coalition Party lies in a similar argument about the CCF/NDP. It is common to refer to the CCF/NDP as a movement party and this is not a wholly incorrect description. At the time of the CCF’s organizational conference in Calgary in 1932 and its founding convention in Regina the following year in which its “Regina Manifesto” was adopted (Penner, 1996), the party was intending to function as much as a movement as a political party. Young makes this point clearly in his analysis of the CCF:

“The CCF began in the West because it was there that the roots of protest had grown strong in the soil of discontent, that the isolation of the frontier, the malevolence of nature and eastern business were most keenly felt, driving the people to build their own organic society, expressing values foreign to industrial capitalism ... Its approach was that of a movement, predicated on the assumption that there is universal agreement on the cause and cure of sin and that if such agreement is lacking it is the result of ignorance which education will remedy” (1992:219, 221, emphasis added).

While it is not inaccurate to describe the CCF as a movement party then, greater exactitude is achieved by understanding the CCF more properly as a party/movement, as Young does in his closing comments: “As the argument is pursued it is increasingly difficult to disentangle one from the other because, of course, the CCF was a party-movement” (1992:234, emphasis in the original). This does not strip the term “movement party” of its utility, but rather narrows it in regards to the CCF/NDP as a historical descriptive of the origins of the NDP. After the NDP merged with the Canadian Labour Congress around 1960 to, as Thorburn suggests, “escape the trap of inadequate campaign funds and too-narrow a base,” it began to drift away from its original movement functions towards a more electorally focused party (Penner, 1996; Thorburn, 1991). While the NDP then, may be understood as a movement party in a historical
sense (and arguably may retain a minimal level of movement function today) it is no longer the party/movement its founding organization was, since the CCF was only a movement party at its origin; during its existence the CCF was actually a party/movement. As Chapter Two made clear, the FCP can be appreciated in a precisely similar fashion: it arose from the disgruntlement and frustration of Pro-family activists in BC and its activists are emphasizing education and consciousness raising movement functions while secondarily attempting to gain formal standing as a political party in British Columbia.

**Traditional, Derivation, Complementary and Fusionist Perspectives**

Typical relational treatments of political parties and social movements reflect an organizational separation similar to the linguistic separation found in the term 'movement party.' For sound analytical reasons, the dynamics between parties and movements are predominantly examined by both political scientists and movement scholars alike as a product of the complementarities and differences between these two separate organizational forms. Depending on the organizational focus of the research in question (i.e.: a social movement), the alternate organization (i.e.: political parties) is treated as a peripheral body that exerts a force of varying degrees of importance on the fortunes and strategies of the principal organization under study. This has provided important insights and advances to the understanding of the exogenous relations between movements and parties, but it is an inadequate approach with respect to understanding organizations like the FCP and the CCF as party/movements. Susan Phillips (1996) has roughly taxonomized three predominant ways in which analysts tend to approach relational studies on movements and parties by identifying what can
be conceptualized as traditional, derivation and complementary perspectives on this problem. However a fourth perspective, such as that found in the work of Young (1992) on the CCF and Kitschelt (1989; 1990) on left-libertarian parties in Europe, is vital to a proper appreciation of the full relational impact of fusing party form with movement function and a more informed understanding of party/movements. By adopting such an analytical position, the tensions peculiar to a party/movement can be exposed by this fourth perspective, which can be considered a fusionist view.

The first, and arguably most dominant of these perspectives on the relation between movements and parties is the traditional or competitive one. "The traditional view," writes Phillips, "is that interest groups and social movements are in competition with parties, the consequence of which is usually seen to be destructive to the organizational base and representative capacities of parties" (1996:440). The growth of social movement organizations, in particular the New Social Movements (NSMs), from the 1960s onwards, has been identified by political scientists as well as the Lortie commission examining electoral reform as contributing to the crisis of legitimation being experienced by political parties (Meisel, 1991; RCERP, 1991). In Chapter Five, the argument was presented that parties have failed to accommodate the growing diversity of issues in post-industrial societies and consequently faith in their capacity for representational efficacy among the public in general and political activists in particular has waned. Whether the NSMs are the cause or effect of this situation is debatable, but the Lortie commission clearly sees them as the cause:

"... the rapid rise of organized interest group politics during the 1970s and 1980s. This development further undermined the credibility of political parties as primary vehicles for articulating and promoting political ideas and interests. ... As a result, many citizens, especially large numbers of well-educated activists, have eschewed partisan politics, and thus political parties, as mechanisms of dimensions of this phenomenon are
critical. ... many of these activists express, explicitly or implicitly, strong anti-party attitudes. The legitimacy of political parties as primary political organizations is questioned in ways reminiscent of earlier populist movements such as the Progressives” (RCERPF, 1991, 1:222-23).

Implicit in this view is that democratic representation and articulation of citizenry issues and concerns are being usurped by movements with strategies of resource mobilization and legitimation that are at least in part founded on the public denouncement of political parties. “The implication,” as Phillips points out, “is that groups and movements are in direct competition with parties for representation of interests, and for the opportunity to define the nature of the political and to set the policy agenda” (1996:443).

This antagonistic attitude of movements towards parties has been commented on by other political scientists and been broadened to include various minor parties of protest that were born out of social movements (Covell, 1991; Duverger, 1959; Pinard, 1973). Duverger argues, for example, that permanent minority parties, unlike personality minor parties, tend to be “against the government” and Covell’s comment that movements are “often hostile to political parties in general and to the traditional political parties of their system in particular” (1959:293; 1991:88). Of particular interest is Pinard’s comment about “radical movements” that

“Believe that none of the existing parties can be counted on. In such situations, what is abandoned in favour of a new party is not a weak traditional opposition party, but all existing parties. Indeed, the latter are not only abandoned, they are positively rejected as unsuitable channels for the expression of a rather precise set of concerns. ... As examples of radical movements, one could mention the following parties during their “real” phase: the Farmers and Labour movements and the Progressives of the 1920s and the CCF/NDP” (1973:442).

The importance of Pinard’s argument is the identification of an antagonistic and competitive climate between parties and movements, but also of the strategic adoption
of party form to perform movement functions during the ""real"" phase (i.e.: party/movement) of organizations like the CCF/NDP; none of these relational perspectives on social movement and political parties it seems, exists to the exclusion of the others.

Research focusing on social movements as the primary organization of study also reflects this competitive view of parties and movements. In criticizing the decision of the Canadian Green Party to form a political party, Helga Hoffman and David Orton write that "We believe that building a green movement in Canada was seriously undermined by the formation of the federal green party and also the formation of green provincial parties in B.C. and Ontario" (1989:21). In their opinion, such a tactical decision undermines the democratizing potential of a social movement like the Greens by re-confirming current institutional arrangements as the only legitimate repositories of political power in Canada. This perspective appears to only have room for a combatant relationship between the two forms. In less dogmatic fashion, but nonetheless utilizing a competitive perspective, Dick Flacks writes about the future of the American left that

"Movements rather than parties are more likely to be vehicles of popular voice. Because the party by its nature is set up to represent, it reinforces the passivity of most members ... Movements, on the other hand, ... are the closest thing we have, in practice, to authentic popular participation ... social movements, representing a range of distinct interests and identities, constitute the primary vehicle of democratic expression" (1990:41-42).

Flacks concentrates his analysis upon the democratizing potential of parties and movements, coming to his conclusions by opposing them such that their democratic strengths and weaknesses can be evaluated in order to determine organizational superiority. Like others, Flacks has found it useful to adopt a competitive perspective
on the relations between parties and movements which fosters a critical appreciation of this complex nexus.

In considering the second way of viewing the party-movement relationship, Phillips writes of the derivation perspective that it "recognizes there is often a direct connection between social movements and parties because it is not uncommon for a movement to develop the apparatus to contest elections" (1996:441). The Family Coalition Party, the Christian Heritage Party, the Feminist Party of Canada and the Green Party (both in Canada and West Germany for instance) are all parties born out of social movements. Like the Progressives, the CCF/NDP and the Social Credit League of Alberta, these parties were formed to give formal institutional and political voice to the social grievances which had catalyzed their respective movements. Asked about the relationship between political parties and social movements, all of the FCP members interviewed for this study remarked that a relationship did exist between the two. Gerhard Herwig commented that

"At the root of every party is a movement trying bring change in a certain direction. Parties probably spring from movements because there isn’t an expression in the existing political structure that brought results [for the issue of concern]."

A majority of FCP members shared Mr. Herwig’s opinion and directly connected parties and movements by commenting that many parties arise from social movements. Others noted that social movements influence existing parties by trying to have their issues adopted by various parties or the government.  

That parties like the FCP, the CCF/NDP and the Greens derive their support and owe their existence to founding social movements is broadly acknowledged by political scientists and movement scholars alike (Boggs, 1986; Braithwaite, 1996; Phillips, 1996; Penner, 1996; Thorburn, 1991; Kornberg, et. al., 1982; Heberle, 1968). Boggs for one,
writes of the German Greens that “the uniqueness of the West German Greens - and a vital source of their political strength - lies in their organic relationship to emergent popular struggles” (1986:178). Likewise, Maureen Covell (while arguably overstating the case) remarks that “another characteristic that Canadian new parties share is that they were all born out of movements” (1991:100). Of left-libertarian efforts to “develop new vehicles of political mobilization” in Europe, Kitschelt writes that “social movements represent a first step in this direction. ... Founding new parties ... constitutes a second step” (1990:184), while Young (1992) makes a parallel observation about the evolution of the CCF in Canada.

Even Hoffman and Orton, despite their opposition to the formation in 1983 of the Green party in Canada, do not dismiss this aspect of the party-movement relationship. They include, for instance, a temporal caveat in their criticism by commenting that “It is a movement that has to be built at this time, not a federal political party” (1989:21, emphasis in the original). Implicit although unacknowledged in their argument is that at some point a political party may be useful or even essential to the success of the Greens. Their criticism thus appears to be more concerned with the historical moment at which the party was formed, rather than its ultimate formation. Before contemplating the embrace of an institutional form that may undermine the Green project, the work of the movement must first, they argue, “focus on practical environmental work and develop green consciousness. ... To put forth ... some concrete green programs and policies around which the public can be mobilized” (1989:23). Their message is that a radical democratic agenda of ecologically centred politics must first be solidified by the work of the movement within civil society before a party form can be contemplated. Without these foundations, any party arising from a movement
runs a tremendous risk of ideological compromise and self-co-opting its strategic
initiatives, but once such groundwork is laid, the possibility of utilizing a party form to
achieve the movement's goals may become more palatable.

Phillips draws the relationship of parties and movements even closer with her
third view of the dynamic between movements and parties. By regarding the two as
complementary, she argues that both organizational forms, rather than being regarded
as solely engaged in the adversarial tactics of competition, can be seen as working
collaboratively to re-invigorate Canadian democracy. The "new politics" of the NSMs,
as Phillips describes them, with their intent to make politically normative the concerns
of a "post-material" value system have, she argues, transformed political engagement
and representation in three important ways. By emphasizing a "politics of difference"
that promotes "inclusiveness, democratization, and cultural relativity rather than
homogeneity or sameness," the NSMs have forced a reappraisal and expansion of what
is constituted as the political (1996:455). They have also stretched the realm of what is
accepted as legitimate political space by pointing out the simultaneously localizing and
globalizing effects of governmental decisions, an effort that also increases and redefines
what may be considered a site of political engagement. In particular, Phillips notes that
places "once considered private institutions - the family, Church, workplace, and
classroom - [are] sites in which the struggle for equality and social justice must take
place" (1996:456). Finally, all these trajectories have demanded, argues Phillips, an
alteration in the "style of representation of politics" (ibid.). That is, "the politics of
difference necessarily entails a shift of emphasis from what is being represented ... to
how it is being represented and who is making the claim" (ibid.).
In this regard and with their activities, the NSMs have in some sense forcibly constructed the need for a complementary perspective. By altering the political landscape in such a dramatic and untraditional way, social movements have made it increasingly difficult for parties to engage in "politics as usual." This means parties may no longer be able to satisfactorily articulate and represent the interests of an ever-diversifying political culture like Canada's, and so may have to accede a legitimate political role to social movements. Phillips concludes that

"In balancing individual versus groups roles in democracy, parties, groups, and movements play complementary roles ... It is not possible for any one of these agents alone to renew and strengthen democracy, but [they] collectively ... hold the possibility of constructing and reinforcing a communality of citizenship while recognizing the heterogeneity of group difference" (1996:457).

In similarly forced fashion, this complementarity has been identified, albeit in a more synergistic way, in work by Galipeau (1989) and also Rohrschneider (1993). Galipeau points out that in their attempts to maintain the privileged standing and accommodate the demands required by a "politics of difference" parties have

"Stretched their brokerage capacities to include women's issues, peace issues, the demand for gay rights, a clean environment, and a host of other special and general interests. Instead of being initiators of policy debates, parties must now react to an increasing number of politicized social cleavages" (1989:418).

For the Family Coalition Party founders, this impact of movements on parties was at no point felt more sharply than when Premier Rita Johnson, as was remarked upon in Chapter Three, declared the Social Credit to be a pro-choice party. Analogously, Rohrschneider argues that "the evolution of NSMs may fundamentally alter the internal processes of political parties" (1993:168) because movement activists have a preference for non-hierarchical decision-making structures within parties. He points out that these preferences "find their most visible expression in the organizations of green or other
New Left parties” and that “there is evidence that movement proponents are increasingly represented within established Old Left parties, which in turn may alter their internal dynamic” (ibid.). While there appears to be little evidence of the latter in Canadian mainstream parties, the parties of the Greens, Feminists and FCP have all emphasized the importance of an organizational infrastructure that promotes a fully democratic decision making process (Sandilands, 1992; Hynes, 1980). Both Galipeau and Rohrschneider’s observations are grounded in an implicit conception of a complementary relation between movements and parties similar to that envisioned by Phillips. Rohrschneider’s work also provides a natural segue into the fourth perspective, demonstrating again that these perspectives are inextricably linked, separable and identifiable only by the degree of weight awarded them in a given analysis.

When Rohrschneider remarked that parties like the Greens operated according to a set of non-hierarchical decision-making principles preferred by its activist supporters, he was articulating an example of a manifest characteristic produced by fusing party form with movement function. By interpreting the relationship between movements and parties through a fusionist perspective, a number of unique traits and characteristic tensions that party/movements like the FCP and the Green share become emergent. Young’s (1992) analysis of the CCF and Herbert Kitschelt’s (1989) study of left-libertarian parties in Europe both use this last perspective to identify the tensions produced by melding form with function. If the four views presented are understood as they should be, that is, as a relational continuum, then this fusionist perspective stands as the polar opposite to the competitive view. From a position of antagonisms, the movement-party relationship has been drawn ever closer together through the
derivation and complementary perspectives, to a point of apparent paradox. The fusionist view offers the closest possible relational connection between a party and a movement, but in fact, the fusing of party form with movement function to create a party/movement produces a sociopolitical unity, effectively eliminating the relational possibility. This elimination leaves no buffer between the structural and cultural demands of the two organizational types that might otherwise be used to mitigate antagonist tensions that arise between the differing requirements of each; in other words, once the decision has been made to utilize a party form to pursue movement goals, there is no place left to hide. For example, Kitschelt (1989) argues that left-libertarian parties are confronted with resolving the tension created by a party's demand to pursue a logic of party competition versus a movement's preference for a logic of constituency representation. Kitschelt maintains that these parties pursue a strategy congruent with the latter, but this is not an easy task. By adopting a party/movement form these organizations cannot simply retreat to the idealism of their movement principles or focus electoral opportunism, they are forced to deal with the organizational, institutional and cultural tensions that accompany the strategic decision to become a party/movement.

**Organizational Tensions: Created and Compounded Effects**

Michael Markwick of the Catholic Civil Rights League summed up the Family Coalition Party's difficulties as a party/movement by succinctly remarking that "it is damn hard to be a prophet and a King at the same time ... because of the complexity of our times, they may be no more complex than the past in some ways, but you cannot be Peter and Caesar at the same time." Party/movements like the FCP have created for
themselves, beyond the problems that beset all movements and minor parties, a number of tensions unique to their identity as they attempt to meet the requirements that accompany status as a political party while maintaining the focus on, and commitment to, their movement ideals. Finding a sustainable balance between a movement’s role as educator and political agitator for the attainment of its goals and the formal and cultural expectations put upon a political party is a tricky balancing act - one that most party/movements have had little success in achieving. The slow abandonment of movement idealism by the German Greens, the Ontario Greens, and the CCF/NDP (Braunthal, 1996; Offe, 1990; Sandilands, 1992; Young, 1992) may have been a product of their failure to achieve and then sustain this balance, but it may equally have been the tremendously powerful draw towards conventional political institutionalization that entering party politics generates, which produced their organizational and ideological drift towards the political mainstream.

Compounded Effects

In addition to this force and these novel challenges, party/movements also compound for themselves problems that already exist for movements and minor parties as separate entities. The FCP must still, for instance, attend to movement issues of resource mobilization and framing as well as party issues of developing policy, campaign expertise and an image of governmental viability. By themselves, each of these issues are formidable tasks for the FCP, but efforts by party/movements must be redoubled if they are to overcome them and evolve into a viable sociopolitical actor. Concerning mobilizing resources for their cause, John McCarthy notes that

“The choices that activists make about how to more or less formally pursue change have consequences for their ability to raise material resources and mobilize dissident efforts,
as well as for society-wide legitimacy - all of which can directly affect the chances that their common efforts will succeed” (1996:141).

Financially, it was reported in Chapter Two that the Family Coalition Party subsists on the meagre funds raised through its membership dues, annual lunch and dinner banquets and the odd donation or small fund-raising effort. Most interviewees reported that while they help the party at times by donating small amounts of money, they also financially support other pro-life or pro-family organizations. This implies that the FCP must compete with other, more established organizations for conscience constituent donations. All SMOs are confronted with such competition, but in addition, the FCP must convince potential donors that their organizational form is, or has the potential to be, as efficacious for the pro-family cause as more traditionally structured SMOs. Of course, attracting religious conservative political party activists presents the FCP with the same problem but for the opposite reason. As a party/movement the FCP reflects the narrow-issue focus of the concerns of the Pro-family movement and as was argued in Chapter Five, this is a situation that makes generating political support difficult. Unable at this point to portray themselves as an organization with the potential to govern the province, the FCP is unlikely to receive financial support from those religious conservatives that do support political parties. In this way, each half of the party/movement duality dilutes the financial mobilization potential of the other, a dilemma that traces its way through all of the organizational challenges faced by the FCP.

Now, much of a party/movement’s financial prospects has to do with its ability to generate, sustain, and expand its membership base. In 1993, when Bill Vander Zalm spoke on behalf of the FCP, the party enjoyed its healthiest period of membership
growth and financial stability. One of the most oft cited laments of the FCP executive is that their restrictive financial situation is due in large part to their small membership base. The compounded challenge of broadening and strengthening this base for the FCP is the product of a logic analogous to its financial resource predicament: the various rationales individuals apply in their decision to join or become involved with a party or movement may be at odds with each other when it come to the FCP. People likely join parties and movements for different reasons, and the rationales for taking out membership in the former may dissuade potential members from joining the FCP because of its movement functions, and *visa versa*. The importance of what Boggs calls “maintaining popular mobilization” and the difficulty in achieving this for party/movements has been identified by a number of scholars about the Greens in Germany and Canada as well as various left-libertarian parties in Europe (Boggs, 1986:204; Phillips, 1996; Kitschelt, 1990). People may be willing to join a party or a movement, but the hybrid nature of the party/movement may act as a kind of psychocultural barrier that prevents people from supporting an organization like the FCP because they cannot clearly identify its goals, objectives or the potential benefits of its form.

Additionally, as Phillips argues it is often erroneously “assumed that one of the strengths of movement parties is their close interconnection with social-movement organizations” (1996:450). As an example, Steuter points out that in Canada “The pro-family network is located in the fundamentalist and Catholic churches which provide some important advantages including: a large potential support base of sympathetic, like-minded people, as well as financial support, office space, equipment and free advertising in religious publications” (1992:297).
For her subject, the pro-family movement and REAL Women, this may indeed provide some important linkages, but as comments made by the FCP executive that were recorded in Chapter Three made abundantly clear, the FCP enjoys no such advantage. The strength of the Pro-life and Pro-family movement in British Columbia has not translated into support for the FCP. Asked, for instance, if the failure of the party would matter to these movements, Mrs. Toth replied

"Not a hoot, they can't seem to take that next step. You see 6,000 people lining the street, it doesn't follow they will vote pro-life. This is what surprised me. We thought these people were looking for a place to vote, but they weren't."

At this point, the FCP knows that it is failing to construct the necessary linkages and interdependencies with the broader movement that it will need if it is going to develop into a viable political force. In their early days, the potential of the German Greens lay in their capacity to construct a system of organic links with the ecology movement (Boggs, 1986), but as Sandilands points out, the current failings of the Ontario Greens is in part due to their inability to construct such relationships (1992). Time is critical to the FCP in this regard according to Kitschelt's argument, because with its passage, party/movements drift further from their natural source of constituent support through a process he terms "organizational dealignment" (Kitschelt, 1990:180). The party executive is aware that if these links are not developed now, forging them later may become more difficult as potential membership channels dry up.

Two other factors also contribute to the compounded problems of membership recruitment faced by the FCP. First, the party has a relatively narrow-issue movement focus rather than a platform based on regional alienation. This means that unlike the Progressives of the 1920s, the CCF, the Reform Party of Canada, the Bloc Quebeçois or WAC Bennett’s Social Credit Party in British Columbia, they do not have a strong
regional base from which to draw membership support. Resurgence movements or "NSMs are not likely," as Phillips notes, "to produce parties that have a strong regional presence, [so] they are less able to use regionalism as an electoral strategy" (1996:454). Second, by adopting a party form, party/movements have inadvertently limited the opportunities they have for recruiting members. Unlike social movement organizations which can viably recruit members year round and particularly at times when their issues are enjoying a period of high public salience, party/movements have largely restricted their membership drive periods to the twenty-eight days leading up to an election. This is a restriction likely produced in part by an attitude in the public consciousness which sets aside the potential for party involvement until election times roll around. Leading up to the 1996 provincial election, the FCP was receiving a steady number of new and renewed memberships, but its current membership drive (for renewals and new members) appears to be producing limited results, similar to past off-election year efforts.

Party/movements also face a debilitating mobilization tension within their membership ranks. Young, writing about the CCF points out that "because it was a movement the CCF attracted only those who were dedicated, and who gave freely of their time and money and stayed with the party through defeat after defeat" (1992:224). And about the reasons people give for joining parties, Kornberg et. al. conclude that

"An examination of the reasons officials give for joining party organizations and the conditions under which they enter suggest that as a group they are not really committed politicians consumed with ideological fervour. Some join of their own accord. Others join to accommodate a friend or acquaintance already in a party. People who join parties as a convenience to others rarely develop intense political ambitions. However, they also do not expect to work very hard" (1982:149).
These two passages reflect the membership tension of party/movements like the FCP. If individuals join because of the party form, it may be that they are unprepared or unwilling to put forth the effort needed for the organization to perform its movement function. In this case, the difficulties faced by any SMO in soliciting membership help becomes compounded and it may be that only those dedicated to the movement aspect of the party/movement can be counted on for active participation. Within the FCP, the dedicated, committed activists can be found on the executive board, and even then can be narrowed to the handful of people identified in Chapter Three as those doing most of the work for the party. And the Toth’s frustration - that they have difficulty finding people to be active on behalf of the party - is likely a product of the fact that much of their membership is constituted on a show of loyalty towards Mrs. Toth rather than firm ideological commitment to the party/movement’s goals.

Finally, there is the issue of maintaining member support and commitment to the party/movement in the face of tremendous odds against survival and even greater odds against success. McAdam, McCarthy and Zald point out that “nothing sustains the commitment of activists, nor draws others to a political movement, quite like victories” (1988:726). Yet party/movements like the Canadian Greens and the FCP have few tangible victories to draw upon in their attempts to foster intra-member support. Unable to point to electoral success or influential movement activity, party/movements have a doubly hard time finding rallying points of motivation for their membership. The FCP rely most heavily on a survivalist mentality. Without the anticipated support of the Pro-family movement or any significant electoral breakthroughs (save for the defeat of Grace McCarthy in 1994, see Chapter 3), the party/movement uses its very existence as its primary manifest success. Yet without some eventual tangible victories
the FCP will be confronted with a growing problem of membership disaffection and the risk of organizational erosion. Boggs indicates that within the German Greens

“Pessimism and even apathy began to overcome many Green activists after mid-1985, in the aftermath of electoral defeats in the Saarland and in North Rheinland-Westphalis ... Moreover, the period of fascination with the Green upsurge between 1980 and 1983 seemed to have crested. An increasing number of members and supporters could be heard complaining that being a Green was no longer exciting” (1986:217).

Regarding the CCF, Young highlights the risks that constant defeat present for a party/movements democratic integrity in remarking that “a succession of failures encourages independence and irresponsibility among the militants in a party” (1992:225). At present, neither of these potential situations appear as a threat to the FCP, but a future without victory may cause them to become salient and destructive characteristics.

It is also worth mentioning Kitschelt’s (1990) four point evaluation of the membership difficulties faced by left-libertarian parties in Europe. First, he notes that “few sympathizers actually join and contribute to the parties,” (1990:191) a situation evident with the financial and membership status of the FCP. Second and third, he remarks that “many who join become disaffected with the party quickly ... [and] ... The importance militants attribute to purposive commitments inevitably leads to a certain sense of disappointment with the parties’ accomplishments. Purposively motivated activists want to change the world” (ibid.). In this vein, Bill Stilwell of the FCP remarked that “unfortunately, human nature being what it is, people are so desperate for success that they look for a party to succeed right away,” and to recall Mrs. Toth’s comment:

“Some people discover the party, and if they never heard of it before, they become very enthusiastic and we hook them right away ... You can’t know who is going to stay and who is going to go ... It was difficult to make people make it a priority. Some people are not on a political wavelength at all, they can’t see the importance of doing this. ... they get discouraged to the point of not continuing.”
Kitschelt’s last point, that activist commitment can undercut the “social incentives (atmosphere, friendship, social events)” (1990:191) for less enthusiastic members, does not appear to apply in the case of the FCP. In fact, it appears that these “secondary incentives” as he calls them, actually buttress and fuel the continued commitment of FCP activists. However, with three of his four points recognizable in the membership situation of the FCP, and other noted problems present in existent or latent states, it is clear that the FCP has compounded the resource mobilization challenges it faces by fusing form with function and has thereby steepened the grade of its road to sociopolitical success.

Mobilizing popular and active support may be the most important of the compounded challenges the FCP has set for itself, but related to the party/movement’s potential in this area are the issues of developing effective collective action frames as well as political policies and expertise. With its party/movement typology, the FCP can address neither of these matters without attention to the impact its duality has on them. Framing efforts, in other words, cannot simply focus on movement function but must also convince potential adherents of the utility to be found in adopting a party form. In Chapter Four it was argued that the FCP knows it has been deficient in developing an effective and comprehensive collective action frame. Of the various framing characteristics and functions identified by David Snow and his colleagues (Snow and Benford, 1988, 1992; Snow et. al., 1986), it is specifically with the aspect of experiential commensurability and the prognostic function of a collective action frame that the party form of the FCP exerts its compounding effects. Does the former, inquire Snow and Benford
“Suggest answers and solutions to troublesome events and situations which harmonize with the ways in which these conditions have been or are currently experienced? Or is the framing too abstract and distant from the everyday experiences of potential participants?” (1988:208).

Simultaneously, the prognostic function must adequately and acceptably suggest “both a general line of action for ameliorating the problem and the assignment of responsibility for carrying out that action” (Snow and Benford, 1992:137). By introducing the notion of using a party form to achievement movement ends, the FCP does indeed appear to have created a frame that promotes a political strategy too divergent for the Pro-family movement to accept. Rather, the FCP is slowly coming to the realization that it must construct its collective action frame in such a way that it will not only exhibit ideological congruence with the PFM, but also convince the movement of the legitimacy of its new tactical repertoire. Of course, this latter effort would not be required should the FCP have emerged with a traditional social movement organizational form.

In terms of political expertise and policy development, the FCP executive is fully cognizant of the fact that they must generate a comprehensive base in these areas if they are to present themselves as a legitimate political option for the vote casting electorate. Like all minor parties, this is a major challenge for the FCP, but it is magnified by the fact that the expertise of its personnel lies in movement activism, not party politics. In Chapter Five it was reported that even committed pro-family supporters cannot be expected to vote on the basis of a limited focus issue-cluster such as that offered by the FCP. Material concerns of economic security and social stability still dominate the vote process, so a party/movement must develop a base of political expertise beyond those quality of life concerns if it is to attract even the votes of its
natural constituents. It was noted in Chapter Three that John O’Flynn of the FCP remarked that most activists have little taste for policy development beyond their movement interests and the currently thin policies of the FCP reflect this deficiency. In this regard, Carty wrote of the Christian Heritage Party that

“Despite its preoccupation with public policy, there appears to be less policy study in the CHP than in other parties. Perhaps that is because the party is clear on where it stands, and is more concerned with propagating its views by holding public meetings and publishing newsletters than with debating the fine points of its policies” (1991:236).

This observation is suggestive of the tension created between the demands of party politics and movement goals of a party/movement like the CHP and the FCP. Political education comes at the expense of policy formation because of giving precedence to movement functions, as well as because of the lack of expertise party/movement activists often have in areas other than those of their primary concern. The result is that a party/movement becomes unable to generate electoral support beyond those willing to vote on the basis of a single issue-cluster. On this scenario, Stephen Brooks comments that

“While their [a party/movement] members might be willing to vote for or against a candidate solely on the strength of a stand on a single issue, most voters probably would not ... For a group interested in achieving a specific policy goal or a narrow set of objectives, a strategy of running candidates for public office is almost certainly wasteful and doomed to failure” (1996:466).

All minor parties face the problem of evolving into serious political contenders, but again, party/movements magnify these difficulties. Unlike fragment parties (whose founding leaders and often supporting members are already skilled in the art of conventional politics) or parties with regional strongholds (like Reform who can gain legitimacy from their concentrated base of support), party/movements have no strategic advantage they can use as leverage to speed their maturation process. Limited by the
commitment to their movement's principles and role as political educator, party/movements like the FCP have no alternative than to focus the development of political expertise and the image of political legitimacy on small, incremental goals. Most FCP executives recognize and accept this, and share Alan Idler's view (an FCP candidate in the 1996 provincial election) that

"One of the things is we're not very experienced ... yeah, being a small party means you have to think small - looking for how you can meet five new members in a year or something - that's quite a leap for us, and then of course your goals and methods to find five members are different from finding five hundred. ... [on gaining political legitimacy] ... you don't want to be seen, and we probably are, as 'abortion protester plays politics' ... I think unless we can be as visible as the Greens with their issues, then we're not there. The Greens are presented as the authority on their issues and can't be challenged on those issues and until we're perceived like that we can't say we're successful. I don't know when we will wake up and say we've arrived, but you need to present yourself like that."

**Created Effects**

Beyond managing the compounded extant problems facing movements and minor parties, party/movements must additionally resolve a number of unique and significant tensions that result from this political fusion process. Movement researchers and political scientists both identify these tensions as presenting the most serious threat to the survival of a party/movement in its purest form (Kitschelt, 1989, 1990; Young, 1992; Offe, 1990; Sandilands, 1992; Braunthal, 1996; Lyon, 1984, 1992). Oligarchization; institutionalization; co-optation or absorption; the tension between maintaining the purity of movement principle and engaging in broad-based political compromise; maintaining the will to resist electoral fortune in order to give primacy to the movement functions of the organization; these are all challenges unique to a party/movement which must be confronted if it is to achieve its goals of acting as a
political opportunity structure for its associated movement and effecting the sociopolitical change set out in its mandate.

These tensions can be attributed to two general and powerful forces that act upon party/movements like the FCP. The first has been conceptualized by Kriesi (1996) as "internal structuration," and refers to the processes of oligarchization, professionalization and institutionalization. Kriesi argues that "the process of internal structuration is virtually inevitable, if the SMO is to have success in the long run" and points to the case of the German Greens as an example of this inevitability (1996:155). Claus Offe (1990) refers to the second force as the "logic of institutional politics," which can be understood to include the problem of co-optation or absorption, and the tensions between the demands of movement function and electoral success. Offe writes of this force:

"So effective seems to be the logic of institutional politics, and so pervasive its impact upon individual actors who learn and practice the rules of the institutional game, that this rapid evolutionary self-transformation does not need to be explained" (1990:246).

Despite Offe's assumption that this process is self-explanatory, an effort should be made to understand the effect these forces can have on party/movements like the Family Coalition Party.

A characteristic feature of party/movements is embracement of an internal decision-making structure based on non-hierarchical and democratic principles. The German and Ontario Greens, the old Feminist party of Canada, the CCF, and the Family Coalition Party all exhibit this type of internal structure (Boggs, 1986; Hynes, 1980; Sandilands, 1992; Young, 1992; Lyon, 1992; Braunthal, 1996). It was noted in Chapter Five that the FCP membership support the party's internal democratic decision-making
process. To reiterate the importance of this process to the FCP, note that one member commented that “we go by the democratic process,” and another stated that "It’s more grassroots because there is no hierarchy or structure, so it doesn’t give the appearance of being a political party, so in that respect it encourages involvement. If there were political aspirations to unify them, yeah, it would be a detriment."

The impact that the dynamics of internal structuration have had on other party/movements suggests that this observation is well-founded, and while the FCP has yet to begin the drift towards institutionalization and oligarchization, its activists need to maintain a vigilant watch for the beginnings of such organizational transformations.

In their early days of party/movement activism, the CCF and the German Green party were both heralded as novel and principled organizations that could be expected to resist the lure of parliamentary power. Young wrote that “The fact the CCF was a movement meant that its participations in the party battle did not contaminate its goals so much that its influence in politics was lost. Its operation within the political system and its gradual acceptance of the rules of the game did bring about a dilution of its ideology in the programmatic sense, but did not significantly alter the party’s goals” (1992:229).

Even after several years of existence, Boggs believed that the “Greens remain a party sui generis, and there are factors operating in their case that might resist the Michelsian pattern ... The Green program - in the attention it lavishes on participatory democracy, qualitative change, and cultural radicalism - is designed to subvert the pressures toward assimilation” (1986:214).

Yet with the passage of time, the prognoses for these party/movements have proven overly optimistic. The CCF merger with the Canadian Labour Congress, with its intention to broaden the party’s base of popular support (Thorburn, 1992), heralded the emergence of the New Democratic Party (NDP), an organization far more focussed on electoral success and pursuing a logic of institutional politics than its organizational
predecessor. Unlike the CCF, the NDP has been accused by the more organically pure left in Canada of electoralism, bureaucratization and being a "capitalist reform party" (Howlett, 1989; Hoffman and Orton, 1989:23). Vaughan Lyon also points out that it may not be possible to turn back the ideological clock on the CCF/NDP: "Making the party 'radical' again might not sit well with leaders who are now serious contenders for power nationally as well as provincially" (1992:130). In Germany, the Greens have suffered a similar evaluative fate. Offe observes that

"In its short parliamentary history, the Green party has not only ... abandoned most of its partly naïve experiments in mingling the forms of movement politics and parliamentary politics, but it has also adopted much of the conventional tactical repertoire of (oppositional) parliamentary politics and party competition" (1990:244).

The logic of institutional politics has exerted such a pull on the Greens, in fact, that in May 1993, they merged with Alliance 90, an ideologically centrist and politically pragmatic party, to form what is now known as the Alliance 90/the Greens coalition (Braunthal, 1996).

Fear of such institutionalization and of becoming another validating example of Michels' "iron law of oligarchy" (cf: Rohrschneider, 1993) leads to the development of a serious factional tension within most party/movements. Consensus about the wisdom of utilizing a party form to achieve movement goals tends to be sharply divided between two opinions. Those committed to the ideological purity of the movement's message and educative function oppose the adoption of a party form, fearing that it will corrupt the integrity of the movement via the logic and processes of institutional politics. More pragmatically minded activists, such as the Toths and the rest of the Family Coalition Party executive, believe the party form can act as an effective political opportunity structure for the movement and that the lure of political power can be
resisted if the goals of the movement are kept paramount on the agenda of the party/movement. The CCF, the NDP, the Feminist Party of Canada, as well as the Ontario and Canadian Greens have all exhibited this tension.

For the German Greens it has come in the form of the battle between the “Fundis” and the “Realos” (Boggs, 1986; Braunthal, 1996) while within the Feminist Party “there was some division over the question of participating in elections, but the idea was finally accepted ... It was felt involvement would take the Party one step beyond previous feminist pressure groups” (Hynes, 1980). In Canada, the tension is present at both the federal and provincial levels of the Greens. Hoffman and Orton, in their opposition to the formation of a Green party, wrote that

“We believe that building a green movement in Canada was seriously undermined by the formation of the federal green party and also the formation of green provincial parties in B.C. and Ontario. ... For all the talk of consensus decision making, there seems to be a reliance on Robert’s Rules of Order and bureaucratic legalisms” (1989:21).

In her study of the Ontario Greens, Kate Sandilands observed the same tactical fissure:

“Greens were divided about the election process: some felt that more emphasis should have been placed on the [1990] campaign ... that electoral politics provide an essential educative platform for Green issues. Others felt that Green efforts would have been better spent in organizing community forums around local issues ... that electoral politics divert Greens from the more transformative process of building grassroots activities and alliances” (1992:157).

Young identified a similar tension within the old CCF: “the militants opposed the development of the CCF as a political party ... Success, they feared, would transform the CCF from a vehicle of protest into a disciplined party in which there would be little room to rebel” (1992:224). The ideological dilution that accompanied the pursuit of conventional politics by the CCF/NDP even aroused these sentiments in the NDP. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the internal left-wing faction of the NDP known as the “Waffle” became openly critical of the conventional political direction the party had
taken since formalizing ties with organized labour and sought to redirect the party back towards its original party/movement agenda (McMenemy, 1976; Kornberg, et. al., 1982).

The danger of this factional tension for party/movements lay in its capacity to drain the time and energy of the organization’s activists. Precious resources that could otherwise be spent on attending to the mandate of the party/movement are spent trying to put out the fires created by the friction of the two opposing sides and unifying the activist body. The effect of this infighting on a party/movement can be devastating. Braunthal notes that the German Green’s loss of all their Bundestag seats in the 1990 German general election was in no small part due to this factional tension and the disputes it gave rise to. He notes that “observers recalled a statement made by a Green leader: The party gave the impression of “desolation without political contours, and grim trench warfare”” (1996:97).

Yet, this battle is not purely symbolic or a matter of egoistic pigheadedness on the parts of the respective strategists within the party/movement. There is ample evidence that the fears of movement fundamentalists are well founded - pursuing movement goals through a party form makes the mandate and the structure of the organization highly susceptible to the logic of institutional politics. But at the same time, pragmatic-minded activists are correct in their assumption that the internal structure of party/movements is not conducive to growth or the exercise of political influence in the institutional arena. The internally democratic structure of the CCF and the Ontario Greens have been identified as limiting their capacities as party/movements to achieve their goals (Young, 1992; Sandilands, 1992). Young notes of the CCF that
“Although there is much evidence to demonstrate the relevance to the CCF of Robert Michels’ Iron Law of Oligarchy, it is also true that the activities of the leaders were limited by citizen participation - enough at least to make participation in the party battle more awkward than if their control was absolute” (1992:225).

Correspondingly, Sandilands argues that the Ontario Greens are hamstrung in their efforts to radicalize Canadian democracy because of their rejection of conventional forms of representation and decision-making: “As they seek to reformulate processes and not just products of democracy, they do not reflect the current, instrumentally framed interests of other social movements: they stand little chance of being elected” (1992:168).

This tension ultimately forces party/movements into making a decision critical to their futures. Kitschelt (1989) articulates this decision as the choice between pursuing the “logic of constituency representation” or that of the “logic of party competition.” The former he conceptualizes as being driven by a commitment on the part of activists to the ideologies and policies of the movement aspect of the party/movement, while the latter refers to the “exigencies of vote-getting” and the required institutional and strategic initiatives this logic demands (1990:180). It is a decision that pointedly exposes the tension for a party/movement that exists between maintaining movement principles or adopting the practices of brokerage politics. The difficulty this decision presents for party/movements is that to shift one way is to engage in a concomitant withdrawal from the other. That is, to pursue a strategy of brokerage politics is to dilute the ideological purity of the party/movements principles; conversely, to steadfastly maintain a position of principle is to diminish the potentiality of the party form for exerting policy influence. Kitschelt captures the contradictory nature of this tension by observing that
"On the one hand, they must preserve the fluid, open organizational form and obstructionist quality that challenge the highly institutionalized corporatist welfare state and maintain the loyalty of their core constituencies. On the other hand, they must become effective political players in terms of both electoral appeal and impact on public policy" (1989:40).

The decision to pursue one avenue over the other is not one generally made on absolute terms or even around conscious deliberation. Party/movements by their nature are seeking to strike the perfect balance between the two options and so the shifts witnessed of a particular organization would tend to be partial and perhaps even temporary in nature as they search for their elusive centre. However, organizations like the Family Coalition Party have betrayed a bias for the institutional merely by their decision to engage in an act of political fusion. This suggests that the lure of political power (not for its own sake, but for the goals of the movement) might cause a party/movement to slowly and incrementally drift more towards an institutionalized form of party competition than away from it. Further, Young points out that "for one thing, the internal pressures of the party-movement they have espoused help them resist any return; for another, a return to the status quo would constitute an admission of error" (1992:230) . With these forces and biases acting upon the tactical resolve of party/movement activists, adopting a pure logic of constituency representation seems unlikely; they are, in other words, at a point of no return.

Beyond these psycho-emotive and motivational forces, there are also tangible reasons for pursuing, to some degree, a logic of party competition. Offe (1990) highlights three such reasons in trying to understand the reality that in Germany the "Green members of parliament have quickly and effectively adopted all the essential elements of the parliamentary discourse, and simultaneously abandoned much of the discourse of anti-institutional movement politics" (1990:245). First, he argues, there is
the pragmatic issue of "facilitating the survival of the political causes and activities of
the movement by making use of the protection and recognition of established political
institutions" (ibid.). Second, he notes the absence in democratic polities of alternate
forms of representational organizations. Despite their progress, social movements still
predominantly occupy a space on the periphery of the institutional, and parties still
dominate the political landscape as the only true agents of political representation.
Finally, he cites solid historical precedence for such actions: "there are compelling
reasons to embark on this (only available) road in good political conscience" (ibid.).
That is, there is a long and honourable history of groups pursuing a logic of institutional
politics in an attempt to have their social grievances addressed. In the case of the
Family Coalition Party, this lineage has included the Progressives, the CCF, and the
Social Credit League.

As for the fortunes of the FCP, they have as yet not had to grapple with this
decision directly. While the wisdom of their decision to form a party/movement has
been questioned and criticized by past members and some pro-family activists (see
Chapters 3 and 4), within the party there exists unanimity that the strength and virtue of
the FCP lay in its members' commitment to promoting the principles of protecting the
sanctity of life from the moment of conception to natural death and valorizing the ideals
of the traditional family. Asked if they felt the FCP was vulnerable to losing its
'movement soul,' respondents felt this was extremely unlikely because of the
individuals involved with the party, but did recognize that such a risk does exist. In
this regard, one pro-family activist commented about the potential of the FCP 'losing its
soul' that
"On the whole, I’d say not because I don’t see them as moving into the mainstream in the usual way. For example, it’s not a move for more power in BC. If there were a party with power connected to the movement and the members of the movement joined it, say the Conservative party, it seems to me that inevitably there would be compromises there because of joining a major party and perhaps having a chance at power. There might be some tradeoffs. ... But in the case of a party like the FCP, I can’t see such a party attracting people who are willing to make the sorts of tradeoffs which any hypothetical group wanting power in BC would be willing to make. I can’t imagine at the moment that happening so I don’t think there’s a real risk there with the FCP.”

On this issue, long time FCP executive Gerhard Herwig commented that “I would not advocate changing the priorities of the party to achieve electoral success. Our priorities are right.” This commitment at present remains firm, but there are those who expressed concern over the dangers of organizational drift and the inherent conflict between movement and party goals. On the latter Michael Markwick of the Catholic Civil Rights League remarked that “the movement can’t translate into a party without losing a great deal along the way.” Another pro-family activist said they felt the FCP does not risk losing its soul, but a party or movement

“Has other ways of selling its soul - when it goes big time and establishes its own bureaucracy, its job becomes to maintain itself; its main job it seems is to do the things it needs to provide the money it needs to maintain the infrastructure. Greenpeace is the perfect example of that kind of thing, where it was the most effective I think, when it was in its small day - sort of volunteers and idealism working towards a certain end. Now it’s a big structure, it’s a bureaucracy and people are looking at it that way. It doesn’t have the credibility, so that’s what takes the soul out of the movement. It goes through that stage of movement and developing into a political party and it suddenly realizes it must deal with other issues that it really has not much interest in and that dilutes and waters down the prime issue.”

Whether the Family Coalition Party is able to resist the forces of internal structuration and the logic of institutional politics remains to be seen, but they are susceptible to a final danger that confronts party/movements: the risk of absorption by another political party. As noted in Chapter Three however, this is one peril to which the FCP would gladly succumb.
Movement scholars point to the risk co-optation presents for social movement organizations (McAdam, 1982; Rochon and Mazmanian, 1993). In discussing the ecology movement for instance, Rochon and Mazmanian argue that “the fear of co-optation makes many movement leaders, including those in the environmental movement, wary of becoming institutionally involved in the decision making process” (1993:87). It is a circumstance Sandilands observes with the ecology message of the Green Party in Ontario: “Ecology, as common sense, has been increasingly absorbed by dominant discursive formations and transformed into a narrow and limited environmentalism” (1992:171). For party/movements, the tension created by their duality forces this risk more into the institutional realm of party politics rather than the domain of the social movement industry. It is perhaps more fitting then, to speak not of the co-optation of party/movements (although in another instance of compounding their challenges, party/movements must also guard against this) but rather the absorption of their agendas and/or body politic by larger cadre parties. Political scientists (Lawson, 1988; Covell, 1991) point to the risks party/movements face in this regard, should they begin to achieve the goals of their movement agenda. Covell argues for instance, that “If their educational efforts succeed and their policies begin to attract large-scale electoral support, they are notoriously vulnerable to having those policies stolen in piecemeal fashion by the major parties of the system” (1991:85-6). This, it has been pointed out (Penner, 1996; Young, 1992), was precisely the situation the CCF found itself in 1933. As its popularity surged, Liberal Opposition leader MacKenzie King recognized the threat the CCF posed to the cadre parties prompting him to stand up in the House of Commons and claim that the “Liberal party in power could enact
everything in Woodsworth’s speech [the CCF leader] *without* reverting to socialism” (Penner, 1996:91).

As Young makes clear, in this case “it was the movement that triumphed as Mackenzie King read the signs and moved leftward. ... What the establishment feared was not the CCF party so much as the CCF movement” (1992:223,229). The issue of absorption is critical to defining the goals and the concept of success as it pertains to a party/movement. There is a story, for instance, that Ed Broadbent, past leader of the NDP, was once asked if he regretted never being Prime Minister so that he might enact the policies of the NDP. It is said he replied in the negative, commenting that a close look at many of the policies implemented at the federal level of government were originally initiatives of the NDP. In the case of the Green Party, and Sandilands’ (1992) analysis then, it may be argued that while their efforts have not translated into policy with the ideological purity they seek, their presence as a party/movement has contributed to at least a shift towards greater ecological commitment and consciousness on the part of the major parties. As for the Family Coalition Party, in many regards, their goal is absorption. To recall from Chapter Three, the formation of the party was a strategy of last resort and one of their primary goals is to have another party adopt their two core principles so they might coalesce with another conservative, free enterprise party in BC. In this case, the possibility of absorption, rather than posing as a danger to their existence, is in fact part of the hopeful vision the FCP has for its future.

**Institutional and Cultural Tensions: Hidden Limitations**

While it is true the bulk of particular tensions that face a party/movement exist within its organizational domain, there also exist some latent institutional and cultural
obstacles that become salient once a party/movement begins its effort to gain popular support and political legitimacy for its agenda. Institutionally, party/movements come to discover that parliamentary systems like Canada's possess a number of characteristic traits that are not sympathetic to the presence of an organization like the Family Coalition Party. Also, the administrative demands required to maintain an institutional presence are a particular drain on a party/movements resources, energy, and motivation. Finally, a party/movement finds itself in a difficult position regarding its relation with the media. The media is critical to both parties and movements for developing their potential, and so effectively managing this institution becomes vital for the success of any party or movement. Yet a party/movement finds itself in the position of deciding what strategies - those of a party, or of a movement, or a combination of both - can best be utilized to attract the attention any political organization requires. Culturally, party/movements discover they must deal with a cultural lag. Supporters of party/movements like the FCP and the Greens view the party form as a legitimate part of a social movement's tactical repertoire. They also view the act of voting as viable form of social movement action and the electoral arena as a site for the expression of quality of life concerns rather than simply one for maintaining materialist security. However, potential adherents of the party/movement, both from within the particular social movement community and from the general population, have yet to accept these visions. These discoveries provide a rude awakening for party/movements and add to the lengthy list of obstacles that already confront them.
Institutional Tensions.

These tensions, particularly salient for party/movements, manifest a political system resistant to change and one not designed for the type of representation the Family Coalition Party is seeking. Quite simply, Canada and British Columbia’s system of electoral representation has not been structured to accommodate organizations that seek to represent constituents on the basis of issues. The current process available to the electorate for selecting their political representatives is founded on a premise of geographic constituency representation, and as such, party/movements find it difficult to promote their agenda via an institutional presence because of the fact that quality of life issues and concerns cannot be articulated spatially. Meisel, for example, argues that “The parties’ representation function ... is therefore inevitably influenced by the continuous need to reflect geographical areas. But the complexities of modern life have forced governments to satisfy, as often as not, functional rather than territorial claims” (1991:247). Lyon makes a similar, although broader, observation: “In its essential features, the political system has not changed since the nineteenth century. Social and economic conditions and the agenda of the government have, meanwhile, changed dramatically” (1992:127).

The problem that emerges for party/movements becomes obvious. Without some degree of spatial concentration of its issue-cluster, a party/movement has little hope of wielding the kind of political influence it is seeking. In a system that stresses a geographic perspective, however few votes a party/movement might receive in an election, their results would appear more impressive concentrated in one area than scattered across the entire province. This is why, as Covell points out, “Canadian new
parties tend to combine ideological stands with regional protests” (1991:99). The Progressives, the CCF/NDP, the Social Credit League, and the Reform Party of Canada all had the advantage of regionalism and therefore concentrated geographic support, which gave them the necessary base of popular support in institutionalized form from which they could launch more issue-driven concerns.

There is also the problem for party/movements of the overall resilience of the extant political system and institutions in Canada. Offe’s (1990) remark, noted earlier, that at present there exists no viable alternate system of political representation in democratic societies is in part the product of a system stubbornly resistant to change. In Chapter Five it was argued that a critical catalyst for the emergence of minor parties in Canada was the crisis of representation and the decline in legitimacy being experienced by the country’s mainstream, cadre parties. Yet as Merkl points out, “Such “failure,” however, has rarely involved the permanent decline or disappearance of a particular major party or the basic realignment of a party system” (1988:561). Despite, for instance, the federal Progressive Conservative party’s devastating defeat in the 1993 federal election as a result of which it held only two seats in the Houses of Parliament for the next four years, the party is showing signs of renewed life after it won twenty seats in the 1997 federal election. Further, to recall from Chapter Five, very few of the Lortie Commission’s 1992 recommendations for electoral reform have been instituted, particularly those revolving around increasing the opportunities for political viability and engagement by minor parties (Tanguay and Gagnon, 1996; Phillips, 1996). It was also remarked by these analysts that the Commission placed a significant portion of the blame for the current crisis of parties in Canada at the door of the New Social Movements and consequently, NSMs and other interest groups have been “cool in their
response due to the report’s assault on movement and group politics as incapable of accommodating interests” (Phillips, 1996:445). As an organic outgrowth of social movements, party/movements like the Family Coalition Party, are, by extension, subject to the same forces of institutional resistance and antagonism that plague attempts by social movements to construct an alternate system of representation.

These tensions of resistance are in no minor way due directly to this paradoxical relation existing between party/movements and the political system. In effect, the Greens in Europe and Canada, as well as the Progressives, the CCF, and in a less dramatic way, the FCP are attempting to alter the current system by using the institutional mechanisms of the system itself (Covell, 1991; Sandilands, 1992; Braunthal, 1996). In Germany, “What inspired the Greens,” observes Boggs, “to construct an alternative party in the first place was deep hostility to the corporatist state, to which the party system was viewed as a mere appendage” (1986:180). Likewise in Canada, the Ontario Greens have as a major part of their political project, the intention “to point the way toward alternative forms of political life in the public sphere” (Sandilands, 1992:163). Even “the Progressive Party and the CCF were founded in the hope that they would be unlike the established parties in both doctrine and practice” (Covell, 1991:100). Such motivations create an inevitable tension for party/movements as they attempt to de-institutionalize the political process of representation by immersing themselves in the institutional realm in order to use the protocols of conduct that maintain the system as tools to change it. It is a situation that escalates the institutional tension between party/movements and a system highly resistant to change.
The Media Problematic

Finally, beyond the political system itself, party/movements must address the challenges presented by another institution pivotal to their fortunes, the media. So common is reference to the importance of the media to political parties and social movements by political scientists and movement scholars alike that such a comment is practically aphoristic. In the case of British Columbia, McLintock and Kristianson state that

"The success and failure of the contenders for political office depend in large part on their ability to court positive news coverage, while a variety of interest groups attempt to create a climate within which their particular issues are high on the public and political agenda" (1996:123).

The necessity to attract media coverage and formulate a productive relationship with the media is so great in fact, that general strategies of both parties and movements are heavily shaped by the potential for developing such a relationship (Meisel, 1991; Taras, 1996; McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1988; Carroll and Ratner, 1997). It is a situation which led McAdam and his colleagues to observe that "increasingly then, movements have come to depend upon and to be shaped by the means of communication available to them" (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1988:722).

Carroll and Ratner (1997) for instance, argue that movements like Greenpeace, End Legislated Poverty and the Gay-Lesbian Centre in British Columbia have all developed media strategies contingent on their desired level of interaction with the mainstream media. In this regard they remark that within Greenpeace, "the commitment to a media-oriented political strategy was deeply inscribed in the groups' initial formation" and that this strategy has been so masterful that one interviewed activist suggests that "Greenpeace has positioned itself in a way that the media will now
come to Greenpeace for information or opinion without us going to them because we've established credibility (Ken)” (Carroll and Ratner, 1997:11, emphasis in the original). This is precisely the position of authority that the FCP’s Alan Idler was noted as commenting on early in this chapter, one that Greenpeace has and to which, he believes, the Family Coalition Party must aspire. Alternatively, the Gay-Lesbian Centre in Vancouver, “anticipating little support from the dominant heterosexist media, ... reduces dependency on mainstream accounts through sponsorship of independent alternative newspapers” (ibid.:25). As Carroll and Ratner’s research suggests, a movement’s level of interaction with the mainstream media may vary, but deliberate strategies for engagement do exist and even if the mainstream is shunned, as in the case of the Gay-Lesbian Centre in Vancouver, alternate media sources are sought out.

Political parties meanwhile, have traditionally embraced the mainstream media in their efforts to gain electoral office. In British Columbia, this has historically been a relationship coloured by overt political partisanship and activity. McLintock and Kristianson point out that early BC newspapers adopted partisan stands and that “One of BC’s most colourful early politicians, Amor de Cosmos, founded the British Colonist newspaper in 1860, in part to provide a vehicle with which to oppose what he saw as efforts by Governor Sir James Douglas ‘to concentrate power in his own hand’” (1996:123).8

Today, although overt partisanship may have disappeared or is at least being hidden, the intimate relationship between parties and the media has not abated. The importance of favourable media coverage is of such a priority that parties “routinely devote approximately half of their campaign expenditures to TV advertising,” and construct their campaigns in an effort to maximize the probability of favourable news coverage (Taras, 1996:433; McLintock and Kristianson, 1996).
These party efforts necessarily come at the expense of articulating and defending specific policy positions because in "Contemporary Canadian politics, all three major parties obscure their principles and programs in an attempt to cobble together a winning electoral coalition of heterogeneous social groups ... [and] ... At a time when the major parties are marketing themselves and their programs (to the extent that they exist) in the same way that the big breweries flog their homogenized and insipid products, it is highly unlikely that any party will run the risk of crafting intelligent policy responses to issues that are now clamouring for attention" (Tanguay, 1992:484-85).

Even the NDP, in an attempt to abide by what Galipeau (1989) has termed the "law of the inclusive middle" has, "partly because of the dictates of electronic politics, ... begun to imitate the unprincipled and opportunistic electoral appeals of the Liberals and the Conservatives" (Tanguay, 1992:484). This reliance on the media and strategic focus on gaining their attention has further contributed to the crisis of representative legitimacy being experienced by political parties in Canada (Meisel, 1991; Tanguay, 1992) because such efforts come to concentrate on the party leader, the leadership tour (McLintock and Kristianson, 1996) and the construction of what Taras (1996:423) calls a "symbolic universe" through a process of political iconography (Szasz, 1994; cf. Klandermans and Goslinga, 1996:313). In the end, discussion and representation of social policies (and often even economic policies) are readily sacrificed for the opportunity to capture an attractive sound bite for the party on the evening news or a good 'photo-op' for the morning paper.

For parties, movements, and party/movements alike, the importance of the media can be roughly captured by the work of Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993). They argue that movements need the media for the purposes of mobilization (activating constituency support), validation (granting political legitimacy through coverage), and scope enlargement (the drawing in of potentially sympathetic third-parties to the cause).
Ideally, continue Gamson and Wolfsfeld, these necessities can be acquired if movements can gain from the media: legitimate standing, preferred framing of their issues, and sympathetic coverage that may attract potential adherents, or will at least present their organization’s goals with a positive image for the general public. If these elements can be achieved even in part, their scheme seems to suggest that potential for a movement to grow should increase. They further hypothesize that such things as increased levels of professionalism, entertainment value, and visual spectacle should all contribute to an elevated amount of media attention.

The question at hand of course, is what all this means for a party/movement like the Family Coalition Party. There exists within the FCP membership and executive a unanimous recognition that the media is vitally important to the growth of the organization, but at present there is no coherent strategy for fostering a constructive relationship with the media and there is also a strongly held belief that the media is indoctrinated with a bias against the pro-family agenda. Asked about the importance of the media, past FCP member and spokesman Bill Vander Zalm replied that it was “all-important, the media is the most powerful force in society, far more powerful than the government even. Today, the media is the most powerful influence.” Yet despite the acceptance of this position, the FCP executive seem at a loss as to how to gain standing for the party among the media. The current impression they feel the media have of the FCP is captured by Mrs. Toth’s remark that

“They don’t think the FCP is a legitimate party, they never could get the name right. They mixed us up with the CHP [Christian Heritage Party], sometimes I think it was on purpose. They think we are fringe and outside the mainstream. They are certainly not supportive of what we stand for, they are quite openly hostile.”
On the same issue, Mr. Vander Zalm commented: “I think they [the media] may see it as a group that may be better ignored than given too much attention and probably often view them as a radical bunch of oddballs.”

Efforts to shed this perception and to develop standing with the media have to date been largely limited to election periods and attempts by individual candidates to develop a rapport with local media. During the 1996 provincial election, this strategy was reported by candidates as being moderately successful. Vicki Podetz, a candidate in the Vancouver Island riding of Nanaimo said for example:

“I was surprised how well the local media covered us. I felt nervous at the time, and I felt when he covered me he was kind of confrontational, but in the end he gave me a pretty good write up. I was impressed with how well the local press did this.”

Other candidates reported similar experiences and levels of satisfaction, although some, like Mark Toth, felt they were entirely ignored. Frustrated at having the Vancouver Sun leave his candidacy off the list of those running in the riding of Vancouver-Kensington, Mr. Toth reported that “I took my sign with the taped article and took it to the office on Granville Street and I handed it to the receptionist.”

Overall, the 1996 provincial election did provide an opportunity for increased media exposure for the FCP and its pro-family agenda, confirming observations such as McCarthy, Smith and Zald’s that “regular election cycles provide windows of opportunity to bring issues to public attention and the attention of elites” (1996:299). In terms of the mainstream media, the FCP received coverage on two separate occasions from BCTV as well as a large article by Douglas Todd, the religion reporter for the Vancouver Sun. It was a result that pleased both Mr. and Mrs. Toth respectively:

“The Vancouver Sun put out a rather beautiful photo of the Stilwells and I think that helped them greatly. If they had done that for Kathleen and I it might have helped our cause. I think it helped the party in general as well.”
"During the election campaign, they are in constant contact to find out what you are doing. BCTV was very good this time about putting us on - covering the fundraiser in North Van and that. They did come out and I was pleased they did that. They did a lot of good for the party, we had calls saying I saw Heather and please send me stuff. So it is very important. If we could afford to buy TV time, that would be super."

By and large, though, most candidates and executive, while appreciative of the mainstream coverage and recognizing its paramount importance, felt that the FCP had the most success with local newspaper media and radio talk-shows.

To improve their chances of gaining standing with the mainstream media, there is agreement that the FCP must do more between elections to foster a constructive relationship with the media. Vicki Podetz, for one, commented that

"You have to let them know about your presence constantly so that when an election comes up, they know you’re there. Also, you need to develop credibility, be articulate, intelligent and have something to say. To do this you have to constantly pursue it - letters to the editor, talk to reporters on issues, get to know them."

Mr. Toth’s is a concurring opinion: “I believe we have to try harder, I think we should meet regularly with the media - other organizations do that.” Yet part of the objective in gaining standing is to win sympathy and acts of preferential framing from the media, which is a difficult proposition if the media bias perceived by the FCP membership is valid.

The FCP executive as well as Pro-life and Pro-family activists, tend to believe the media harbours an ideological bias against their cause. One Pro-family director stated quite simply that “the media hate us.” Bill Vander Zalm meanwhile, sees the bias as

"An understandable one I think. You know, regardless of where a person sits, you have to believe in what you do, you might be wrong but you believe in it. The bulk of the media, not only in this country but generally speaking - the people that work in the media for the most part came out of the generation that would encompass the sixties, the late fifties, a generation of conflict. Many or the majority of my media friends which are mostly a little bit younger than me, I say the majority but that may be overstated, many of those media friends actually became involved in the media because that was
their vehicle to protest society as they knew it then. So they are liberal people. There is nothing necessarily wrong with that, but certainly they play hell with where it is you are at when you are taking a more conservative stance. The media generally is very liberal.”

This view of a liberal-minded media is shared by the FCP membership and creates an interesting ideological juxtaposition with those involved with the gay rights movement. Diametrically opposite from the activists of the Gay-Lesbian Centre in Vancouver that Carroll and Ratner (1997) interviewed for their study, and who believe in the bias of “heterosexual normativity that infuses the world of mainstream media,” the Pro-family community supports a thesis that the media is sympathetic to the gay rights movement while being openly antagonistic to the pro-family message. The circumstance lends standpoint credibility to Gamson and Wolfsfeld’s argument that

“Movement activists tend to view mainstream media not as autonomous and neutral actors but as agents and handmaidens of dominant groups whom they are challenging. The media carry the cultural codes being challenged, maintaining and reproducing them” (1993:119).

Regardless of where one is positioned on an ideological spectrum, it is not uncommon that the media will be regarded as an ideological antagonist. To escape the perception of being persecuted or ignored because of an ideological slant on the part of the media, what political organizations may need to realize is that, as Hackett and his colleagues note about the media in British Columbia, “they are shaped by impersonal market forces, particularly the imperative of selling audiences to advertisers, more than by the partisan prejudices of some elite of media owners or news managers” (1986:279). Some in the Pro-family movement already recognize this. Gerhard Herwig of the FCP commented that

“The media don’t give us a break. We’ve released lots of press releases and they get ignored. But you have to understand the media - we think they have to be fair and
report, but they don't. What drives the media is sales and advertising - to sell they have
to make judgments about what goes in, same with radio and talk shows.”

And Kari Simpson of the Citizen Research Institute, who claims to have an “excellent
relationship with the media”, remarked that other pro-family organizations have

“By and large pitted the media as the enemy, but the organizations have to understand
their role. The media is the vehicle and we're the role player, not seeing that is the
deficiency in other groups. You have to do the physical work [to foster a relationship],
you have to provide the tools. The media is a business and money is the bottom line.
Know it. Deal with it. That's the fact, it will rule."12

Escaping the trap of perceived bias however, is only part of the solution for a
party/movement like the FCP as they look to gain standing and sympathy from the
media. The party executive know for instance, that they must also develop a tactical
repertoire capable of avoiding the tension that accompanies being a party/movement.

To successfully promote their agenda and utilize the media in the manner
described by Gamson and Wolfsfeld (1993), social movements develop media strategies
that will maximize the opportunities for attention by the media. Movement tactics
ranging from quiet demonstrations and picketing to noisy acts of civil disobedience are
often adopted in a deliberate attempt to draw media attention, and to provide the media
with the entertainment value of high spectacle that Gamson and Wolfsfeld have
hypothesized about. Greenpeace may be the acknowledged master of such tactics, but
the Pro-life movement with its annual life-chain demonstration, and the demonstration
by Pro-family supporters outside the Vancouver Art Gallery supporting the Surrey
Schoolboard’s decision to ban books from elementary schools that portray gay families,provide ample proof of these movements’ willingness to use similar strategies.13 These
tactics all provide movements the opportunity to profile the principles of their various
causes and are considered legitimate means of political expression. One FCP member,
when asked about the acceptability of demonstrations, replied that he supported them because, after all, "the poor man’s media is the street."

For a party/movement however, the situation is dramatically different. Pro-family directors and FCP members were virtually unanimous in their opposition to the FCP sponsoring or engaging in demonstrations or other tactics used by social movements to promote their cause. While they felt it acceptable that individuals participate in such social movement actions, to do so as a representative of the party was deemed inappropriate and potentially damaging to the credibility of the FCP as a legitimate political organization. The implication is that despite its movement function and focus, the party form of the FCP ultimately dictates the acceptability of its media strategies. Its form effectively eliminates the tactical repertoires available to social movements because with its party form comes the expectation that the membership will abide by a standard of protocol commensurate with official provincial party standing. This means that a party/movement must, like other parties, concentrate on developing a professionalized approach to media relations and attract personnel capable of drawing media attention if it is to gain media standing. In the case of the FCP, the importance of this was most evident between 1993 and 1994, when Bill Vander Zalm was involved with the party (see Chapter 3).

This situation suggests that a party/movement is forced into deciding whether to pursue what can be regarded as a strategy of media populism in which principles are abandoned for the popularized attention the mainstream media gives political parties, or what may be thought of as a strategy of media circumvention, in which alternate sources of media exposure are sought and the mainstream media is, if not avoided, at least not actively sought out. The former is the typical strategy of parties, with their emphasis on
leadership style and personality rather than policy substance. The latter can be found in a media strategy like that adopted by the Gay-Lesbian Centre in Vancouver as it is described by Carroll and Ratner (1997:12-18). Party/movements like the FCP are caught between the two because of their hybrid nature. They can ill afford to ignore the benefits to be derived from pursuing a strategy of media populism, but to do so risks compromising the public appearance of being firmly committed to the principles of their movement. Yet the pursuit of media circumvention, while perhaps allowing them to maintain a position of undiluted principle carries with it the risk of not being regarded as a serious or legitimate political force in the electoral arena.

Presently, the Family Coalition Party has no definitive media strategy, and acknowledge that they are simply ‘taking what they can get’ and trying different tactics to gain media exposure. To recall from Chapter Three for example, during the 1996 provincial election, candidates Mark Toth and Brian Zacharias both attempted to gain media attention by being deliberately controversial; both were ignored by the media. Of his 4X4 sign that read, in part, “your taxes pay for the killing of unborn babies,” Mr. Toth said, “not one single media took a picture of that sign. The media didn’t pay attention but I thought if they did that would help my cause, it would give me more publicity, and they didn’t simply because it was pro-life.” In Campbell River however, John Krell’s campaign received a lot of media coverage, albeit negative, in the local papers after he condemned homosexuality during a high school all-candidates debate. Party executives were thrilled with the attention it drew to the party. It was a situation of some coverage being better than none, a circumstance Doug McAdam alludes to in his list of hurdles movements must overcome when he writes that they must “generate media coverage, preferably, but not necessarily, of a favorable sort” (1996:339). Overall,
the FCP executive have evaluated their attempts at forging a media strategy to gain mainstream media standing as inadequate and in need of vigorous developmental action.

Even efforts at utilizing alternate media sources have been evaluated by the FCP and have also been found wanting. The executive have had little success in promoting the FCP through various Catholic, Pro-life and Pro-family media channels because of a commitment on the part of these publications to remain politically non-partisan. Unlike REAL Women, which Steuter argues has the advantage of “free advertising in religious publications” (1992:297), the FCP have enjoyed no such advantage. Members have also commented that ideologically sympathetic publications like British Columbia Report aren’t as supportive of the FCP’s goals as they would expect. One member remarked that the media in general is “ignoring us more than anything, we’re a nothing, we don’t rate mention, definitely not accolades. Even BC Report which I support, I love it, don’t give us the time of day, even though they’re pro-family and pro-life.”

On the other hand, new media technologies, in particular the Internet, are being viewed as viable alternate routes for listening to the FCP’s voice. Alan Idler of the FCP believes that the Internet may be the answer to the media problematic faced by small political organizations:

“It’s hard to connect with people when you can’t give them a message. I believe myself that the election we just had will be the last where TV and cable will be so important. It will switch to being in front of a computer and direct communication because you can reach people with computers a lot more cost effectively than through commercial broadcast media. By the next election there could be Internet in every living room, so you could go direct and don’t have to worry about what the media gives you, so maybe it will happen.”

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Kari Simpson of the Citizen’s Research Institute shares a similar vision with her belief that “political parties are trying to do politics the old way, but the game of politics has
changed because the tools have changed. We can talk to each other - the Internet, fax machines, cell phones and that - politicians haven't computed that yet and they should." Whether the Family Coalition Party decides upon a strategy of media populism (which seems highly unlikely) or one of media circumvention, it does seem apparent that the advent of new media technologies and the capacity of party/movements to exploit them will be critical to organizations like the FCP achieving their goals.

Cultural Tensions

One more tension of fusion for party/movements is the cultural lag that exists between the motivational vision of its activists and the appreciation of the institutionalized political arena by potential sympathizers to the organization. "For most Canadians," writes Galipeau, "the job of the state is to assure both economic prosperity and social justice ... Furthermore ... Canadians are imbued with a materialist ethos. Post-materialist values do not resonate in our collective discourse" (1989:415-16). Additionally, as Meyer and Staggenborg argue, "democratic polities ... play an active role in encouraging citizens to make use of the polls and political parties" (1994:10). In Canada, these political cultural attitudes foster a belief that elections and institutionalized politics are events and sites for settling the materialist concerns of society, not the quality of life issues of a "post-materialist" ethos. These latter concerns are still predominantly regarded as being properly fought over and articulated on the terrain of civil society and in its extra-parliamentary spaces. Founders of party/movements like the Family Coalition Party however, appear to have been inspired by a view of the electoral arena as one eminently and legitimately suitable for
engaging in struggles over the issues that affect the quality of modern life. Party/movement activists, by the very presence of their organizations, deny that institutional politics should be the exclusive domain of corporatist economic agendas and materialist issues.

Such a perspective also allows party/movement activists to reconceptualize the purpose and role of a political party. In Chapter Four it was argued that the founders of the Family Coalition Party view the organization as creating a political opportunity structure for the broader pro-family movement and that this potential has yet to be recognized or embraced by directors of various pro-life and pro-family organizations. The party form is regarded as a tool for prying open an avenue for the movement to potentially influence governmental and political party policies, and the current failure of the pro-family movement in British Columbia to recognize this is likely a result of a dominant cultural attitude that promotes the vision of a political party as an organization that should be concerned mainly with protecting the material security of its constituents. Party/movement activists however, appear to have moved beyond this parochial view of parties with their apparent understanding that “cultural stocks are not static, and over time repertoires of contention grow and change” (Zald, 1996:267) and their recognition that to succeed, movements must engage in “product differentiation” and organizational specialty (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1988:718). Those involved with the Progressives in the 1920s, the CCF, the Greens, the Feminist Party, the Christian Heritage Party and the Family Coalition Party all understood that the institutional arena must be expanded, reinvigorated, and re-politicized so that it can accommodate struggles around the issues of social and moral concern that motivated their decision to create a party/movement.
This vision of a sociopolitically expanded electoral arena necessarily includes viewing the act of voting as more than an attempt to ensure continued material security, which is an inevitable consequence of the current electoral system’s reductionist construction of the vote (see Chapter 5). Under Canada’s Westminster, first-past-the-post system, the electorate’s unwillingness to vote on the basis of a single issue-cluster is understandable, retaining as they do political and electoral cultural convictions based primarily on a materialist ethos and being confronted with a severely limited opportunity for formal political expression. The impact of this situation on a party/movement is evident in the meagre number of votes they acquire at the polls. Certainly the election results of party/movements like the FCP and Greens indicates that their “electoral fate,” as Covell describes the Green’s general results, “does not support the idea that there is a large share of the electorate willing to change its vote on the basis of this issue alone” (1991:83). Both the Feminist party (Phillips, 1996) and the FCP found this to be one of their greatest challenges.

The root of this challenge appears to be how the act of voting is perceived by potential supporters. Unlike those not willing to vote for the Greens or the FCP, party/movement activists and supporters seem to identify voting not as a defence against the erosion of material security, but as a direct form of political and social movement action. FCP leader Heather Stilwell, in describing the dynamics of social movement action commented that

“Social movements are when a whole bunch of people in many organizations and outside organizations start to question the status quo, are being heard by the status quo, and take action to achieve that end ... [what kind of action?] ... Well, the action can be voting, supporting organizations that they can see are working to effect the change, forming these organizations, working within them, volunteering time.”
These different appreciations of the nature of voting may help explain Covell’s observation that “Support for new-politics issues in the abstract may be on the increase, but this support has not yet been translated into votes for a successful challenger party based on a new-politics agenda” (1991:83). They should at least help make sense of the response to the FCP’s efforts the Toths have heard continually since 1991 - ‘I like everything you stand for, but I can’t vote for you’.

By envisioning the electoral arena as a legitimate site for popular struggles over sociomoral issues, party/movement activists also force a reconceptualization of the roles of political parties and the function of voting within democratic societies. The presence of the FCP, the Greens and other party/movements in the institutionalized domain of party politics is evidence that committed activists are willing to challenge the cultural norms of the political status quo. Their efforts to democratize the political process and make it more representative of a “post-materialist” value system is also proof that such norms are not the unalterable constructs of political elites but are gelatinous formulations that can be modified and reconstructed through acts of political will and movement commitment. But this commitment exposes another latent tension party/movement activists must resolve if they are to be successful. Their vision of opening up the political sphere and stripping corporatist economic agendas of their political privilege appears to be inhibited by a cultural lag between their activist strategies and the continued belief by potential sympathetic adherents that the electoral arena should be a site primarily for the expression and defence of materialist concerns.

The myriad obstacles that are created and become manifest when political form and movement function are fused to create a party/movement beg questions concerning the strategic efficacy and organizational stability of an organization like the
Family Coalition Party. In an institutionalized political culture driven by concerns of materialist security and prosperity, the formation of a party/movement on the basis of quality of life issues is a tactical maneouvre that may well lack practicality. Susan Phillips, in examining the Green Party in Canada writes that “the limited success of the Greens in Canadian elections, indicate that this strategy may not be worth the effort, especially in electoral campaigns focused on the economy and debt reduction” (1996:453). Likewise, Kitschelt remarks about left-libertarian party efforts in Europe that “a logic of constituency representation and organizational dealignment may not be the most promising of strategies to be successful in electoral competition” (1990:181). The political track record of party.movements without strong regional bases of support has certainly been dismal, both electorally and in terms of influencing policy. The Greens in Canada have yet to elect a provincial or federal member, the Feminist Party was a short-lived phenomenon, and the FCP has yet to exert any serious influence over government policies concerning the family. Given these contingencies, Kitschelt and Phillips appear to be correct in their assessments about the wisdom of forming a party/movement. Yet it must be remembered that electoral success is only a secondary goal of most party.movements. Chapters Three and Four made abundantly clear that the primary goal of the Family Coalition Party is to effect policy change either within the government or within another political party with which they then would consider merging. And this latter strategy of trying to have another larger and ideologically similar party adopt their founding principles and then merge with them, may offer a minute, but nonetheless potentially viable, tactical option for party.movements like the FCP.
Structurally, party/movements are inherently unstable organizations because of the tensions that the act of political fusion presents for them. The forces of internal structuration and the logic of party competition combine to drive party/movements like the German Greens and the Canadian CCF/NDP away from their movement roots and towards the seductive powers of political professionalization. "To be sure," observes Offe, "the transition from "movement" to "political party" tends to be - and has actually been in the case of the Green party - full of inconsistencies and uneasy as well as unstable compromises" (1990:243). Further, Phillips notes that "Most social-movement scholars argue that it is exceedingly difficult for movements to develop political parties that can over time retain a commitment to radical ideals, combined with an ability to operate in pragmatic ways with a stable base of support" (1996:451).

In the end then, it may well be the fate of party/movements that they are temporary manifestations in the transition from movement to party. It may be that they cannot be more than intermediary structures with exceptionally volatile and unstable cores, whose political half-life is determined only by the commitment and integrity of its activists. Such a reality sets a temporal limit on not only their structural existence but their strategic efficacy, because if it is inevitable that they drift towards party institutionalization, the time that an organization like the FCP has to effect the change it seeks is therefore quite limited.

This is why a strategy of assimilation (absorption by, or merging with, another political party) may not be an objectionable goal for a party/movement. By attending to the objective of influencing the policies of another party to the point of considering a merger, a party/movement alters its requisite organizational demands and cultural expectations. Primarily, party/movements would be able to at least partially avoid the
tension between Kitschelt’s (1989) logic of party competition and logic of constituency representation. By engaging in a strategy of assimilation, an organization like the FCP may attract members more easily by advancing to potential adherents the benefits of joining the party not for the purpose of voting for it, but to demonstrate a show of strength for their issue and a source of potential electoral support for the targeted party should that party adopt as policy, those issues. Such a strategy might also partially eliminate the need for a party/movement to develop its internal base of political expertise and other demands to which a minor party must attend (see Chapter 5).

Of course, a strategy of assimilation still presents a party/movement with the problem of convincing a populist oriented party to adopt a set of inviolable principles. This would require the targeted party to adopt firm policy positions, a practice which is counterproductive to the pursuit of political power in modern democratic societies and so one not likely to be readily endorsed by the party’s elite. This has certainly been the case in terms of the FCP. The efforts of the FCP executive to merge with the Reform Party of BC and also to have the Enterprise League of BC formally adopt their founding principles have been thwarted by the executive in both organizations (see Chapter 3). Finally, even if a strategy of assimilation is successful, there is no guarantee that the issues of concern for a party/movement will not be removed from the targeted party’s policies in the future. It is important to remember that it was just such an act within the Social Credit Party - the removal of the Christianity clause and the adoption of a pro-choice position on abortion - that prompted the Toths to form the Family Coalition Party to begin with.

In the end then, it may well be that the created and emergent tensions experienced by a party/movement make their goals unattainable, but perhaps goal
attainment is not where their true value lies. Rather, it sits hidden in the very existence of party/movements and the processes used by its activists in their struggle to achieve their aims. There is little ideological agreement between the Family Coalition Party and the Green Party, but both share an unwavering commitment to their principles and to their respective struggles to have them realized in popular culture and formal law, and their efforts - through education, raising awareness, encouraging political participation, and fighting to make the political system in British Columbia more democratic and representative - more than their victories or defeats, are what make party/movements an invaluable and integral part of the democratic process.
Chapter 7
Conclusions

Cause by cause they fight,
One by one they lose

Melissa Etheridge, Testify

The experience of western societies suggests that where power is both worth having and hard to get, men and women will combine to form political parties.

Anthony King

The presence of the Family Coalition Party (FCP) on British Columbia’s political landscape has provided the opportunity to explore some questions concerning the pro-family movement in the province as well as the organizational nature of small political parties that have their ideological roots firmly planted within a social movement. Specifically, the main problem has been to determine what characteristic features and problems confront an organization like the FCP, one that exhibits characteristics both of a political party and a social movement organization. Reaching some kind of satisfactory understanding of this problem has required an analytic approach that has focussed on the sociocultural context from which the FCP draws its ideological strength, an examination of the FCP exclusively as a social movement organization, and an evaluation of it as a minor political party of protest. Accordingly, to initially gather knowledge about the party and the pro-family movement in B.C., a series of interviews were conducted with the founders of the party, its executives, election candidates and general members, as well as with directors of various pro-family and pro-life organizations. Contemporary social movement theory, as well as research on minor political parties in Canada and the pro-family movement in Canada and the United
States was then used to develop an understanding of the FCP's organizational and ideological context.

What has emerged is an appreciation of the Family Coalition Party as an organization that shares a high degree of ideological resonance with the Christian right-based pro-family movement in the United States, and an equally high organizational resonance in the party/movement tradition of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in Canada. As a party/movement, the FCP, like the CCF before it, must fight to maintain a balance between maintaining a principled movement position and meeting the requisite demands of party politics. In this struggle, party activists are confronted with a series of problems unique to the dual identity as well as some of those problems that exist for any movement organization or minor political party. The experiences of the CCF and the Green Party (in Canada and Germany) suggest that this is a daunting, if not impossible task, as both parties have fallen prey to the powerful forces of political institutionalization. At present, the Family Coalition Party is maintaining its party/movement balance but the future is uncertain. After six years of marginal political existence and limited support from the broader pro-family movement, the party has reached a crossroads and its activists are now confronted with making a number of decisions that will ultimately determine the organizational fate of this party/movement.

**Summarizing the Findings**

Arguably the unique aspect of this research has been the bringing together of the subject and its analysis. There is considerable research on social movements originating from the left, and there is a significant and growing literature on the Pro-family
movement and the Christian Right in the US. There are also numerous analyses that have emerged within political science circles concerning minor or movement parties in Canada as well as a small amount of work available on the Pro-family movement in this country. However, there is little available research that has attempted a critical evaluation of the Pro-family movement using the theoretical advances of contemporary social movement research. Moreover, limited analysis is available on organizations such as the Family Coalition Party that have a demonstrably hybrid duality of movement function and party form and that focuses on the consequences of that duality. What this research is, in effect, is a project of amalgamation - one that tries to bring together all the various subject matters and theoretical perspectives just mentioned in an effort to make some sociological sense of the persistent presence of a small provincial political party in British Columbia, the Family Coalition Party. The result is a number of theoretical and empirical understandings about the social and political contexts that inform and give rise to such an organization, as well as the common and peculiar fates that a party/movement like the FCP holds for its adherents and activists. In the course of this effort, the political roots and current ideology of the Pro-family movement in Canada and the United States have been untangled and the various organizational dynamics and challenges that confront movement organizations and minor parties have been examined. Most importantly though, the intention of this research has been to contribute to an understanding of the intrinsic nature of party/movements and the variety of particular challenges that accompany the strategic decision to fuse party form with movement function.

The Family Coalition Party is the direct fallout of a group of pro-family activists that by 1991 had become so frustrated and disaffected by their inability to influence
British Columbia's political institutions over pro-family policies that they took the step to form their own political party. After the Social Credit Party, which had until 1991 been a political haven for religious, pro-family conservatives in the province, dropped its Christianity clause and proclaimed itself pro-choice in regards to abortion, politically involved pro-family activists no longer had a point of formal political access through which they could attempt to influence governmental policy on matters they saw as directly impacting traditional family life in BC. Increasing access to abortion, government subsidizations for abortions, the growth of gay familial rights, a tax system that penalized married couples over those living common-law, the lack of parental control in matters of educational curricula and other related issues are all seen by FCP activists as direct threats to the sanctity and future of the traditional family. The various crises which currently beset modern western society in British Columbia, from a straining social safety net to increases in youth crime, are argued to have their aetiology in an eroding valorization for the benefits of maintaining the traditional family as the social, political, economic and cultural mooring post for modern society. The health and fortune of a society is intimately linked, argue supporters of the pro-family movement, to the ability of its political and cultural institutions to maintain the ideas and practices of the traditional family, and the expansion of secular humanism, which underpins the liberal attitudes of the current day, is identified as the main threat to this link. The crisis of modern society is, it is argued, a 'crisis' of the family, one which has been produced in no small part by an ever-increasing level of interference by the state into the private life of the family and one that can only be combatted by a programmatic combination of education and gaining formal political standing in the institutional sphere of policy decision-making.
To this end, the FCP was formed with the intention of acting as a formal political conduit for the pro-family movement in BC as well as a vehicle for engaging in a strategy of political education, particularly during times of general or by-elections in the province. What the FCP shares with other party/movements such as the Green Party (in Europe and Canada), the old CCF, and the now defunct Feminist Party of Canada, is a primary concern for raising awareness about their issue-cluster of concern, a recognition of the need for formal access to the realm of institutionalized politics, and a secondary concern for winning elected office. It is this last point that is perhaps the most distinctive feature of a party/movement like the FCP. It could well be argued that the first two features are shared by all parties (although the political education function of most mainstream parties is more of a hazy apparition save for the self-serving purposes of winning an election), but party/movements are unique in their partially abstentionist approach to electoral politics, the otherwise raison d'être of political parties. The linkages between a party/movement's goal of raising awareness and that of offering an institutionalized access point and giving formal political voice to their cause are direct. The FCP membership believe that there exists an intimate relation between raising consciousness and the political process. Giving formal political voice to their movement lends the entire cause, they believe, a certain political legitimacy, thereby facilitating, it is hoped, the educational efforts of the organization; as one member remarked about the FCP's existence, "if it's a political party, there must be something to it." Moreover, it is a strongly held opinion among the membership that formal party representation is critical to any strategy that targets gaining policy influence as a goal.

Two other characteristics that distinguish party/movements are their agenda of democratic reform and their related internal commitment to operate via a fully
democratic, non-hierarchical decision-making process. The Greens have been the most vociferous in their intentions to implement a program of radicalized democracy (Boggs, 1986; Sandilands, 1992), but the CCF, the Progressives and left-libertarian parties in Europe all had, or have, as part of their package for sociopolitical change a mandate to increase direct citizenry participation in the political process. This has included intentions to infuse their respective parliamentary systems with a greater sense of responsibility and systemic attention towards accurate representation as well as dismantling the corporatist and brokerage practices of 'politics as usual,' which had effectively promoted an ever-increasing concentration of power in the hands of the economic and social elite of a country. Most apparently in countries that, like Canada, have a parliamentary system based on the Westminster, first-past-the-post model, this has come in the form of calls for a switch to some type of proportional representation system. In the case of the Family Coalition Party, while there is active support for such electoral reforms, they are not, in the way the Greens are, committed to a program of radical democratization. Here they depart from their organizational cousins on the left and reflect their conservative roots by advocating gradual change rather than radical reform, although there is a consensus within the party that the hegemonic elite in Canada hold far too much power and that this power should be returned to the ordinary citizen.

It is these characteristics, and a strategic combination of them which finds the goal of electoral success subsumed under a program that seeks to educate, represent and reform, that make a party/movement like the FCP distinguishable from any other political party or social movement organization. The decision by the founders of the FCP to use a party form to directly address the concerns that inform the pro-family
movement was a decisive tactical manoeuvre aimed at creating a political opportunity structure through which they hope to have a policy impact on other political organizations around them. It was a decision to extend the tactical domain of the pro-family movement from the largely exclusive domain of civil society into the realm of institutionalized politics. It had been concluded by the Toths and others that were involved with the formation of the FCP that opportunities for formal political access were no longer available for the movement after the changes within the Socred party, and so the creation of a political party was the last viable, although least favourable, option. To proceed down such a path however, required that they attach their movement functions of education and raising awareness to a party form that carried with it a set of institutional and cultural expectations that most activists are ill-equipped to manage and uninterested in pursuing.

To understand the implications of such a strategy is to appreciate the Family Coalition Party not simply as a movement or a party, but as a unique organizational entity, a party/movement, the end product resulting from the fusion of party form with movement function. Unlike other relational perspectives of parties and movements, which have regarded the two as either derivations of each other, antagonistic to one another, or working in complementary fashion, a fusionist perspective requires that the two be seen as one, a seamless and single organizational form. This view permits not only the characteristic traits of the FCP, the Greens, or the CCF to be identified, but also the series of problems peculiar to this hybrid political form to be exposed. These challenges are principally the product of two forces, "internal structuration" and "the logic of institutional politics," that act upon a party/movement and are manifest in the organizational, institutional and cultural hurdles that confront a party/movement.
Organizationally, party/movements must address both created and compounded difficulties. Those difficulties created by the fusing of form and function pose the most serious threat to the internal stability and organizational future of a group like the FCP. It is with these created tensions that the impact of “internal structuration” and the “logic of institutional politics” is easily observable on party/movements. What party/movements strive to achieve is the maintenance of a balance between the requisite demands of their party form and the continued commitment to the purity of their movement agenda and ideals as well as their internal democratic procedures. The force of internal structuration however, constantly and increasingly pushes an organization like the FCP towards professionalism, oligarchization and the risk of co-optation or absorption. Simultaneously, the logic of institutional politics pressures the executive of a party/movement to decide between the pursuit of what Kitschelt (1989) has termed, a “logic of party competition” or a “logic of constituency representation.” The former, in its purest manifestation, demands of an executive that they abandon entirely their movement function and ideological commitment, while pursuing the latter strategy all but eliminates the potential for a party/movement to gain institutional credibility and electoral success. It appears to be the fate of most party/movements, and certainly has been in the case of the German Greens and the CCF/NDP in Canada, that they succumb to the power of these two forces and jettison, to varying degrees, the ideological commitment of their movement for the opportunity to gain political power by pursuing, at least in part, a logic of party competition. The Family Coalition Party has yet to exhibit any significant symptoms resulting from the effects of these forces, but there are signs that they are not immune to them. By virtue of choosing a strategy that involves using a party form, the founders do betray a bias for the institutional, and there
are those within the membership that would not oppose more flexibility around the party’s positions over its pro-life and pro-family principles. One member in this regard commented that “they could soften their stand on abortion I think, and still get the hard-line support and also get others to support them,” while another said that the party’s “absolute stand on abortion frightens me.”

The compounded difficulties that arise for a party/movement around the issues of membership recruitment, financial stability, and activist motivation are, meanwhile, impacting on the FCP. Minor political parties and social movement organizations both tend to experience chronic resource mobilization problems, and a party/movement like the FCP compounds these difficulties with their organizational duality. Members and/or financial supporters of movements and parties do so with the expectation that these organizations will fulfill the mandates popularly and commonly associated with their form. Supporters of political parties anticipate, for instance, that their party of choice have the potential for governance while movement supporters expect a protocol of activism and constant public education. The FCP risks alienating both sources of support with their party/movement status because of such conflicting expectations; potential supporters are not, in the end, quite sure what they will get by supporting the party. As a result, the FCP is having great difficulty attracting member and financial support from what they view as their natural constituency, the over 20,000 strong pro-life and pro-family community in the province; and so the party continues to hover at a membership level of just under a thousand. Internally, the FCP is also continuing to have a difficult time generating active commitment from its members. Many have joined the party out of loyalty to its founders, Kathleen and Mark Toth, but from executive reports, seem unwilling to commit beyond holding a membership. This is
likely a result of the FCP's duality: people join a party not expecting to work for it, but this is the very thing the movement aspect of the FCP desperately requires. It is also apparent that one small core of activists continue to perform the bulk of the work for the party, although in the last year there have been signs of increased involvement from new members.

The FCP has also been confronted with challenges of an institutional and cultural nature. The overall resistance of the current parliamentary model and its bureaucracies to systemic reform and the geographic construct of the electoral system's mode of representation have created an institutional barrier for party/movements. The "post-materialist" nature of party/movement grievances requires an electoral system capable of representation based on issues rather than spatial proximity. Without a geographic concentration of an issue, it is virtually impossible for a party/movement to gain the electoral attention they require to be perceived as a political threat to mainstream parties and thus have attention directed towards their grievances. In this regard, party/movements like the FCP and the Greens differ dramatically from the likes of the old CCF, the Reform Party of Canada, and the Bloc Quebecois, in that they have no regional stronghold of support which they can use to give political voice to their social grievances. This, in part, is the motivation behind Canadian minor parties like the FCP's and the Greens' support for the adoption of a proportional representation system akin to the German system under which the Greens have had such success. Yet a system capable of offering more direct citizen participation and tangible political representation of issues is likely to be met with continued resistance by the dominant parties and elites in the country (or province) because of the threat it poses to their continued oligarchical control of political power.
As an institution unto itself, the media also poses a vexing challenge for party/movements. The media is of such paramount importance to the fortunes of political parties and movements alike, that political organizations must develop highly effective strategies for attracting and utilizing the media to their advantage. The asymmetrical power relation between the media and political organizations heavily favours the media (Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993), so it is incumbent on parties and movements to construct a media friendly image that will not only gain them standing but have the media cast them in a sympathetic light. For parties, this translates into popularizing their message for mass consumption and articulating it through a charismatic leader in a manner that remains flexibly non-committal on issues of policy. For movements, this necessity demands a specific media strategy that either deliberately avoids the media or deliberately targets the media by presenting them with irresistible images of confrontation and spectacle. Party/movements however, are trapped between the two and must choose between either a strategy of media populism or a strategy of media circumvention. The Family Coalition Party membership does not support the notion of the party engaging in movement strategies for gaining media attention because it is felt that party status carries with it an expectation of proper institutional conduct. On the other hand, should the party pursue a strategy of media populism and present itself as an organization willing to dilute its ideological fervor in order to win media attention as a populist party, it risks alienating its supporters. The consequence is another tension of fusion that retards the potential of a party/movement.

The current popular beliefs of Canadian political culture contribute yet another barrier to the efforts of party/movements. The strategic vision of party/movement
activists is one founded on a belief that the electoral arena is a site of contestation for social, not simply economic, grievances. In turn, this has led activists within the Family Coalition Party to regard political parties as a specialized type of social movement organization and the act of voting as a deliberate and legitimate social movement action. What the FCP and other party/movements have discovered though, is that there exists a cultural lag within their constituencies that inhibits potential adherents from adopting this vision. Political parties, elections, and voting seem to be embraced by the average pro-family supporter as vehicles and opportunities to ensure continued material security. Yet these political institutions and acts have yet to be identified by movement supporters as equally valid opportunities to engage in struggles informed by a “post-material” ethos. This cultural lag of political vision has limited the ability of party/movements like the FCP to mobilize membership, financial and voter support among their natural movement constituencies, and consequently, it has restricted their capacity to present themselves as a serious political force not only to potential supporters, but to the very parties and government bureaucracies they are seeking to influence.

Part of the inability of the FCP to attract voter support is the reductionist nature of the vote in Canada’s and British Columbia’s current electoral system. The FCP faces this problem along with all other minor parties because of their image as political neophytes. Citizens have only one opportunity every election cycle to exercise their political will through the vote and it is unlikely that they will support any party that has a narrow issue-cluster focus or appears unable to guarantee the continued material security that characterizes life in BC and Canada. Despite Inglehart’s insightful observation about the motivations underlying NSM activism - “the values of Western
publics have been shifting from an overwhelming emphasis on material well-being and physical security toward greater emphasis on the quality of life” and that “economic and physical security continue to be valued positively, but their relative priority is lower than in the past” (1977:3) - people do not appear to vote with a primary concern for quality of life issues. The FCP (and likely the Greens) are all too aware that the vote may first be regarded as a defence of material security, not as a promotion for quality of life issues. This problem of the vote, along with the challenges of mobilization already mentioned, long-standing loyalties to established parties, a first-past-the-post electoral system, shifting political cleavages and a general political cultural belief in deference to authority all contribute to the creation of a rocky terrain that minor parties in Canada must traverse if they are to have any hope of achieving their electoral goals.

Regardless of these obstacles though, minor parties, regardless of their origins or goals, have been constantly identifiable on Canada’s political landscape from the time of the Progressives federally in the 1920s, to the provincial Greens and the FCP of the 1990s. Alberto Melucci wrote of social movements that “these groups become the indicators, the symptoms of the structural problems of the system. Through their visible action they publicize existing conflicts, even though their mobilization is limited to a specific time and place” (1980:55); he could just as well have been writing about the presence of minor parties in Canadian politics. Party/movements, movement parties, fragment parties and flash parties have all emerged in attempt to give formal political voice to grievances that range from regional exploitation and cultural alienation to economic dysfunction and sociomoral injustice. Their presence bears witness to the crisis of representation that has beset dominant cadre parties as a result of their exclusionary and elitist practices of corporatism and brokerage politics. The FCP for
one, is a direct product of the attempt by Grace McCarthy to broker support for her leadership bid by shifting the Social Credit Party towards a more secular, all-encompassing platform, thereby attempting to broaden its appeal. The CCF was a direct result of the economic exploitation felt by Western farmers at the hands of eastern business interests, and the Canadian federal Greens remain at odds with the NDP because the latter is now widely regarded among the left as having fallen victim to the political practices of compromise and corporatism.

Like minor parties, social movements, as Melucci indicates, betray by their presence a systemic ill. Imbalances of power, representation, economic fortune, sociopolitical enfranchisement and other social inequities and dysfunctions have given rise, at one time in history or another, to social movements. Since the 1960s, it is the New Social Movements (NSMs) that have captured the attention and imaginations of sociologists and political scientists for their tactics of engagement over post-materialist issues such as the environment, gay rights, women's equality and the peace movement. What has been particularly unique about NSMs has been their abstentionist attitude towards institutional politics and their concomitant claiming of arenas in civil society (including the family, the school, and the workplace) as legitimate terrain for political action and expression. This was a reversal of a historical trend for social movements which had, since the early nineteenth century, directly linked themselves to party politics (Zald, 1988). This deliberate refusal to acquiesce to the practices of the political status quo, and the opening up of previously apolitical spheres for political engagement, produced for the feminist movement, the ecology movement and other NSMs, a groundswell of popular support because they have provided minority voices with a means of articulating grievances without the risk of censure by hegemonic elites. What
has subsequently transpired over twenty-five years of vigorous movement activism has produced substantial gains in the realms of popular consciousness, formal law and political policy. In British Columbia this has meant, among other things, increased recognition for gay marriages, the right for gays to adopt children, the ready availability of abortion services in hospitals and private clinics, and a public education system that is committed to educating students about homosexuality and presenting the gay family as a legitimate familial form.

Naturally the NSMs have faced opposition from their detractors, most often religious and/or conservative minded ideologues and activists who regard the gains won by NSMs as a threat to the dominant hegemonic order and to the status of their own historically privileged ideology. It is the widely held belief among the pro-family movement that the secular humanist ideology that undergirds the NSMs has spread throughout civil and political society and is threatening to dismantle the structures that have provided social order and material security for generations of Canadians and Americans. The most prominent of these oppositional groups have been the pro-life movement and the pro-family movement, of which the latter (at least in the US and in British Columbia) represents numerous different special interest groups. They are movement efforts by religious conservatives who have set out to not simply oppose the agendas of various NSMs but to actively work towards the popularization and legal acceptance of a Christian and conservative based lifestyle that has as its sociopolitical and moral centrepiece unmitigated support for the traditional family unit of a married heterosexual couple and their children.

Typical treatment of these movements by sociologists has been to regard them as ancillary to the efforts of the NSMs by categorizing them as countermovements -
movements that arise in opposition to the initial efforts of other movements and resist them with varying degrees of success. While this conceptualization may have been empirically valid in the 1960s and even through the 1970s, in the 1990s it has become inadequate for three main reasons. First, during any historical moment, standpoint largely determines who is the movement and who is 'counter'. Pro-life supporters have always considered pro-choice advocates as the counter-movement and *visa versa*, so it is important to remember that the analytic distinction is largely an artificial one. Second, and more importantly, cultural and policy victories over the last twenty-five years can be claimed by various NSMs. Abortion laws are the most evident example of this: with the legalization of abortion in Canada in 1969 and in the US in 1973, and the general popular acceptance of a woman's right to have access to safe abortions, the pro-choice and pro-life movements have reversed their categorical roles. The pro-life movement no longer works as a countermovement trying to prevent or resist the efforts of the pro-choice movement but rather is working towards reversing pro-choice victories with their movement efforts to have more restrictive abortion laws enacted. It is now the pro-choice movement that is in the defensive position of being a countermovement. Finally, the pro-family and pro-life movements are, like the NSMs, concerned primarily with quality of life issues. It is their opinion that a lifestyle based on Christian values and conservative politics offers the best opportunity for the 'good life' and for achieving social and economic justice. This would seem to bring them into the fold of the New Social Movements, though in other respects it would be implausible to consider them as such.

Rather, the pro-family and pro-life movements are best thought of as a sub-type of new social movement, a *resurgence movement* that is attempting to resist social change
while simultaneously promoting social change by working towards the re-establishment of lost, but previously dominant and popularized cultural beliefs. Appreciated as such, it becomes possible to evaluate pro-family movement organizations using the concepts that have been applied by movement scholars in their analytical efforts to understand contemporary movements. In examining the Family Coalition Party this way it is necessary to separate the party form from movement function, but once this is done, the FCP can be identified as a social movement organization (SMO) that faces the same resource mobilization, framing and political opportunity difficulties that confront all contemporary movements. Scarce human and financial resources and inadequate framing efforts are all contributing to the current growth impediments being experienced by the FCP. There is however, a novelty to their tactical approach as an SMO. Most analysts point to the importance that available political opportunities have to the goals of SMOs, but in the case of the Family Coalition Party, none appeared satisfactory, so they created their own. As a conservative resurgence movement that has created its own political opportunity, the FCP represents a challenge to contemporary social movement research because its presence exposes the discipline's “theoretical silences” (Buechler, 1993) regarding substantive theoretical and empirical analysis of such movement organizations. In some small measure, this research has attempted to remedy this situation. This research in fact indicates that all party/movements and social movement organizations, irrespective of ideological orientation, face the same myriad difficulties in their efforts to gain support and sociopolitical legitimacy for their cause.

Yet it cannot be forgotten that the Family Coalition Party, while organizationally similar to, say, the Greens in the problems it faces, has a singularly different set of
ideological foundations. The pro-family movements in Canada and the US have their roots in the deep traditions of conservative political thought and Christian orthodoxy. The intimate relationship between conservative thought and Christianity can be traced back to Edmund Burke's original work on conservative thought through to its present manifestation in American New Right politics and certain Canadian neoconservative programs. Untangling the ideological, religious and political strands that gives the pro-family movements in the two countries their sociopolitical vision, three conclusions can be drawn. First, throughout the various mutations that conservative thought has undergone in Britain, the United States, and Canada, it has exhibited a remarkable resiliency. At its core, conservatism continues to reflect a belief in a minimalist state, free market economics, individual responsibility and the importance of the traditional family as the cornerstone of a civilized society. The importation of conservatism from Britain to the US and Canada introduced these tenets into the dominant hegemonies of both nations and it is from these roots that the pro-family movement has arisen. Second, although these tenets are equivalent in both traditions, Canadian and American brands of conservatism do differ because of Canada's tradition of socialism and America's mainly liberal political legacy. Third, and most significantly for the pro-family movement, conservative traditions in Canada and the US have always overtly emphasized the intimate relation between the stability of the traditional family and the general health of the nation.

The pro-family movement is at its most mature and powerful at present in the US. The Christian Coalition and other pro-family organizations have exerted tremendous influence on the American polity through their effective lobbying efforts within the Republican Party. A relatively permeable American state, with its diffuse
system of political power, provides numerous political opportunities for PFM activists to gain access to the policy process necessary for promoting their agenda. Also, the lack of a socialist tradition in the United States has permitted pro-family organizers to frame their agenda with support for neoconservative economic policies. What has resulted is a cohesive New Right program of pro-family values, neoconservative economics, and minimalist government, that has a broad base of support rooted in the evangelical Christian community. Through the coordinated use of lobby groups, public awareness campaigns, political action committees and tele-evangelism, the pro-family movement in the United States has been highly effective at combatting the struggles of New Social Movement organizations, and appears poised to exert even more influence in the future.

By contrast, the Canadian pro-family movement, at least in British Columbia, is still in a stage of mobilizational infancy despite the fact that many of its organizations have been in existence for some years. Pro-life and pro-family organizations engage in their activism, for the most part, independent from one another. While coordinated efforts are at times apparent over particular issues, there is no sense of overall organizational or strategic unity among the directors of these movement organizations, nor does it appear that any such effort is forthcoming. Asked about the possibility and potential benefit of coalescing under some kind of umbrella organization, pro-life and pro-family directors, as well as FCP members offered mixed responses. A few believe the possibility exists, and that the benefits could be tremendous, while others acknowledge potential benefits to such an arrangement but think it unlikely to occur because the separate organizations appear to relish their autonomy. Still another group felt it would be detrimental to the overall movement as well as an impossibility, again because of the strongly independent nature of the people running the organizations.
Another particularly evident obstacle limiting the coalition potential of the PFM in British Columbia is the staunchly apolitical and non-partisan position of most of the organizations. There continues to be a stubborn belief within the movement that change must come to the political from civil society and that this can only be achieved by a strategy of maintaining the appearance of political neutrality. In this respect, the current status of the pro-family movement in BC is best thought of as existing in a state of organizational disunity and political indirection.

Adding to the movement's difficulties is the presence of a strong state exhibiting a pattern of highly concentrated political power and a sociopolitical culture resistant to the idea of an economic system based purely on the principles of the free market. The infusion of socialist doctrine in Canadian socioeconomic traditions makes it more difficult for the PFM in Canada to include a program of neoconservative economics in their agenda, even amongst their own ranks. As Lorna Erwin's (1993) research points out, the pro-family organization REAL Women found its support waning after it began to incorporate support for neoconservative economic policies in its pro-family message. Among the Family Coalition Party, the same phenomenon can be found. While the party is made up of economic conservatives, they are opposed to the draconian implications associated with a complete dismantling of BC's social safety net. In discussing the party's position on public funding for abortions for instance, Heather Stilwell acknowledged that

"We are hard on abortion funding, and I don't know if that would be right wing, and we are not going to allow the public purse to pay for abortion but then that doesn't mean we are miserable and hard nosed, that we are going to be sending pregnant girls off on a leaky raft. The government can also be used for helping them through the difficulty."
In the hypothetical case that the FCP were to form the provincial government, this remark hints at a funding redistribution and change in social policy direction more than an *ipso facto* abandonment of the Canadian social safety net tradition. Of course, strong deconstructive measures have been attempted, federally under Brian Mulroney’s conservatives and provincially with the conservatives in Ontario and Saskatchewan, but most notably in BC during the early 1980s where among other drastic measures, "In the social services area, the Bennett government eliminated the Family Support Worker Program, the Provincial Inservice Resource Team, and Mental Retardation Coordinator positions as part of a major downsizing of the staff in the then Ministry of Human Resources" (Prince, 1996:255).

These have been sporadic and scattered efforts that have met with swift and vehement opposition however, and while nothing is guaranteed, Canada’s socialist tradition does seem to provide, at least in British Columbia, a partial buffer that has to date prevented the long-term implementation of neoconservatism’s harsh socioeconomic realities. It has at least prevented the pro-family movement in British Columbia from incorporating the most austere aspects of neoconservative doctrine into their agenda.

With Canada’s parliamentary system, the PFM in British Columbia has met its greatest obstacle to gaining policy access and popular support for its cause. Unlike the American state, political power becomes highly concentrated in the hands of party leaders, Premiers, and the Prime Minister under a Westminster model, which severely limits the political opportunities available to movement organizations. The pro-family movement must rely primarily on government sponsored standing commissions or royal commissions to gain policy access, or must attempt to work from within political parties and try to influence their platforms. None of these opportunities have proven particularly fruitful for the pro-family movement in BC, due in part to the populist
nature of contemporary party politics and the growth in popular support for the messages of the New Social Movements as they concern the rights of women, gays and children; Thus, as a last resort, Kathleen and Mark Toth, together with three other pro-family supporters, created a party/movement, the Family Coalition Party, in an effort to create a political opportunity for the movement and give formal political voice to their cause.

Presently, this is where the Family Coalition Party stands. It is a small political voice for the pro-family movement which grows a bit louder during election periods, but is for the most part, as one FCP member described it, remains “a voice in the wilderness.” While it struggles to have that voice heard, it is also waiting for the pro-family movement in British Columbia to recognize and accept it as a viable political opportunity structure for the movement. Should this occur, the FCP potential as a party/movement may have a chance to be realized. Likely this would come through a strategy of assimilation that targets another political party for the purposes of merging with it. Electoral success seems highly improbable under the current electoral system in BC, even should a proportional representation reform be implemented. The party would have great difficulty electing a member based on a narrow issue-cluster platform of traditional family values in a popular culture that reflects growing support for familial diversity and a political culture that emphasizes materialist over quality of life concerns during election periods. Members themselves, true to the party/movement character of their organization, see electoral success as a long term and a highly challenging goal. Heather Stilwell estimated it would be at least ten years before the party won a parliamentary seat, while another member remarked, ‘I think it’s faced by a difficult role, it could be eight years to get a candidate elected.”
The future of the Family Coalition Party would seem to rest with its potential as a political opportunity structure for the broader pro-family and pro-life movements. Yet to have this potential realized, the party is keenly aware that it must begin to effectively manage the vast number of organizational difficulties that confront a party/movement. Party executives know for instance, that principal among these must be their framing efforts, with which they must convince other pro-family organizations and supporters that the use of a party form is a viable and potentially invaluable strategy for the PFM. After six years of receiving little support from their natural constituency, it seems clear that support is not readily forthcoming and so the party executive is realizing that it must actively seek it out with a vigourous framing effort. Additionally, it seems the party’s lack of support is to some degree the result of the general disunity that exists within the entire movement. One FCP member commented about the PFM that “right now they’re not together of course, and a lot of these people are lone riders as it were, saying ‘let’s ride in and shoot up the town’. So I don’t know if they want to be involved in that kind of action [coalition formation].” Part executive seem to recognize that without a project of unification on the part of the broader movement, and without their own party aggressively addressing its organizational challenges, the potential of the FCP as a party/movement is unlikely to be realized.

Ideologically, the party does appear to have the advantage of having the dominant hegemon on its side. The FCP is what Merkl (1988) aptly calls a “neglected old minority” and should a conservative party once again pay attention to the demands of these religious conservatives, they could perhaps realize a strategy of assimilation. The party is in agreement, for instance, with all the policies of the Reform Party of BC (except for their positions on abortion and defining what constitutes a family) and
supports the efforts of the Enterprise League of British Columbia as they try to unite the right in the province. The FCP’s efforts at uniting with the Reform Party have been stymied to date, but even in these defeated efforts, Reform did give serious consideration to the demands of the FCP. The most recent example of these coalition efforts is the upcoming meeting between the new Reform Party leader, Wilf Hanni and the FCP. At Mr. Hanni’s request, the parties are to meet in late September, 1997 to discuss the potential of a merger. These ideological sympathies and the titillating possibilities of assimilation provide a source of continued motivation and commitment for the party. Additionally, the successes of the pro-family movement in the United States and the highly resonant agendas between the American PFM and the Family Coalition Party contribute to the belief by the membership that they are pursuing a course of action that will eventually result in victory. In the end though, it will probably be the deeply historical and religious roots of their conservative and Christian beliefs that keeps them battling in the eye of the political storm over family values.

What the organizational fate of the Family Coalition Party will be is, as of now, an unanswerable question. Some members believe it will grow, others feel that once the Toths are no longer active in the party it will collapse. Still others believe the future of the party may be determined by the euthanasia issue, which they believe will have a scope to mobilize people far beyond that of abortion. Past FCP president John O’Flynn for one thinks the party’s future

“Depends on where euthanasia goes. We’ll sit back and see what’s happening in this country. This is where the movement will go. The abortion issue is stale, there’s not much happening. Genetic engineering, reproductive technologies, these will add to the debate, some of the adoption issue will add to the movement, but I think its going to be contingent on euthanasia.”
Most suggest that it will continue to exist in its roughly present form, neither growing nor deteriorating. Certainly there appears to be a steady enough supply of grievances to motivate the party's members to maintain the party.

The growing support for gay parental rights in BC, the linking of the NDP government's Internet web page for youth to homosexual web pages, efforts by Southern Baptists in the US to boycott the Disney corporation over their purported promotion of homosexuality, and reports that "Miss G" (the Manitoba woman who was forced into drug rehabilitation to protect her unborn foetus) has become a born-again Christian and is drug-free, all serve to fuel the FCP's motivation.4 As one founding member commented

"It's done to them, not by themselves - every time they see the abortion on demand issue in the paper or on TV, condoms in schools, see the issue of drugs in schools, sex education in schools - they see it and say this is wrong, we could sit down as the FCP and do something. This impetus drives them further and further on."

For the FCP and analysts of the pro-family movement in British Columbia, it is largely a matter of waiting to see what social forces exogenous to the movement will emerge to mould and shape its political trajectory and that of its party/movement. Norm Herriott, a long committed executive member of the FCP, suggests that the importance of the FCP lies in developing, and then maintaining the organization to a point of political readiness because as he said, "I think we're poised. If this movement gets off the ground and migrates north, it'll happen. That's the only real hope we have of becoming a party of significant size - if we're poised, ready to become the party for families."

**Future Directions**

While this wait goes on, there exists a number of important analytical avenues to travel down in order to gain a better understanding of the political and social dynamics
of the pro-family movement in British Columbia. Norm Herriott’s comment points to
the necessity of examining the nature and impact of cross-national connections and
influences between the Canadian and American pro-family movements and their
respective organizations. For instance, Focus on the Family and the Christian Coalition,
both originating in the US, have established themselves in British Columbia, and
although claiming autonomy, the BC chapters may provide an organizational conduit
for American influenced pro-family ideologies. The organizational disunity of pro-
family groups in British Columbia also requires study to uncover why these lines of
fracture exist, how they specifically impact the micro and macro mobilization efforts of
the movement, and what tactical imperatives are required to transform the movement
into a more cohesive body of organizations for those seeking this outcome.

Such analyses demands that research on contemporary social movements
expands beyond exclusive attention to movements originating from the left. By
embarking upon studies of conservative movements using contemporary movement
theory, not only does the general validity of that theory expand, but comparative
analysis makes possible an understanding of the relational dynamics between
antagonistic movements. The concept of resurgence movements could be particularly
helpful in this regard. With a dual emphasis on the promotion of and resistance to social
change, this movement typology is able to capture the dynamic nature of social change
in a democratic society and the constant interplay between opposing movements,
legislated change, and popular consciousness.5 By respecting the historical moment in
which various movements exist, it becomes possible to understand that pro-family
movement activists are seeking to not only resist the efforts of the New Social
Movements in typical countermovement fashion, but also to re-establish a value system
based on the valorization of the traditional family, which is something they believe is the answer to achieving a healthy, stable social order. In the future, as popular consciousness and legislative mandates continue to change, this concept could apply equally well to other movements as they in turn set out to simultaneously protect and promote their visions of the good society.

Concerning party/movements, further studies will contribute not only to the understanding of these unique political structures, but will also clarify the relationship between political parties and social movements. Further studies are also required of party/movements to more fully determine if they are only capable of a temporary existence as intermediary structures, or whether they are able to maintain their tenuous balance between two disparate forms. This is one of the reasons why the study of such small political organizations like the FCP is valuable - they provide an opportunity to study the structural and cultural forces that shape the political and organizational fortunes of neophyte political groups. They also provide an opportunity to gain insight into a potentially emerging social movement. The Family Coalition Party and other minor social movement organizations and political parties may be political barometers indicating a much broader base of social discontent within civil society; to study these small groups is to gain an understanding about the political perceptions and motivations that underlie citizen activism in democratic societies.

More research is also needed to clearly determine the strategic value to a movement of party/movement organizations like the FCP. In an apparent paradox, it has been argued that the Family Coalition Party was the result of the failed efforts by some pro-family activists to effect change through the use of social movement organizations, but simultaneously it was argued that the New Social Movements have
been, in varying degrees, successful in their efforts to bring about changes in the sociopolitical and cultural systems of British Columbia. This is a situation which suggests party/movements may not be critical to the fortunes of a social movement, but only by more closely examining party/movements for their substantive contributions to the goals of a movement, could this be determined. For instance, at present the Family Coalition Party has been able to contribute little in the way of substantial gains for the pro-family movement in British Columbia, but more research is required to determine whether this is due to a shortcoming of the party, or the broader movement, or the lack of utility a party/movement has for a movement in general. Perhaps more could be gleaned in this regard from a study of the Green Party (in Canada and particularly in Germany). Both parties have existed for a much longer time than the FCP and so there is a greater opportunity to examine what, if any, substantial contributions they have made to the successes of the overall environment movement. The existence of party/movements for example, may cause mainstream parties to alter their platforms in an attempt to win over the membership base of the party/movement. This in turn would provide the broader movement with potentially more powerful political representation of their issues and diminish the need for a party/movement. Some movements meanwhile, may be able to gain enough popular support for their agenda that mainstream parties or the government itself will respond to their demands without the existence of a party/movement. The factors that might produce these different results remain unclear however, and only further investigation into the nature of the relationship different movements have with political parties and the cultural attitudes of the general public will allow them to be uncovered.
A second avenue of research which could help resolve this apparent paradox would be to identify any factors which might explain why a particular group of activists chooses to pursue change through the use of a party/movement, while others deem single identity social movement organizations sufficient. In the case of the Family Coalition Party, it might be that their past involvement with mainstream parties such as Social Credit, or their generally conservative belief system, leaves them with a bias that favours using the institutionalized party form. It may also be that the formation of a political party is the result of a belief that popular opinion is heavily weighted against the issues of concern (in this case those of the pro-family movement), which makes effecting change exclusively within civil society virtually impossible. Yet this would not explain why many pro-family movement activists still believe a concentrated effort within civil society and without formal political affiliation is a more appropriate strategy. This in turn suggests that there may be a strong social psychological component in the decision to form a political party on behalf of the broader movement - which may include such factors as previous successes working with other political parties; a greater comfort level working within political parties than those who oppose this strategy; a deeper confidence in the political system than felt by other activists; or the existence of dissatisfactions with various social movement organizations which have arisen over years of perceived unsuccessful activism. Broadly speaking, it may be that activists' prior records of experience with various types of interest intermediation practices that guide their decisions regarding whether or not to pursue change through the political party process, but only further investigation focusing on these issues will be able to resolve these questions.
All such research would benefit from the complementary perspectives offered by political scientists and sociologists. It would seem that an increased level of theoretical and empirical collaboration of this kind would yield some overdue insights into the enigmatic nature of party/movements. While there are many questions left to be asked, it is hoped that this dissertation on the Family Coalition Party of British Columbia has made some contribution to an understanding of the pro-family movement, the specific challenges confronting the FCP, and the sociopolitical dynamics of party/movements in general. Certainly two things have become abundantly clear: mobilizing political support for matters of social and moral conscience is indeed a tricky business, and the hotly contested debates that make up the politics of the family will continue well into the future.
Endnotes

Notes to Chapter 1


4. The term party/movement will be used throughout the dissertation to indicate that organizations like the FCP have a character distinct from typical mainstream parties. Mainstream parties it will be argued (see Chapter 5) have as their primary goal, the winning of elected office. To this end, they may at times support various social movement issues, but this is more to gain political office than having a primary concern over the particular movement issue. Party/movements on the other hand, have social change through awareness and education as their primary goal and winning political office as a secondary and long term goal. The ordering of the term party/movement acknowledges the primary popular image of the FCP as a political party.

5. Of course, any small organization such as the FCP will have difficulty gaining media exposure in general because of their limited financial resources to purchase air time and their typically marginal political status.

6. Regarding the 'status frustration' experienced by conservatives living in an increasingly liberalized American society, Daniel Bell in "The Dispossessed," commented that "What the right fears as a whole is the erosion of its own social position" (Bell, 1964:2). See also, David R. Schweitzer, *Status Frustration and Conservatism in Comparative Perspective: The Swiss Case*, (London: Sage, 1974).

7. The adjective 'informal' is being used to denote ongoing queries to interview respondents for reasons of clarification or expansion on points brought up during their formal interviews. This has primarily involved the party executive and is done with approval for followup which respondents gave during their initial interviews.

8. Reasons for these extraordinary meetings have among other things included the development of election brochures, constituency association meetings, and election office grand openings, pre and post-election strategy meetings.

9. Included in this remainder were 4 of 8 FCP candidates from the 1991 election, a member who ran as an FCP candidate in Ontario's 1987 provincial election and three members who were on the original board of directors of the FCP but who are no longer active on behalf of the party. 22 women and 34 men were interviewed, the youngest being 32 and the oldest 83.

10. Such factors include social distance between the interviewer and respondent, the interview setting, body language and physical or verbal cues from the interviewer, respondent ego threat, and respondent expectations of the interviewer and the interview. For a discussion of these factors, see for instance, R.L. Gorden, *Interviewing: Strategy, Techniques and Tactics* (Homewood: Dorsey Press, 1980);


Notes to Chapter 2

1. In *The Conservative Mind*, Russell Kirk lists six canons of conservative thought which mirror those stipulated by Kendall and Carey, although Kirk does not highlight the inherent tensions that accompany them.

2. In his discussion of conservative politics from 1960 to 1994 (*The Right in the Twentieth Century*, 1994) Brian Girvin makes the argument that the post war period was by no means a period of static activity for the British Conservative Party. The party spent this time sloughing off their “association with the inter-war authoritarian right” and consciously motivated their actions towards becoming electorally competitive with the left.

3. Seymour Martin Lipset (1988) argues that the label ‘neoconservative’ was attached to this group by Michael Harrington to discredit and distance them from the Democratic Socialists. It was an attempt to have them viewed as the left wing of the right, rather than the right wing of the left. It has proven to be an excellent sociological example of the power of labeling. Among the works cited, see also Peter Steinfels *The Neoconservatives: The Men who are changing America’s Politics*, 1979.

4. Social democratic beliefs were not entirely jettisoned by the neoconservatives in their anti-Communist positions. As Lipset indicates though, tensions arose within the Republican party between the neoconservatives and the classic laissez-faire conservatives, a tension which likely began to tug at the neoconservative commitment to the welfare state.

5. Brian Girvin uses the term modernization to encompass social changes brought about by advances of the feminist movement, the challenges to a patriarchal social order, conventional sexual morality, and changes in the structure of the family. See *The Right in the Twentieth Century: Conservatism and Democracy*, 1994.

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6. Richard Viguerie, a prominent New Right figure and "long the symbolic leader of the New Right" has identified the date of its formation as 1974 when President Ford overlooked a number of staunch conservatives for the vice-presidential ticket in favour of the more moderate and liberal Nelson Rockefeller (Gottfried and Fleming, 1988:78).

7. These four strands of New Right thought and form are not mutually exclusive, they spill over and blend into one another to such an extent that as Girvin (1988) points out, it would be extremely difficult to analyze them independently.

8. The Adolph Coors company is but the most prominent corporate contributors and supporters to the New Right. Val Burris' "Business Support for the New Right: A Consumer's Guide to the Most Reactionary American Corporations" (Socialist Review, 1987 No. 91: 33-63) outlines the diverse corporate support the New Right enjoys, including Dr. Pepper, Kraft and Seven-Eleven. The oil industry is by far the largest contributor to the New Right. See also: Jenkins & Shumate's Cowboy Capitalists and the Rise of the New Right: An Analysis of Contributors to Conservative Policy Formation Organizations" Social Problems, 33(2):130-145.

9. While the New Right doubtless has a radical fringe, it would be an analytical error to consider the entire New Right as radical and one that would limit the potential understanding of the New Right's political and social dynamics in liberal democracies. Leonard Weinberg put it this way: "By expanding the meaning of radical rightism to include such movements as the New Right and New Christian Right ... is to distort the picture and practice a kind of academic McCarthyism. To be sure there may be some blurring of difference at the fringes but the New Right and New Christian Right groups publicly disavow racism ... Their enemies are secular humanists, liberals and Communists, not blacks, Jews and foreigners" (Weinberg, 1993: 185-86).

10. Progress towards a neoconservative based hegemony for Canada has been uneven in the sense that both the Trudeau and Mulroney governments had records that were patchy and ambiguous in this regard (Hatt et al, 1990; McBride & Shields, 1993).

11. The Vancouver Sun has published numerous articles on the Common Sense Revolution, including: "Welfare-cuts horror story probed" "Ontario plans to axe 10 000 jobs" "Ontario set to make people work for their welfare money" "Ontario unsheathes sharp knife to cut spending by 5.5 billion" "Ontario budget slashers celebrate year of tumult" "Cuts to the bone feared in Ontario services" "Ontario unloads housing, welfare costs" "Harris budget to cut welfare payments by 22%" (July 21, 1995).


13. In "Manning, Harris form Reform-Tory alliance" (Vancouver Sun August 30, 1995 p. A4), it is noted that Manning sees that "an alliance with Harris is natural since a number of the themes that he is pressing are ones that Reform has plowed the ground on in Ontario and other places".


16. See Stephen J. Carter’s *The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion* (1993, New York: Basic Books). In it, Carter demonstrates how legal and judicial actions have structurally and culturally dissuaded people from engaging in religious based political activity. His is also a position which demonstrates the variability of opinion among Christians regarding matters of public policy, for while he is arguing for a greater degree of involvement of religiously committed people in politics and law, he nonetheless opposes policies supporting prayer and the teaching of scientific creationism in public schools.


20. Diamond argues for instance, that different organizations have been involved and responsible for different campaigns. The National Association of Evangelicals, for instance, lobbied actively over educational policy and employment equity bills, while the Christian Freedom Foundation advocated economic policies in the 1950s that were forerunners to Ronald Reagan’s “trickle down” economics of the 1980s.


22. Apart from the sheer numbers of Evangelicals, there was the motivating forces of a religious fervor promulgated by charismatic preachers and the expansive televangelical empire capable of reaching millions nation wide. This empire included nation wide radio and television programs such as Pat Robertson’s “700 Club” and his Christian Broadcasting Network, as well as print media outlets such as Third Century Publishers and publications such as *Conservative Digest*. These forums gave a wonderful platform for the New Right to mobilize support for its agenda as well as developing links between conservative political agendas and born-again Christian ideals. See Diamond’s *Spiritual Warfare* and *Roads to Dominion* for a detailed history of televangelism in the US.


26. For instance, in the 1996 Washington state gubernatorial race, “Christian radical” Ellen Craswell won the Republican nomination on a platform that included views that “homosexuals can become heterosexuals if they work hard enough at it …[and] ... the righteous should go into government.” “‘Christian radical’ candidate splits Washington state GOP” *Vancouver Sun* 24 October, 1996, p. A14.


28. The recently embraced and implemented V-chip, which allows parents to restrict what shows their children may see on TV, was invented by a Canadian Evangelical, Tim Collings. “The Evangelical Faith that drives the V-chip’s inventor” *Vancouver Sun,* 22 June 1996, p. D28. In the article, Collings says he tries to “do things that would edify the lord, rather than blaspheme. I try to make society better rather than worse.” The article continues that Collings “disagrees with homosexuality and the “homosexual lifestyle.” He doesn’t condone any form of promiscuity or sex outside marriage. He opposes abortion.”


33. Up until 1990, the Social Credit Constitution contained a Christianity clause which was the first of its principles and objectives: 2(a) To foster and encourage the universally recognized principles of Christianity in human relationships.


37. For convenience, the term “Left” will be used to describe those who generally adopt socialist democratic positions to the left of centre on a linear political spectrum. This would include, but not be restricted to, groups or individuals supportive of trade unionism, feminism, gay rights, environmental movements and other New Social Movements.

38. Modeled after the Republican Party’s “Contract with America” the Christian Coalition’s “Contract with the American Family” was unveiled in May, 1995. It includes ten clauses to promote the pro-family agenda, including a ban on partial-birth abortions, promotion of religious liberty, and a return of local control over education. In *Active Faith* Reed has said this is a document of long term vision and activism, one that is a “measured and gradual passage of key provisions that built momentum over a period of years” (Reed, 1996: 202).

39. If there are two books which can be held up as the bibles of the pro-family and CCR movement in Canada, William Gairdner’s *The Trouble With Canada: A Citizen Speaks Out* and *War Against the Family: A Parent Speaks Out*, classify as such. Virtually biblical in their immensity, they outline the religious conservative arguments and fears about the decay of the traditional Anglo-Saxon family in Canada at the hands of liberal social policies which concern gay and women’s rights, abortion, immigration, and sex education in schools. A pop culture driven by a secular humanist ethic and an over intrusive state into the realm of private life are Gairdner’s focus of attack in works that offer no pretense in ideological bent with chapter titles including “The Feminist Mistake: Women against the Family,” “The Great Welfare Rip-Off: Soaking Everyone, to Pay Everyone,” and “The Silent Destruction of English Canada: Multiculturalism, Bilingualism, and Immigration.”

40. Policies such as legalized abortion in Canada (1969) and the US (1973), the increase of women choosing to be in the labour force, liberalized divorce laws, and increased acceptability of common-law and gay unions have all contributed to this growing social diversity of family structure. See for instance, Statistics Canada’s *Growing Up In Canada: National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth* (1996).

41. Ralph Reed in *Active Faith* (1996), has acknowledged the critical importance of Catholic support for the Christian Coalition if its agenda is to succeed.

42. Even into the 1990s these are the primary targets of pro-family activists. James Dobson of Focus on the Family has claimed that abortion and gay rights are the two most important issues for the NCR (Diamond, 1995).

43. This strategy can consistently be found in the themes of pro-family advocates in the US, Britain and Canada. In the US, presidential policy advisors like George Gilder, Charles Murray and Martin Anderson, have all pursued this trajectory. In Britain, Roger Scruton and Ferdinand Mount, both advisors to Margaret Thatcher, have done the same. Canadian William Gairdner is continuing this trend with his work. While not always an overt strategy, their defence of the traditional nuclear family, patriarchal social order and bourgeois morality is also an opposition to the growth of secular humanism and liberal social policies. See for instance, Gilder’s *Men and Marriage* (1988), Murray’s *In Pursuit of Happiness and Good Government* (1988), Mount’s *The Subversive Family* (1982), Scruton’s *Sexual Desire* (1986), and Gairdner’s *The War Against the Family: A Parent Speaks Out* (1992).
44. For instance, euthanasia and doctor-assisted suicide cases such as the recent Robert Latimer case in Saskatchewan and the Sue Rodriguez case in British Columbia are slowly stirring up opposition among the pro-life community. Latimer killed his twelve year old daughter who was suffering from severe cerebral palsy by carbon monoxide poisoning. Sue Rodriguez took her fight for the right to a doctor assisted suicide to the Supreme Court of Canada. Despite losing, with the assistance of NDP MLA Svend Robinson, she enlisted the help of an anonymous physician to help her commit suicide before Lou Gehrig's disease left her unable to do so. There are also numerous examples of the growing pressures on government's to deal with these issues. “Farmer hopes for acquittal in daughter's mercy killing” Vancouver Sun 25 November, 1996, p. A7. “Mom wants Parliament to decide right to die” Vancouver Sun, 14 November, 1996, p. A1. “Top US court to decide on right to die” Vancouver Sun, 2 October, 1996, p. A11. “Euthanasia debate leaves Australia locked in bitter debate” Vancouver Sun, 27 September, 1996, p. A14.

45. For a sociological analysis of the abortion debate in the US, see Kristin Luker’s 1984 book, Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood.

46. In addition, there are pro-life political action committees like National Pro-Life (NPLPAC) and Life Amendment (LAPAC). The direct political action of these groups has been credited with among other things, the 1976 passing of the Hyde Amendment, prohibiting government funding of abortions other than when the mother's life is at risk, and the election of several pro-life New Right senators (Diamond, 1995; Luker, 1984).


49. For example, Campaign Life is the politically active arm of the movement, while Birthright is strictly an apolitical counseling service for expectant mothers. Provincial organizations such as BC Pro-Life and Vancouver Right to Life are educational in focus. Each supports the other in spirit, but not action, careful in their protection of the latter’s charitable tax-status.

50. Borowski died of cancer in September of 1996 (“Abortion foe Borowski dies” Vancouver Sun, 24 September, 1996, p.A3). His fight over abortion spanned more than twenty years and included the founding of several pro-life groups, hunger strikes and most prominently his legal battles over fetal rights.

51. The case revolved around the actions of pro-life protestor Maurice Lewis. After violating the “bubble zone” and being convicted, an appellate decision ruled the zone unconstitutional. A subsequent appeal filed by the government of BC overturned the ruling of the first appeal, with the argument that a women’s right to privacy overrode an individual’s right to free speech. “Bubble Zone law gutted by


54. For a philosophical argument over the rights of the fetus and the issue of potentiality as it applies to the fetus as a victim, see Earl Winkler, “Abortion and Victimisability” Journal of Applied Philosophy 1(2):305-318, 1984.


57. For instance, neither Ralph Reed nor William Gairdner, in four books between them, have “reproductive technology” listed in their indexes. In Diamond’s analysis of the Christian Right in Spiritual Warfare, and Roads to Dominion, there is virtually no mention of reproductive technology among members of the movement.


68. The statistics Gairdner cites are from a study conducted by the Institute for the Scientific Investigation of Sexuality, a Christian Right organization run by Dr. Paul Cameron. Among other anti-gay positions, Cameron has linked gays to mass murder and child molestation and is a proponent of quarantining gays to stop the spread of AIDS (Diamond, 1989).

69. Gairdner for instance, has claimed the home schooling movement has grown to 20,000 throughout Canada (Gairdner, 1992). In BC, interest in traditional schools continues to grow. Richmond parents recently lobbied unsuccessfully for a traditional school, while in Surrey, the two year old school had parents lining up a week in advance of registration for seventeen Kindergarten spaces. "Traditional school’s leader says other classes just as good" Vancouver Sun, 21 January, 1997, p. B1, B2. Heather Stilwell, current leader of the FCP, was a leading activist in the establishment of the traditional school in Surrey.


72. In Kelowna, Evangelicals have confronted the local school board to oppose the inclusion of homosexuality in a high school life course; A Health and Welfare Canada video, What’s wrong with this Picture, evoked a strong reaction from BC pro-family advocates for graphic phrases such as “Always use a rubber when you screw in the anus or vagina.” “Homosexual teachings in sex course upsetting to some parents” Vancouver Sun, 28 June, 1995, p. A3; “What's wrong with sodomy and needles” BC Report, 24 August, 1992, p. 22.

73. In The Trouble with Canada, Gairdner points out the distinction between radical feminism and feminism in the general sense: “Most women who think of themselves as “feminists” today simply mean that fairness has not always been evenly applied to women in our society, and that it ought to be. (Of course, in some cases they will argue it shouldn’t be, because women have advantages they don’t want to lose. Paid
maternity leave, couches in women's washrooms, restraints on lifting heavy objects, immunity from military conscription ..." (Gairdner, 1990:271).

74. Although Elshtain made her observations in the mid-1980s, the current activities of the New Right and NCR in Canada and the US that this chapter has evaluated suggest her argument remains cogent and applicable. For instance, regarding his vehement opposition to state sponsored day care, William Gairdner writes in War Against the Family "The key weapon in the radical agenda for social change is not daycare for the truly needy. It's daycare as a universal right for all women, in order to reorganize social priorities and "free" women from parenthood" (Gairdner, 1992:134). For the history of state involvement in Canadian families, see Jane Ursel's Private Lives, Public Policy: 100 Years of State Intervention in the Family. Toronto: Women's Press, 1992. For an example of state involvement with family life in western democracies other than Canada, the US and Britain, see Philippe Meyer's The Child and the State: The Intervention of the State in Family Life. London: Cambridge University Press, 1983.


77. Claude Levi-Strauss refutes Parson's functional proof of universality on the same grounds that Malinowski has been challenged. That is, to exclusively correlate what may be social imperatives with a single familial form is a "deduction that is not empirically supported" (Levi-Strauss, 1956:74). Christopher Lasch has criticized Parson's analysis for its dual effect of upholding the indispensability of the family and reinforcing a "rationale for the continued invasion of the family by experts in the art of social and psychic healing" (Lasch, 1977:116).

78. Beatrice Gottlieb in The Family in the Western World: from the Black Death to the Industrial Age also makes this point: "Christianity as an organized religion has not always had a harmonious relationship with the family ... The esteem that monasticism and priestly celibacy enjoyed implied a denigration of marriage and parenthood. One of the battlegrounds in the struggle between the church and lay rulers in the Middle Ages had been the family, the regulation of marriage in particular" (Gottlieb, 1993:254).

79. Of course, the family became a number of other things as well. For instance, these changes in the family also redefined women's roles in society. Both Zaretsky and Eisenstein (1983) point out the oppressive effect the domestication of the family had on women. Engels does the same in On the Origin of Family, Private Property, and State, in which he considers the monogamous marriage as the subjection of women to men, and the family as oppressed by the forces of capitalist production. "Full freedom in marriage," he writes "can become generally operative only when the abolition of capitalist production, and of the property relations which still exert so powerful an influence on the choice of a partner" are eradicated. (Engels, [1962]:281)
Interestingly, shows like the *Andy Griffiths Show*, *My Three Sons* and *The Courtship of Eddie’s Father* are never referred to as demonstrating a wholesome family life. All three shows have single fathers raising sons by themselves.


Notes to Chapter 3

1. Until 1990, the first stated principle and objective of the Social Credit party was to “foster and encourage the universally recognized principles of Christianity in human relationships,” Social Credit Constitution and By-Laws, 1988, section 2(a). After his acclamation as leader in 1986, Vander Zalm, in an interview with the *Vancouver Province*, admitted that “I am pro-life and I am alarmed that the percentage of abortions to live births is so much higher in B.C. than in other parts of Canada.” As well, Vander Zalm supported the return of prayer recitations in public schools while he was education minister. Malcolm Turnbull, “Vander Zalm outlines priorities,” *Vancouver Province*, 1 August, 1986, p. 4.

2. The Toths had originally met Vander Zalm in 1970 through their involvement with Birthright, a counselling service for expectant mothers. Mrs. Toth worked with Vander Zalm’s cousin and in the process of setting up a Birthright counselling centre in Surrey had come into contact with him over signage regulations. They have maintained contact over the years through their mutual support and work in the pro-life movement in B.C. Upon returning to BC after a ten year absence, Mr. Toth contacted Vander Zalm to offer their support and help should he decide to run for the Socred leadership.


4. The Toths have suggested that Vander Zalm was given the wrong information by members of his inner cabinet regarding the power a Premier has to make such proclamations and that Vander Zalm viewed his not being a lawyer, which would have eliminated this dependency, as the largest handicap he faced during his time in government.


6. Part of Mrs. Toth’s motivation for running in this nomination race was her support for the Premier and Susan Brice’s platform which was based on opposition to the Premier and the abortion battles which had been going on in the riding. Barbara McIntock, “Brice re-entering fray for Johnston’s team,” *Vancouver Province*, 24 July, 1991. Malcolm Curtis, “Brice switches back to politics in seeking Socred nomination,” *Victoria Times-Colonist*, 24 July, 1991. A later article described this as a “nasty battle for the Socred nomination in Oak Bay/Gordon Head between Oak Bay

7. These ministers included Claude Richmond, Brian Smith and Elwood Veitch. In the Oak Bay - Gordon Head nomination race, it was also after a Toth supporter had met with Elwood Veitch that Mrs. Toth ran into stiff opposition and subsequently lost the nomination. To that point, Mr. Toth had sold over two hundred memberships to supporters and in an effort to ascertain who was selling these memberships, Veitch invited one of Mrs. Toth’s supporters, an executive from the constituency association, to tea at the legislature.

8. One report said that Toth “accused the Socred establishment of trying to torpedo [sic] her efforts and threatened that neither she, nor her supporters, would back them in an election.” Tom Henry, “Church and Province,” Monday Magazine, 30 May, 1991.


10. The amendment for section 2(a) was: “The principles of the Society recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law.” This is followed by a new clause, 3(a): “The objectives of the Society are: (a) to foster and encourage the development of those social, moral and ethical principles which have historically guided the people of the Province in the pursuit of their individual goals regardless of gender, ethnic origin or religious affiliation.” British Columbia Social Credit Party, “Constitutional Review Committee 1990 Report.”

11. A BC Report article reported that “some suspect the entire fracas may have been part of a continuing assault by Mrs. McCarthy and others on the Vander Zalm leadership.” Tim Gallagher, “The Socreds dodge the ‘Christian’ clause,” British Columbia Report, 18 June, 1990, p. 7.

12. Later, during an exchange in the 1994 by-election in Matsqui, Mrs. McCarthy would accuse Mrs. Toth of “telling lies” because of this description of the vote over the clause. Mrs. Toth reminded McCarthy that she had in fact been standing at the microphone, waiting to speak when the votes were held and so saw first hand how the event unfolded. McCarthy did not pursue the matter any further. Overall however, Mrs. McCarthy did support the change because “We are, after all, a political organization, not a religious organization.” Les Leyne, “Socred constitution drops Christianity,” Victoria Times-Colonist, 5 June 1990.


15. Mark B. Toth, “Convicted out of court,” Victoria Times-Colonist, 16 April, 1991. For the rally, the Toths set up a phone tree to recruit support and brought seven busloads of people over from the mainland in an attempt to dissuade Vander Zalm from resigning.


22. The Ontario constitution reflected several different pieces of legislation that did not apply to British Columbia. For instance, Ontario has a different voting age and regulations over Sunday shopping had been an issue in the province.

23. This was a health care resolution passed at the 1993 Annual General Meeting. The opposition to appointed regional health boards arises because such a situation closes off an avenue for pro-life activists to restrict abortions from being done in hospitals. Locally elected hospital boards provided an opportunity for pro-life activists to elect pro-life supporters to the board and wield some political power. This is currently the battle going on in Langley as the government is bringing Langley Memorial Hospital under the control of the South Fraser Regional Health Board. Opponents fear this amalgamation will result in the hospital being forced to perform abortions, which it currently does not. In point of fact, NDP Health Minister Joy McPhail came out the following day with the statement that “In the communities where certain special interest groups have made it their goal to impose an anti-choice point of view, those communities’ activists were not put forward to be appointed to the board. ... Basically, everybody on the board was required to support our government’s view that all legitimate health-care services, including therapeutic abortion, be provided. BCTV Late News, 11 March, 1997. Justine Hunter, “Anti-abortion activists barred from health boards,” *Vancouver Sun*, 13 March, 1997, p. A1, A9.


25. FCP Newsletter, No. 6, January 1996. Cecilia Von Dehn, an FCP member and vigorous pro-life activist, purchased a private house that sits within the 50 metre limit of the ‘bubble zone’ ruling to allow signs opposing abortion to sit on the lawn. Being a private residence, the ‘bubble zone’ legislation does not cover this property. Known as Gianna House, it operates as a counselling service for expectant mothers.


27. It was reported in the *Victoria Times-Colonist* that “Family Coalition Party of BC leader Kathleen Toth urged the crowd to muster support for a plebiscite on abortion funding.” The crowd referred to was the close to 1,000 pro-life activists who had gathered on the steps of the legislature in Victoria to oppose this funding. Katherine Dedyna, “Anti-abortion throng howls for health minister to resign,” *Victoria Times-Colonist*, 27 March 1992, p. A16.

28. Although the party was unsuccessful with this bid, they did present over six thousand signatures along with their brief opposing the regulations and time constraints of the Referendum process to the standing committee on the new Act. Family Coalition Party of British Columbia, “Initiative, Referendum and Recall: A Brief to the Standing Committee,” 4 November, 1992. The FCP has an official
position on the Initiative and Referendum process which supports the process but opposes the mechanism of the enabling legislation of Bill 36 "unworkable" because of the time constraints and percentage of signatures required. As it stands, 10% of eligible voters in each of the provinces 75 ridings must sign the petition requesting a referendum within a 90 day period.

29. Ironically, the sign was designed to be deliberately confrontational in the hopes of attracting some media attention but Mr. Toth said the sign, in fact his entire campaign, was completely ignored by the media.

30. All Candidates Meeting at West Vancouver Secondary School, West Vancouver - Capilano Riding, 24 May, 1996.

31. Family Coalition Party of BC, “A Brief to the Human Rights Review from the Family Coalition Party of B.C.,” 2 June, 1994. A copy of this also appears, along with all of the party’s other briefs, on their Internet website.

32. ibid., p. 3.

33. Bill 33 protects from discrimination, hatred or contempt classes of people based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, age or sexual orientation. Bill 32 changed the Human Rights Act to the Human Rights Code and established a Human Rights Commission.

34. This concern led the party during the 1996 provincial election about freedom of speech during a campaign. A worry existed that FCP candidates could be found guilty under Bill 33 of spreading hate by openly stating their opposition to homosexuality. It was found however that section 37 of the Bill exempts views that are a specific political belief. For the FCP this belief is support for “traditional family values and protection for human life.” FCP Newsletter, No. 7, August 1996, p. 2.

35. FCP Leader’s Report, 1994-95, p. 1


37. Mr. Zacharias admits he has been “accused of being racist, anti-Semitic, white supremacist [sic]” but points out that “those labels are tossed around to destroy my credibility and you have to look where the accusations are coming from.” He also said the sign shocked some people and “some gave me the finger, some gave me the thumbs up.”


39. ibid.


41. Becky Lockhart, “Morality offered,” Comox Valley Record, 24 May 1996, p. A8. It is also important to note that despite this controversy and that he ran the shortest campaign of any FCP candidate (9 days), he garnered the third highest vote total of any candidate, behind only Heather and Bill Stilwell.

42. Family Coalition Party of B.C., “Education Funding Review: A submission by the Family Coalition Party of British Columbia to the B.C. Government’s Position Paper: Financing Public Schools: Issues and Options,” October, 1992. This paper is based largely on the opinions of the Brookings Institute, a neoconservative think tank in Washington D.C., who in 1990 published a study on education, “Politics, Markets and America’s Schools.” In the study, the authors, John Chubb and Terry Moe, advocated a return of control to local levels through a voucher system.
43. Surrey - Cloverdale All-Candidates meeting, 23 May 1996.
44. West Vancouver - Capilano All-Candidates meeting, 24 May 1996.
45. Mr. Toth sat on the board for Independent schools during this period. Unsuccessful
with WAC's government, they nonetheless persevered and when the Socreds were
returned to power in 1975 won the battle. Bill Bennett's government agreed to fund
one third of an independent school's cost, a funding level which has since risen to
fifty percent.
46. Mrs. Stilwell is also the current president of the school, which receives its funding
from the Ministry of Education but has a specific mandate that calls for "teacher
centred" classrooms, committed parental involvement with the school and
curriculum, and school uniforms. It is a secular school which follows the provincial
curriculum guidelines but teaches the subjects discreetly and emphasizes a "back to
basics" approach to learning and respect for traditional orders of authority. The
school currently has roughly 250 students and a waiting list in "the hundreds"
according to Mrs. Stilwell. Recently, parents camped out overnight for a week in
order to guarantee one of the 17 spaces available in September 1997. There is also a
movement to fund a traditional high school in Surrey. General support for
traditional schools seems to be growing. In Richmond for instance, although recently
turned down, there is strong support for opening a traditional school. Harold
Munro, "Traditional school's leader says other classes just as good," Vancouver Sun,
"Private schools gain in popularity as experts predict numbers will rise," Vancouver
47. Mrs. Stilwell first sat on the Surrey School Board from 1990 - 1993. In this recent
election, she garnered roughly 17, 000 votes, only two hundred behind the top vote
earner. The board is currently dominated by conservatives, with the Surrey Election
Team holding 5 positions, the NDP one, and the White Rock representative the other.
48. Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education. Career and Personal Planning:
Draft Learning Outcomes. Appendix A: Learning Outcomes, Personal Development,
49. Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education. Career and Personal Planning:
Draft Learning Outcomes. Appendix A: Learning Outcomes, Personal Development,
50. ibid.
51. This aspect of a student's privacy is actually a product of changes to the Infants Act,
which the FCP also opposes. Particulars of this opposition are discussed further on.
52. Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Education. Career and Personal Planning:
53. The Family Coalition Party of B.C., West Vancouver - Capilano, "May '96
Newsletter," May 1996.
54. Family Coalition Party of BC, "A Brief to the Human Rights Review from the Family
Coalition Party of B.C.,” 2 June, 1994, p.3.
55. Jerry Collins, “Social engineering dropouts,” British Columbia Report, 30 December,
1996, p. 34. This article also interviews other parents, who do not hold membership
in the FCP, and who are equally opposed to the CAPP program's content. A recent
"Vancouver Sun" article also reported on the findings of the privacy commission's review of the program after it received numerous complaints about the "Collecting Information" component of CAPP. Editorial, "How secret are those tell-all school assignments?," "Vancouver Sun," 6 March, 1997, p. A15.


57. *ibid.*


60. New Party President Darren Lowe wrote a letter to the local Coquitlam community newspaper opposing Resolution 102. Subsequently, the party received over a dozen phone calls from parents about the resolution and the party in general. Requests were made to the party by these parents for support in their opposition to the Resolution. The party responded by submitting a letter of opposition to the Coquitlam School Board.


62. This and other party policies can be found on the party's Internet website.

63. Constitution of the Family Coalition Party of B.C., section 2c.


67. Constitution and Policies of the Family Coalition Party of B.C., "Health Care." Section 16 (2) of the Infants Act states that "Subject to subsection (3), an infant may consent to health care whether or not that health care would, in the absence of consent, constitute a trespass to the infant's person, and where an infant provides that consent, the consent is effective and it is not necessary to obtain a consent to the health care from the infant's parent or guardian" (emphasis added). British Columbia Infants Act, "Part 2: Medical Treatment," 25 November, 1993. In a newsletter, the FCP remarked that this amendment was part of the "socialist philosophy" that "works to undermine the bonds of love within families by legislating away the rights children have to the wisdom, the protection and the love of their parents until they


70. Rebecca Hudson, “Big Mamma vs. the family,” British Columbia Report, 14 October, 1996, p. 8. Among the Pro-family groups opposing the formation of this Ministry have been Focus on the Family and Citizen's Research Institute.


73. In a post-election meeting, the ten executives met to discuss the strategic viability of the party. In a 6-4 vote, the party narrowly survived.

74. Of particular note in this group are Heather Stilwell, Bill Stilwell and Gerhard Herwig. The latter two had been constituency association presidents for the Social Credit Party during Mr. Vander Zalm’s time in office.

75. 79% of respondents indicated their ethnic heritage to be from a Western European nation. 47% of total respondents reported it to be either English, Scottish or Irish, while 31% reported another country for their ethnic origin, in particular Germany, France or Holland. 14% of interviewees indicated their heritage was Canadian and only one respondent was of Asian descent. All of the respondents reported being Christian, with 72% of total respondents indicating they were practicing Catholics. The rest of the sample was spread evenly among Protestants, Evangelical Christians, Mormons, and non-denominational Christians.

76. These include the ridings of Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Fort Langley-Aldergrove, Matsqui, and Mission-Kent.

77. Mr. Vander Zalm spoke in Prince George, Vernon and Surrey on behalf of the party. Mrs. Stilwell has long been active in pro-life, pro-family and education issues in Surrey.

78. Originally, the party offered one year memberships for $10 per individual and $15 for families. In 1992, they were switched to four year memberships for $15 and $20 respectively. It is also a party practice to carry expired memberships over for one year to allow leeway for those who have forgotten to renew their memberships.


83. Steve Vanagas, “A new family for conservatives: Vander Zalm inspires high hopes for the fledgling FCP,” British Columbia Report, December, 1993; Paul Chapman,


86. The "Mandate to Meet" policy reads: "The Executive of the Family Coalition Party is mandated to meet with other free enterprise parties with the view to deciding a strategy or perhaps forming a coalition to defeat the NDP. The two FCP Constitutional clauses on the protection of innocent human life and the preservation of the traditional family must be publicly agreed to by all representatives of any new coalition."


Notes to Chapter 4

1. No judgment of completion or satisfaction with the results of these movements is implied here. The important point being noted is that some concrete and substantial gains have been won by these groups and they have to some degree become institutionalized in law and validated by acts and beliefs of Canadian popular culture.

2. To simplify matters, the FCP will from here out be referred primarily in its relation to the pro-family movement. Although pro-life is a movement in its own right, it is also considered to be a sub-set of the broader pro-family movement. In this light, the FCP can be seen to serve both movements simultaneously.

3. Kaufmann also makes the cogent point that “the most striking aspect of this broad transformation of identity politics into an introspective, fragmented antipolitics of lifestyle is the extent to which the values it promotes - individual solutions to social problems, attention to lifestyle, choice - mirror the ideology of the marketplace” (Kaufmann, 1990:78). This turning away from politics simultaneously reinforces the relations of consumption promoted by post-industrial capitalism, which does little to articulate strategies for radicalizing the cultural relations that mediate the individual’s daily life with extant social structures and expectations. Indeed, Boggs (1986) points out that one glaring characteristic of the New Social Movements is the lack of an alternate economic strategy for society. Like the FCP, the NSMs emphasize social and cultural reformation rather than economic.

4. Stuart Parker, Leader of the Green Party of BC has for instance, provided copies for the FCP of virtually all of their information and material on electoral reform.

5. While there is no shortage of general work on the radical or Christian right, few analyses appear to have been conducted directly using available social movement theory. Sara Diamond’s 1995 work, Roads to Dominion, acknowledges the political


8. For instance, Erin Steuter writes that "the largest and best-known of the women's pro-family groups in Canada is R.E.A.L. Women" (Steuter, 1992:297) and identifies only the Christian Heritage Party, the Ontario FCP, pro-life groups and the Alberta Federation of Women United for Families as other PFM organizations. In a footnote, Lorna Erwin (1993) identifies five specific PFM groups (including the Coalition for Family Values, Renaissance Canada and Positive Parents) and in general, pro-life organizations and "religiously based groups."

9. Although being a pro-life supporter was seen as inevitably leading to similar sympathies for the pro-family position, occasionally the observation was made that the reverse pattern was not as dependable. A small minority of respondents commented that a pro-family advocate could not automatically be relied upon to support an absolutist position opposing abortion although it was likely that such people were "generally" pro-life.

10. These pro-life groups were: Campaign Life Canada, BC Pro-Life, Birthright and Vancouver Right to Life.

11. This of course is not presented as an exhaustive list of pro-family organizations in the province and certainly not for across the country. These organizations were identified as the most prominent groups currently active in the province and chosen for that reason. For instance, although home/traditional school supporters were
identified as "pro-family" and are active in the promotion of alternate education forms in BC, they have no formal (or informal) organizational structure.

12. Most of these organizations have charitable status, which allows them to be tax exempt but prevents them from engaging in direct political work. Campaign Life Coalition, CRI, the Christian Coalition, REAL Women, and the Catholic Civil Rights League have deliberately not applied for this status because it is felt that such standing would hamper their activities. All of the organizations are non-profit.

13. The one exception to this is Focus On the Family. Jim Sclater, Vice-President of Public Policy for Focus Canada, stated that Focus Canada is like a corporate entity, similar in purpose but autonomous from its American base: "Dr. Dobson sits on the board as do the other American vice presidents but they are outnumbered by nine or more Canadians, so it is an autonomous board but obviously we exist for the vision of what Dr. Dobson is doing and what he represents."

14. Even Focus on the Family Canada claims its financial resources are derived from donations, despite having an annual budget of $6 million and a mailing list of only 145,000.

15. REAL Women has accepted grants from the federal government in the past, but emphasize that the $6,000 they received to hold a conference in 1996 is far less than what other special interest groups like the National Action Committee on Women receive.

16. This is also the argument used for those groups who have no charitable tax standing. See note 12, this chapter.

17. Reports were made that things like office space, fax machines, computers, computer software, office supplies, etc. have been donated in the past but for the most part, such items are purchased or leased using money from annual budgets.


21. For instance, in their brochures the following is written: "To affirm the value of protecting the sanctity of all human life, from the point of conception to the point of natural death ... To promote the protection of the vulnerable in our society, recognize traditional family values ..." (Christian Coalition); "The CCRL will continue to defend the traditional family as the basic unit of society" (Catholic Civil Rights League); "To promote, secure and defend legislation which uphold the Judeo-Christian values of marriage and family life" (REAL Women); "We acknowledge the need to foster healthy family units, since only through strong families will we have strong communities" (Citizen's Research Institute).

22. The Surrey Schoolboard, of which Heather Stilwell is a trustee, voted 4-2 to ban three books that depicted same sex families. Kim Bolan, "Librarians urge Surrey school board not to ban books," Vancouver Sun, 24 April, 1997, p. B1, B5; Petti Fong and Kim Bolan, "Surrey school trustees ban three books about same-sex families," Vancouver Sun, 25 April, 1997, p. B1, B3. Trinity Western University's law suit against the BC College of Teachers is also beginning to show similar signs of a framing battle. In a newspaper article, Michael Markwick of the Catholic Civil Rights League claimed the
defendant’s description of Catholic teachers “is trying to make Catholics and Christians look like wild-eyed papists. They’re painting us to be fascists.” This was in response to a handout from the defense attorney which stated the CCRL believes “a Catholic teacher has a right, indeed a duty, to tell homosexuals that homosexual behaviour is depraved and disordered.” Sandra Thomas, “Leader denies Catholics ‘fascists’,” Vancouver Sun, 10 May, 1997, p. A20.

23. It was discovered that Robert Pickering, who voted in favour of the ban, sits on the board of CRI. Kim Bolan, “Surrey school chair linked to anti-gay group,” Vancouver Sun, 6 May, 1997, p. A1, A8; Kim Bolan, “Ramsey decries ‘intolerance’ on Surrey board,” Vancouver Sun, 7 May, 1997, p. A1, A6. In a letter to the editor, one question to the Vancouver Sun about its description of CRI as ‘anti-gay’ was ‘Does The Sun really think Surrey school board chair Robert Pickering’s association with Citizens’ Research Institute, a pro-family group, should be described as a link to an anti-gay group?’ Letter to the Editor, “Defining the boundaries of religious freedom,” Vancouver Sun, 12 May, 1997, p. A12.


Notes to Chapter 5


2. Groups such as the Coalition for Electoral Reform (CFER) and Canadians for Direct Democracy are lobbying for the adoption of some type of proportional representation system at the federal level.

3. In British Columbia, the recently formed (1997) British Columbia Coalition for Electoral Reform is lobbying for the adoption of some type of proportional representation at the provincial level. The FCP, the Green Party, Libertarian Party, Social Credit Party and Progressive Conservative Party have all expressed support for such a change.

4. Believing that MP’s should act according to their best judgement, and not necessarily the wishes of their constituents, in 1780 Burke lost his seat in the House of Commons by refusing to defer to the demands of his Bristol constituency (cf, MacPherson, 1980:12).
5. According to C. B. McPherson, Burke became a supporter of the party form after witnessing an "attempt by the Court cabal to reduce Parliament to impotence" (1980:23). Concerned over the vulnerability of individual politicians to exploits by extra-parliamentary bodies in their attempts to undermine the proper function of the government, Burke supported the idea of a party system to provide some form of institutional protection for politicians.


7. Although it may be argued that the crisis discussed in this section applies to any political party, predominantly this is a crisis faced by major or mainstream parties such as the federal Liberal or Progressive Conservative parties, not minor or protest parties like the Family Coalition Party, the Green Party or the Christian Heritage Party.

8. Roseanne Skoke and Tom Wappell were Pro-life federal Liberal MPs who the FCP believe are consistently silenced by the party whip when they attempt to bring up pro-life issues.


11. These ten dysfunctions are: limiting political discourse; institutionalizing confrontation; undermining the legitimacy of the political system; attenuating the public philosophy; confusing the government mandate; encouraging wasteful government expenditures; ignoring some important issues; misrepresenting political forces; weakening the central government; and neglecting the policy role. John Meisel, "The Dysfunctions of Canadian Parties: An Exploratory Mapping," Party Politics in Canada, 6th ed. Hugh G. Thorburn, ed. (Toronto: Prentice-Hall, 1991).

12. Perhaps somewhat ironically, the NDP's Svend Robinson was often cited by FCP members as an example of what a truly principled and representative politician should be. Included in the other 5/95 principled politicians were Roseanne Skoke, John Nunziata, Tom Wappell and Mike De Jong, all Pro-life, Pro-family Liberals.

13. In the 1997 federal election, voter turnout was 66.7 per cent; in 1993 it was 69.9 per cent and in 1984 and 1988 it was 75 per cent. The British Columbia turnout of 68 percent for the 1997 federal election was just above the national average. Lindsay Kines, "Campaign blamed as voters stay away," Vancouver Sun, 4 June 1997, p. A4.

14. The use of the term 'post-materialist' here, may be seen a problematic given that it is being used to describe not only New Social Movements but also conservative organizations such as the Christian Heritage Party and the Family Coalition Party, groups that still have firm roots in materialist conceptions of social hierarchy, including respect for traditional authority patterns and free market economics. The use of the term post-materialist in this case however, should not be interpreted as an attempt to equate these two types of movements and their different value systems. Rather, it is to simply point out that the FCP activists enjoy a level of material security that permits them to turn their attention and efforts to effecting change that they believe will improve the quality of their lives and those of society at large. As Inglehart wrote, "the values of Western publics have been shifting from an
overwhelming emphasis on material well-being and physical security toward greater emphasis on the quality of life ... Today, an unprecedently large portion of Western populations have been raised under conditions of exceptional economic security. Economic and physical security continue to be valued positively, but their relative priority is lower than in the past” (Inglehart, 1977:3). In his scheme, Inglehart includes under post-materialist concerns items such as “more say in government,” “more say on job, community” and a “less impersonal society,” (Inglehart, 1977:42) all of which can be found in the ideas of the Family Coalition Party. Pointing this general similarity out is the reason behind using the term post-material to describe the efforts of the FCP. Since, however, its use is not exactly as that intended by Inglehart, where it is being used in some relation to the FCP, quotations will be placed around the term to indicate this different usage, as in: “post-materialist.”

15. Other initial members of BCCFER are the Social Credit Party, the Reform Party, the Progressive Democratic Alliance, the Green Party, the BC Conservative Party, the Communist Party and the Natural Law Party. There also exists a national Coalition For Electoral Reform organization.

16. Although a majority of FCP members support a switch in BC to a proportional representation system, most do not feel that this would greatly improve the party’s electoral prospects.

17. The point Elkins makes regarding the passage of time and the maturation process of a party is well taken. However, to deny minor parties full recognition as such is to regard parties as purely electoral machines (which Elkins does in describing what parties actually do) and as such unnecessarily limit the political sphere as a site for democratic discourse and parties as legitimate vehicles for political and social change.

18. During both the Matsqui (21 May, 1996) and West Vancouver-Capilano (24 May) all-candidates meetings, the issues of abortion funding and child care arose from either the candidates themselves or questions from the open-mike sessions. That the latter appeared to be a pre-arranged situation whereby an FCP supporter would ask the question from the floor is irrelevant. Without an FCP candidate present, the political legitimacy of the questions would have been diminished and cadre party candidates would not have had a difficult time dismissing them.

19. In Chapters two and three it became clear that the FCP was generating enough financial resources to maintain itself, but not enough to permit the purchase of media time for advertising, hire professional political consultants, or run the type of professionalized campaign generally associated with strong, viable political parties. Political expertise in the areas of policy development, campaign strategies and the administrative requirements demanded by a party form were also identified as inadequate. Also, except for Heather Stilwell, none of the candidates in the 1996 provincial election expressed any firm commitment to having political ambitions.

20. During Bill Vander Zalm’s involvement, the party enjoyed its largest and most rapid period of membership growth as well as receiving its greatest amount of media attention.

21. BCTV News covered a fundraising dinner for Jim Kelly and conservative Vancouver Sun columnist Trevor Lautens devoted a column to Kelly’s candidacy. BCTV Late News, 17 May, 1996. Lautens, Trevor.” ,” Vancouver Sun
22. The importance of regional strongholds can be seen with the rapid ascendancy of the Reform Party of Canada and the Bloc Québécois in the 1990s. The traditional support of the interior enjoyed by the Social Credit Party of BC throughout most of its history is another example (Burkinshaw, 1995).


24. The BC Libertarian Party and the Common Sense, Community, Family Party were de-registered for non-compliance with the Elections Act. Effectively, they are banned from participating in the next provincial election, unless a $10,000 fine is paid. After taking the BC government to court after the Chief Electoral Officer fined and threatened to ban three candidates from the next provincial election, the BC Green Party received a favourable ruling from the court. The ruling overturns the fines and permits the candidates to run in the next election. Jim Beatty, “Parties want Elections Act overhauled,” Vancouver Sun, 19 March 1997, p. A1, A16. Canadian Press, “Judge quashes Election Act fines, allowing Green leader to seek seat,” Vancouver Sun, 8 April 1997, p. A6.

25. The first of these meetings was held in May, 1997. Among the parties invited were the FCP, the Greens, the Communist Party, the Libertarian Party, the Progressive Conservative Party of BC, Progressive Democratic Alliance, the Reform Party of BC and the Social Credit Party. Apart from making compliance easier, other topics for reform included candidate election expense limits, constituency de-registration procedures and accounting procedures.


28. Ironically, Vander Zalm’s Premiership has been identified as one of the worst for the concentration of power in the hands of the Premier and a few select personnel. Terence Morley writes that Vander Zalm “concentrated all significant political and administrative power in his own hands and then let it be used by only one other person [David Poole]” (1996:161). Although at the same time, Vander Zalm was responsible for initiating the Recall and Initiative Act in an attempt to increase the potential for direct democracy in the province (Ruff, 1996). In his own words,
Vander Zalm remarked that in ‘my last year of government I fought very hard for the introduction of the referendum and initiative and my reasoning for a good part was I could foresee no change coming within the system as long as the politicians, particularly those governing, had the final say. They would always tend to protect the status quo because they were the status quo, and had I been able to introduce referenda and initiative in the form that I saw fit, we definitely would be looking already today at changing the way we are being governed.’

29. Newspaper headlines have supported the idea of switching to a proportional representation system but it was reported in one article that “a recent opinion poll showed that a majority of New Zealand voters regretted their referendum decision to opt for change.” April Lindgren, “Proportional representation fairer system, advocates say,” Vancouver Sun, 2 June 1997, p. A4. In October, 1996 the first election in New Zealand was held on the basis of a 1993 referendum that supported a shift to proportional representation. Jonathon Manthorpe, “Voting reform in New Zealand, Japan, taking opposite paths,” Vancouver Sun, 27 September, 1996, p. A17. Brad Evans, “19th-century system distorts division of seats,” Vancouver Sun, 03 June 1997, p. A5. Norm Ovenden, “Referendum urged on proposed new way to elect MPs,” Vancouver Sun, 4 April 1997, p. A6.

30. Federally, CFER supports “the implementation of a Mixed Member Proportional System (MMP),” similar to the German Hare quota system and has operated since March, 1994. In BC, CFER has just established itself, with similar goals being targetted at the provincial government. Initial signatories to the coalition include The FCP, the Green Party, the Libertarian Party, the Social Credit Party, the Progressive Conservative Party of BC, the Reform Party of BC, the Communist Party and the Natural Law Party.

31. The Enterprise League of British Columbia formed in 1996 with the stated goal of creating “a single unified organization that meets the objectives of all those British Columbians wanting an enterprise-minded government for the province. The League will act as the catalyst and parent body for the merging of these political parties into a single organization.” The Liberal, Reform, Progress Democratic Alliance, Libertarian, Social Credit and Family Coalition parties were all invited to participate in the venture. The FCP initially became involved, but has since withdrawn its support after the League’s directors turned down their request for adopting the FCP’s two founding principles.

32. Wilson holds the lone seat for the Progressive Democratic Alliance in Victoria, which he won during the 1996 provincial election.

Notes to Chapter 6

1. Again, to recall from Chapter 5, the current makeup of the Canadian House of Commons has the governing Liberals with 155 seats, Reform Party of Canada holding 60 and standing as the official opposition, and the Bloc, with forty-four seats, having the third largest number of sitting MPs.
2. There appears to be some discrepancy as to when the NDP actually became formally affiliated with the CLC. Penner (1996) states the year as 1961, while Thorburn (1991) cites it as 1958. For present purposes, the approximation of "around 1960," suffices.

3. Phillips only explicitly uses the term 'traditional' in her analysis. 'Derivation' refers to her second observation that minor parties such as the Greens and the Feminist Party were produced directly out of previously existing social movements, and 'complementary' identifies her third argument that stresses the benefit of viewing parties and movements as working in complement with one another. The term 'traditional,' referring as it does to the common perspective of parties and movement as antagonists in the political sphere, is perhaps less accurate than the term 'competitive,' but it is Phillips' choice and so will be retained.

4. Interest or pressure groups, defines Pross, are "organizations whose members act together to influence public policy in order to promote their common interests" (1986:3). While similar to social movements, the two differ in two particularly significant ways. First, social movements (unlike interest groups) have as part of their agenda, some aspect of democratic reform, from the radical democratic ideals espoused by the Canadian Greens (Sandilands, 1992) to the moderate calls for electoral reform by the Family Coalition Party. Second, interest groups are traditionally more fully institutionalized in the state administrative apparatus, accepted and in fact part of the bureaucratic policy making mechanisms (Pross, 1986). Social movements on the other hand, are ensconced in the organic soil of civil society as they try to gain access to the influential sphere of administrative policy making. Political scientists acknowledge the difference between the two, but appear to stress the similarity of their challenge to political parties more so than social movement theorists. For present purposes, these differences and similarities are acknowledged, but for analytical economy, the role of interest groups has been bracketed so that undiluted focus may be given to the relationships exclusive to social movements and political parties.

5. The CCF/NDP was the most frequently cited party that arose from a social movement. Perhaps surprisingly, given the religious conservative backgrounds of the respondents, the Social Credit Party and League were not cited. Two respondents also commented that parties can influence social movements. Governmental or party policies they observed, can spur an existing movement into oppositional or supportive action for the policy, or even give rise to a movement as a result of people banding together to oppose the particular governmental initiative.

6. Prior to this merger, Braunthal notes, a "group of radical fundamentalists ... split off from the party [the Greens] because it had become too pragmatic" (1996:155). These were some of the more militant and purposively committed movement activists within the Greens that were commonly referred to as the "Fundis" (as opposed to the more politically pragmatic and conventional "Realos") (Boggs, 1986).

7. Of importance here is that the media is identified and recognized as another institution with which a party/movement must engage and that such engagement exposes a unique tension for a party/movement. As such, the purpose here is to simply articulate this circumstance, rather than provide any attempt at a comprehensive treatment of the relational complexities between movements, political parties, or party/movements. For such an analysis regarding movements for

8. McLintock and Kristianson (1996) note that until the 1940s, the Victoria Times and the Vancouver Sun were identified as Liberal newspapers, while the Victoria Colonist and the Vancouver Province were Conservative. They also point out that until the installation of Hansard in 1971, the province’s newspapers acted as the official recorders of legislative activity and that “the legislative library regularly clipped and pasted newspaper reports into red binders that became the official ‘memory’ of legislative proceedings” (1996:124).

9. In “Movements and Media as Interacting Systems,” (ANNALS, AAPSS, 528, July 1993, p. 114-125), Gamson and Wolfsfeld construct hypotheses concerning the relation between social movements and the media, specifically. For the present purpose however, rough parallels can also be drawn for parties and party/movements.


12. Over the past ten years Simpson claims to have been on various CBC and CTV national news and interview shows, as well as constantly being asked to appear on local radio and television shows. Most recently and likely as a direct result over her informal support of the Surrey Schoolboard’s decision to ban a number of elementary aged books depicting gay families (see Chapters 3 and 4), Simpson’s Citizen Research Institute was the focus of nearly a full page article in the *Vancouver Sun*. Dianne Rinehart, “Head of ‘family values’ institute relishes her war against the gay lifestyle,” *Vancouver Sun*, 26 June, 1997, p. B6.

13. This rally was organized by the Citizen’s Research Institute in June, 1997.

14. At present, the Family Coalition Party has two separate Web pages and is monitoring them in order to determine whether to keep one or both of them. It has been determined by the executive however, that at least one must be maintained because of the unique and alternative avenue the Internet provides for the party to reach potential supporters.

15. With the election of Wilf Hanni to the leadership of the Reform Party of BC in September 1997, talks have once again been initiated (by Mr. Hanni) with the Family
Coalition Party regarding the possibility of the two parties coalescing. In earlier discussions with Reform, Mr. Hanni was not opposed to the insertion of the FCP’s core principles into the Reform constitution; rather, it was Jack Weisgerber (the previous Reform Party leader) and Ron Gamble who opposed them.

Notes to Chapter 7

2. In the United States, the pro-family movement encompasses, among others, James Dobson’s Focus on the Family, Phyllis Schlafly’s Eagle Forum, the anti-busing movement, the home schooling movement, groups opposing liberal sex education programs in public schools, and anti-gay rights initiatives such as Anita Bryant’s now defunct “Save Our Children” campaign in Florida. In British Columbia, the pro-family movement includes similarly focused organizations such as Westcoast Women for Family Life, Focus on the Family, Citizen’s Research Institute, and various home and traditional school organizations among others.
3. The active efforts to unify the right in British Columbia appears unlikely to produce political fruit at this point, but should a merger of the right occur, conservative forces would dominate the popular vote. David Mitchell, “The historical odds are against a free-enterprise coalition,” *Vancouver Sun*, 24 March 1997, p. A10; Mike Crawley, “Right-wing leaders urged to forget egos and form new party,” *Vancouver Sun*, 30 May 1996, p. B7.
4. Hugh Davies, “Southern Baptists call for Disney boycott over policy on gays,” *Vancouver Sun*, 19 June 1997, p. A10; The “Miss G” report also said the foetus that was protected was born healthy and that the woman is pregnant with her fifth child. BCTV Early Newshour, 18 June 1997. Ian Mulgrew, “Premier’s web site for kids linked to explicit sex lines,” *Vancouver Sun*, 31 July 1997, p. B3.
5. Anthropologists, working in the areas of ‘cargo cults’ and ‘millenarian movements’ have argued that in the face of social transition (from an indigenous to western social order, from the mystical to the scientific, etc.) such movements arise in attempts to simultaneously retain aspects of old traditional social values and embrace the coming of the new social order. The anticipated result of this transition is the realization of a social nirvana, a perfectly harmonious and peaceful society. Such movements have been described in a number of ways, including ‘revitalization movements,’ ‘new religions,’ ‘independent religious movements,’ and ‘adjustment movements’ (Trompf, 1990). This is not to imply that a resurgence movement such as that represented by the FCP is in some way ‘millenarian,’ but rather that anthropologists have recognized the importance of examining movements from a comparative perspective sensitive to the variety of social and cultural forces that shape the often multifaceted agendas of movements. With regard to ‘cargo cults’ and ‘millenarian movements’ see for instance: Peter Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound: A Study of ‘Cargo’ Cults in Melanesia*, (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1957); Peter Lawrence, *Road Belong Cargo: A Study of the Cargo Movement in the Southern Madang District, New Guinea*, (Prospect Heights: Waveland, 1971); G.W. Trompf (ed.), *Cargo Cults and Millenarian Movements: Transoceanic Comparisons of New Religious Movements*, (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1990).
References


McAdam, Doug, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald. 1996. "Introduction: Opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes - toward a synthetic, comparative perspective on social movements," in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and*


Tarrow, Sidney. 1996. “States and opportunities: The political structuring of social movements," in Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings, ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.


Appendix 1 - List of Primary Sources

The following is a list of primary documents prepared by the Family Coalition Party of British Columbia which were referred to in this dissertation:


Family Coalition Party Website: http://www.uniserve.com/fcparty.


INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: FCP General Membership Questions

SECTION 1: Knowledge of the FCP

1. How did you first hear about the Family Coalition Party of BC?
   Probes: When was this?
   How long after this did you become a member of the Party?

2. What were your reasons for joining the FCP?
   Probes: What other political parties have you, or do you, belong to?
   [If answer is “none”] What is inadequate about these parties?

3. What do you see as the fundamental principles or values that the FCP stand for?
   [OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]
   Probes: Do you think there is a single, overriding principle that the party represents? [if yes] What is that principle?
   Do you consider the FCP to be a religious party?
   [If answer is ‘yes”] Which religion provides its base?

4. What do you consider to be the primary aims or goals of the Family Coalition Party?
   [OMIT FOR EXECUTIVE & ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]
   Probes: Why do you think the FCP was formed in the first place?
   What is the importance of having a party like the FCP in British Columbia?
5. Where would you position the FCP on the political spectrum compared to other political parties?

[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]

Probes: Where would you place the FCP in terms of social issues?

In terms of economic issues?

How do you see the FCP differing from parties like Reform and Christian Heritage?

6. How do you see the FCP fitting into the pro-life and pro-family movement scene in BC?

Probes: Do you see the presence of the FCP in BC politics as part of an increasing growth of pro-life/family politics in other parts of Canada and the US?

7. Who do you think would be attracted to the policies of the FCP?
SECTION 2: Movement and Party Aspects of the FCP

8. Despite being a political party, the Family Coalition Party has been described by some of its members as a movement. How do you view the FCP? [OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]

Probes: How would you define a "political party?" What are its goals?

How would you define a "social movement?" What are its goals?

Do you see a difference between the two terms?

How would you describe that difference?

9. [if they acknowledge a difference] What relationship, if any, do you see between political party politics and social movement politics?

Probes: Would you define a successful social movement campaign as one that has moved into the arena of political party politics?

10. What characteristics, functions, or activities of the FCP do you associate with being a "social movement"?

11. What characteristics, functions, or activities of the FCP do you associate with being a "political party".

12. The FCP has run candidates for election, but it has also engaged in various campaigns attempting to change legislation. Do you consider the work the FCP does to be primarily party or movement oriented?

Probes: Do you see any difference between the two? What is this difference?
13. The FCP uses different strategies to get its message out. When you hear about what the Party has been doing, does it remind you more of a political party or a social movement?

**Probes:** Should a political party actively participate in things like demonstrations?

Should a movement be involved with electoral politics?

Do you think the goals of the FCP are more likely to be achieved using social movement or political party activities?

14. How would you explain this view of the FCP as both a political party and social movement?

*OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS*

**Probes:** Do you see any benefits to this dual identity for the FCP?

Do you see any disadvantages to it?

Does this dual identity present any unique strains or challenges for the Party?

31. The FCP is often viewed as a single issue party. Would you agree with this view?

*OMIT FOR CANDIDATE RESPONDENTS*

**Probes:** What is the single issue they represent?

Does this help or hinder the Party in pursuing its goals? How?

15. Is there any kind of formal relation between the FCP and the pro-life and pro-family movements?

**Probes:** Is the FCP, or could it be, a political arm of these movements?

Would some kind of relationship like this be beneficial? How?
16. Do you think it is important to have small parties like the FCP present in BC politics?

Probes: Why or why not?

What advantages do you see in having these small parties?

What disadvantages?

How would you define whether these parties are successful or not?

What chance of this success do you think small parties have in BC?

17. What challenges do small parties like the FCP face?

[OMIT FOR CANDIDATE RESPONDENTS]

Probes: A lot of people say that voting for a small party like the FCP is a “wasted vote” because the Party has no chance of winning. What is your opinion of this?

What can be done to combat this “wasted vote” syndrome?

18. The FCP allows members to belong to more than one BC political party. What do you feel is the reason behind this?

[OMIT FOR CANDIDATE RESPONDENTS]

Probes: Do you think this helps or hurts the electoral prospects of the FCP?

Do you think this helps or hurts the pro-life/family agenda of the FCP?

How?

Would you give more importance to the FCP getting elected or getting out the pro-life/family message?
SECTION 3: Relations to other organizations and movements

19. Could you identify some of the groups or organizations which are affiliated with or supportive of the FCP?

[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]

Probes: Are these relationships local, provincial, national or international?
How would you describe the nature of these relationships?
What kind of support do these organizations provide for the FCP?
Do they support the FCP more or less than you would expect?
What impressions do you think these groups have of the FCP?
Do you see these organizations having the same goals as FCP?

20. Do you feel a positive and active relationship between the FCP and these organizations is important to the goals of the FCP?

Probes: Is it important to the goals of these organizations? How?
Do you think formal political representation is important for the pro-life and pro-family movements to succeed?
If answer is “yes” Can, or does, the FCP provide this kind of representation?
21. I'd now like to get your impressions about the relationships or connections between the pro-life and pro-family movements in BC, Canada and the US.

Probes: Is there a relation between the FCP in BC and Ontario?

Between the FCP and other traditional family parties in Canada or the US?

Between the pro-family and pro-life movements in BC? Canada?

Between the pro-family and pro-life movements in BC and those in the US?

Between the evangelical movement and the pro-life/family movements? In BC? In Canada? In the US?

Between the FCP and the evangelical movement?

22. The Christian Coalition has recently formed in BC. What impact do you think this will have on the FCP’s political fortunes?

23. Could you identify some of the groups or organizations that are antagonistic or opposed to the FCP?

[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]

Probes: What impressions do you think these organizations have of FCP?

Why do you think they oppose the Party?

24. What impression do you think the media has of the FCP?

[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY, CANDIDATE & EXECUTIVE RESPONDENTS]

Probes: Is a good relationship with the media important for the success of the FCP?
SECTION 4: Condition of society today

25. It has been suggested that there is a deep and pervasive “crisis” in our modern way of life. Do you think there is such a crisis?

**Probes:**
- What is this crisis?
- What caused it?
- What impact is this crisis having on families?
- What challenges are families facing because of this crisis?

26. What do you see as the solution to this crisis?

27. A lot has been written on the growth of liberal attitudes in our society. What impact do you think such attitudes have had on society and the family?

**Probes:**
- What impact has the feminist movement had?
- What impact has the growth of gay rights had?
- What impact has advancement in reproductive technology had?
- What impact has the pro-choice movement had?

28. Can you tell me, then, your personal vision of what society should look like and what central values should be upheld?
SECTION 5: Ideological definitions and positions

29. We have used a number of different terms, and I would like to ask you how you use these terms and what they mean to you. For instance, how do you define “family?”

Probes: What does “feminism” mean and represent to you?

What are you referring to when you use the term “reproductive technology”?

What does “pro-choice” mean?

How do you use the terms “homosexuality” and “gay rights”?

What does the term “liberalism” mean to you?

What about the term “pro-life”?

What do you mean when you use the term “pro-family”?

What does the term “social conservative” mean to you?

What about the term “economic conservative”?

30. The FCP is a pro-life and pro-family party. Can you tell me what characteristics relate these two terms?

[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]

Probes: Is there a necessary relation between the two terms?

Can you support one movement without supporting the other?

Do you personally give more priority to one than the other?

32. You said earlier that you felt the FCP was (or was not) a [RELIGION SPECIFIED] based party. Does this help or hinder the Party in pursuing its goals? How?
SECTION 6: Potential for success and the future of the FCP

33. What would the FCP need to accomplish before you would consider the Party a success?

[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]

Probes: Would you consider the Party a success already? Why?

Would you consider the formation of the Party a success in itself?

Would you say that the formation of the FCP has been a goal for the pro-life and pro-family movements?

How are you defining success?

34. In your opinion, what does the FCP need to do in order to achieve these, or other, successes?

Probes: What political and ideological direction does the FCP need to follow?

What kind of things does the Party need to do to succeed?

What kinds of relations does the FCP need to foster to be successful?

35. To achieve this success, do you think the FCP is better off remaining as a political party, or should it become a movement outside of party politics?

Probes: Should it remain as a party and act as a political arm of the pro-life and pro-family movements?

Should the FCP try to form a coalition with a larger political party?

What would be the advantages of such a coalition?

Disadvantages?

What do you think the chances of such a coalition happening is?
36. What do you think will become of the FCP in the next ten years and beyond?  
[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]

Probes: Will it enjoy electoral success?

Will it be absorbed or form a coalition with another provincial party? If so, which party?

Will it dissolve as a political party but remain as a movement?

If the FCP fails as a party, what does that mean for the pro-life and pro-family movements?

Will the pro-life & family movements continue, or will they ultimately fail as well?

37. What do you think the future holds for pro-life and pro-family politics in BC?

Probes: What needs to happen for these movements to succeed?

What challenges do you think will have to be overcome in order for these movements to succeed?

What is the potential for the formation of a coalition between the pro-life and pro-family movements?

What advantages would this have? Disadvantages?

What is the potential for a coalition forming between pro-life and pro-family organizations throughout Canada and the US?

Will the movements grow, stay as they are, or die off?

38. Do you think the potential exists for these organizations to ever form a coalition under the Family Coalition Party?

Probes: Would this be a desirable goal? Why or why not?

SECTION 7: Respondent Background

⇒ see separate interview schedule
SECTION 1(a): Executive involvement and knowledge of the FCP

E.1 What is your current position with the Family Coalition Party?

[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]

Probes: What duties or responsibilities does this position include?

What past positions have you held with the Party?

How long, in total, have you been involved on the Executive?

What reasons did you have for becoming involved with the Executive?

Is there any particular area of expertise you bring to the Party?

E.2 What can you tell me about how the Family Coalition Party originated?

[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]

Probes: What were the issues that brought about the Party’s formation?

Did the party arise from any pre-existing organizations?

Did the idea for the FCP evolve slowly over time, or was it the result of a more spontaneous decision or event?

Can you tell me anything about why the FCP became a political party rather than a social movement organization?
E.3 What do you consider to be the main goals, aims or priorities of the FCP?  
[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]

Probes:  
- Is it electoral success?  
- Is it to act as a pressure group on other political parties?  
- Is it to bring about changes in government policy?  
- Is it to act as a political arm of the pro-life and pro-family movements?  
- Is it something else?  
- Have these goals changed over time?

E.4 What strategies has the Party adopted in its pursuit of these goals?  
[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]

Probes:  
- How does the Party attempt to recruit members?  
- How does the Party generate financial support?  
- How does the Party get volunteer help?  
- Are there any strategies the executive use to combat any opposition they encounter?  
- Are you happy with these strategies, or are there things you would like to see changed?

E.5 The Family Coalition Party is small and has limited resources. In what way, if any, does this limit the ability of the Party to achieve its goals? 

Probes:  
- What can be done to increase these resources?
E.6 What have been the keys to the Family Coalition Party maintaining its momentum?  
**[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]**  
**ASK PROBE**  
Probes: What was your impression of the FCP's performance in the recent election?

E.7 Are there any past or present pressures from outside the Party that are limiting the FCP's effectiveness?  
**[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]**

E.8 Some FCP members have said that the government is trying to eliminate small parties like the FCP with the recent changes to the Elections Act. What is your opinion of this?  
**[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY AND CANDIDATE RESPONDENTS]**  
Probes: [if agree] Why do you think this is?  
How would you describe the government's relation with FCP?

E.9 Are there any internal conflicts or pressures which are limiting the Party in pursuing its goals?  
**[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]**  
Probes: What is being done to overcome these conflicts?  
What will be the impact on the Party if they remain unresolved?  
Are you in agreement with the direction and goals the Party is pursuing?

E.10 How would you describe the media's attitude towards the FCP?  
**[OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS]**  
Probes: How important do you consider the use of the media to be in getting out the FCP's message?  
How actively does the Party try to foster a relationship with the media?  
Which media forms have been the most use to the FCP?  
Has this relationship changed over time?
SECTION 1(b): Perspectives on and involvement with the 1996 provincial election

C.1 What were your reasons for deciding to run as a Family Coalition Party candidate in the recent election?

**Probes:** Do you have any political aspirations?

C.2 Do you feel that having an FCP candidate in the riding and present at public forums such as All-candidates meetings made a difference?

**Probes:** What kind of difference did it make?

Do you think it had an impact on other conservative candidates?

How did it impact them?

What do you see as the importance of having a party like the FCP run in a provincial election?

What impact would an FCP MLA have in Victoria?

C.3 How was your presence received by other candidates and parties?

**Probes:** Did you face any forms of antagonism or resistance?

[if answer is “yes”] What were they and how did you deal with them?

How were you received by the pro-life and pro-family communities?
C.4 How many votes did you receive?

Probes: Did this number meet your expectations? Lower or higher?

Did you get the support from the sources you anticipated or hoped for?

What do you think the reasons were for this (lack of) support?

C.5 Were there any particular strategies you adopted in your campaign?

Probes: What were they?

Do you consider them successful or would you change them?

C.6 A lot of people say that voting for a small party like the FCP is a “wasted vote” because the party has no chance of winning. Do you feel this was a factor in your campaign? How was it a factor?

Probes: What can be done to combat this “wasted vote” syndrome?

C.7 There is also an impression that the FCP is a single issue party. Do you feel this was a factor in your campaign? How was it a factor?

Probes: Do you feel the FCP is a single issue party?

[if answer is “yes”] What is that issue?

[if answer is “no”] Why does this perception exist?

C.8 The FCP allows members to belong to more than one BC political party. Do you think this had an effect on your campaign results? How?

Probes: What do you think the reason is behind this?

Does this help or hinder the party achieve its goals?
C.9 Were there any conflicts or strains within the Party that you feel hurt your campaign?

**Probes:** What were these?
Did you manage to overcome them? How?

C.10 Some FCP members have said that the government is trying to eliminate small parties like the FCP with the recent changes to the Elections Act. What is your opinion of this?

*OMIT FOR ORAL HISTORY RESPONDENTS*

**Probes:** [if agree] Why do you think this is?
Do you feel these changes negatively impacted your campaign? How?
How would you describe the government’s relationship with the FCP?

C.11 As a small party and campaign, you had limited resources. What kind of support did you receive?

**Probes:** Where did your source of financial support come from?
Where did your manpower come from?
How did you use these resources?
How much did you spend on your campaign?

C.12 How would you describe the media’s attitude towards the FCP in the campaign?

**Probes:** What is their attitude towards the FCP in general?
Did you actively try to foster a relation with the media?
How important do you consider the use of the media to be in getting out the FCP’s message?
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: Activists in organizations other than the FCP

⇒ use for people who represent other pro-life and pro-family organizations but are not involved with the FCP.

SECTION 1: Knowledge and impressions of the FCP

1. What is the name of the organization you represent?
   Probes: What is your position with the organization?
           What are your duties or responsibilities?
           How long have you been involved with this organization?

2. What are the primary aims or goals of your organization?

3. How old is the organization?
   Probes: How and why did the organization originate?

4. How large is your membership?
   Probes: How do you recruit new members to the organization?
           How would you describe the type of person who becomes a member?
           Is there a large turnover of members? (if so, why?)
5. How does your organization go about getting various kinds of support, such as funding and volunteers?

   **Probes:** Where does your funding come from?

   How does the organization recruit and organize its volunteers? [in looking for expertise]

   Does the organization have any other sources of support such as donated stationary materials, printing costs, that sort of thing?

6. What kinds of strategies and activities does the organization engage in to achieve its goals?

   **Probes:** Does the organization organize things like demonstrations, letter writing campaigns, public speaking forums?

   Are there activities or strategies that would not be considered appropriate for your organization to engage in?

7. Do you consider these strategies effective, or would you like to see things done differently? How?

8. Have you met any resistance to the activities of your organization, and if so, what have they been?

   **Probes:** What have you done to counter this resistance?

9. What is the organizational structure of your group? [ask earlier if possible]

   **Probes:** Are you a registered non-profit society?

10. How is your organization related to, or does it work with, other like-minded organizations?
Probes: Is there a healthy working relationship with these other organizations?

Why or why not?

11. What kind of relationship does your organization have with the mainstream media?

Probes: What is the media’s impression of your organization?
What is the media’s attitude towards pro-life and pro-family issues?
What is the importance of a healthy relationship with the media to achieving the goals of pro-life and pro-family movements?
How can that relation be fostered?

I’d now like to move on to the Family Coalition Party and your knowledge of it:

12. What can you tell me about the Family Coalition Party of BC?

Probes: What principles do you think the party stands for?
What do you think the primary aims and goals of the party are?
Are you a member of the Party? Why? Why not?

13. Some consider the Family Coalition Party to be a single issue party. Do you agree with this view?

Probes: [if agree] What is that single issue?
[if disagree] Why do you think this perception of the FCP is held by some people?
Do you see the Family Coalition Party as a religious party?

14. Where would you position the Family Coalition Party on the political spectrum compared to other political parties?
Probes: Where would you place the party in terms of social issues?

In terms of economic issues?

How do you see the party differing from parties like Reform or Christian Heritage?

15. The Family Coalition Party is a pro-life and pro-family party. Do you think these two terms are related in any way?

Probes: Is there a necessary relation between the two terms?

Can you support one movement without supporting the other?

Does any one of the major political parties adequately represent these interests?

16. Who do you think would be attracted to the policies of the Family Coalition Party?

17. What does the FCP represent for the pro-life and pro-family movements in the province?

Probes: Is it important that these movements take the form of a political party?

Do you see a connection between the presence of the Family Coalition Party in BC politics and the growth of traditional family value politics in other parts of Canada and the US?

Is it important to the pro-life and pro-family movements to have a party like the FCP in provincial politics? Why?
SECTION 2: Party and movement aspects of the FCP

18. Despite being a political party, the Family Coalition Party has been described by some as a movement. How do you view the FCP?

Probes: How would you define a “political party”? What are its goals?

How would you define a “social movement”? What are its goals?

Do you see a difference between the two terms?

How would you describe that difference?

19. [if they acknowledge a difference] What relationship, if any, do you see between political party politics and social movement politics?

Probes: Would you define a successful social movement campaign as one that has moved into the arena of political party politics?

Do you think a social movement “sells its soul” when it tries to become an electoral party?

Do you think a social movement can make no real headway unless it enters the political arena as a political party or clearly affiliated with an existing political party?

20. The Family Coalition Party has run candidates for election, but it has also engaged in pro-life protests and various campaigns attempting to change legislation. Do you feel a political party should be engaging in things like demonstrations?

Probes: Do you feel a movement should be involved with electoral politics?

Do you think the goals of the Family Coalition Party are better suited to movement or party politics?
21. Do you think this dual identity of the Family Coalition Party, that of a party and a movement, creates any unique problems for the organization?

**Probes:** What are these problems?

Do you think anything can be done to overcome them?

Are there any advantages to this dual identity of social movement and political party?

22. What would you identify as the differences between your organization and the FCP?

**Probes:** How do the two compare in terms of goals?

In terms of strategies?

In terms of potential for success in achieving these goals?

**What similarities would you identify?**

23. A lot of people say that voting for a small party like the FCP is a "wasted vote" because the party has no chance of winning. What is your opinion of this statement?

**Probes:** Do you think this "wasted vote" syndrome hurt the FCP in the recent provincial election?

Do you think being viewed as "single issue" hurt the party?

What do you think the party can do to combat this problem?

24. Do you think it is important to have small parties like the FCP present in BC politics?

**Probes:** Why or why not?

How would you define whether these parties are successful or not?

What chance of success do you think small parties have in BC?
SECTION 3: Relation to other organizations and movements

25. Does your organization have any kind of relationship with the FCP?

   Probes: What is the nature of this relationship?

   Do you see any advantages to having such a relationship?

   [if no relationship] Why does your organization not have any kind of relationship with the Family Coalition Party?

   Do you see any disadvantages to such a relationship?

26. What kinds of organizations would you expect to be supportive of the FCP?

   Probes: Do you know the names of any of these organizations?

   Are these organizations local, provincial, national or international?

   What impressions do these organizations have of the Family Coalition Party?

   Do you know anything about the kinds of relationships these organizations may have with the Family Coalition Party?

27. [if there is no relation or open support] Why don't pro-life and pro-family organizations support the FCP more than they do?

   Probes: Does the organization promote the party to its members?

   Do your members support the party?

   How many of them would you estimate belong to the FCP?

   Why don’t more of your members support the party?
28. In order to understand how widespread the movement is, I'd now like to get your impressions about the relationships or connections between the pro-life and pro-family movements in BC, Canada and the US. For instance, can you tell me anything about the relations between these organizations in BC?

Probes: What are the connections with other organizations in Canada?

Are there any formal connections between these organizations and those in the US?

What, if any, is the relation between the pro-life and pro-family movements in BC and the evangelical movement in BC?

In Canada? In the US?
SECTION 4: Prospects for the future of pro-life pro-family politics & the FCP in BC

29. What do you think the future holds for pro-life and pro-family politics in BC?

Probes: What needs to happen for these movements to succeed?

What is the potential for the formation of a coalition between the pro-life and pro-family movements in BC? Across Canada? With US organizations?

What advantages would this have? Disadvantages?

Are the movements likely to grow, remain as they are, or die off?

30. Is formal political representation, like the Family Coalition Party offers, important for the success of the pro-life and pro-family movements and their issues?

Probes: [if answer is “yes”] Why doesn’t the Family Coalition Party get more support than it does from these communities?

What does the Family Coalition Party need to do to be more successful?

Do you think the pro-life and pro-family movements can engage in meaningful political action without the presence of a political party like the FCP?

31. What do you think will become of the Family Coalition Party in the next ten years and beyond?

Probes: Will it enjoy electoral success?

Will it be absorbed or form a coalition with another provincial party? If so, with which party?

Will it dissolve as a political party but remain as a social movement?

If the FCP fails as a political party, does that foreshadow anything for the pro-life and pro-family movements?

Will they continue, or will they ultimately fail as well?
32. Do you think the potential exists for these organizations and their members to come together as a block and vote for or coalesce around the Family Coalition Party or some other political party?

**Probes:** Would this be a desirable goal? Why or Why not?

**SECTION 5: Personal Background Questions**

⇒ see next page
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: FCP Members - Background Questions

1. FOR GENERAL MEMBERS:
   Have you ever held any formal position with the FCP?
   [if answer is yes] What position(s) & responsibilities?
   [if answer is yes] Why did you leave the position?
   Were you politically active before joining the FCP?

2. FOR EXECUTIVES AND CANDIDATES:
   Were you politically active before joining the FCP?
   Do you have any personal political aspirations?

2. Besides the FCP, are there any other groups or organizations to which you belong?
   Probes: Which of these memberships is the most important to you? Why?
   Are you currently active with any of these groups?
   What is the nature of your involvement?
   Have you left any organizations, and if so, why?

3. Thinking of things such as time, money and other commitments, what factors affect your participation level in the FCP?
   Probes: Given the opportunity, would you become more or less involved?
   What motivates your involvement or continued membership?
   How do you support the Party?

4. What have been the main benefits to you from your membership in the FCP?
   Probes: Have there been any disadvantages or drawbacks?
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: FCP Membership Demographic Questions

1. In what year were you born? __________

2. Where were you born? __________

3. Where were you raised? __________

4. How many years have you lived in British Columbia? __________

5. Are you: ______ married ______ widowed ______ separated
    ______ single ______ divorced

6. Do you have any children? What are their gender and age?

    Gender: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______
    Age: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______

7. How many years of formal schooling did you complete?

    ______ 0-8 years
    ______ 9-11 years (some high school)
    ______ 12 years (high school diploma)
    ______ 13-15 years (some college/university)
    ______ 16 (university graduate)
    ______ 17 or more, but without a post-graduate degree
    ______ 17 or more and master’s degree
    ______ 17 or more and Ph.D.
    ______ other (e.g., vocational training)

8. What is your occupation? [if retired, determine primary occupation]

    ____________________________

    What is your total household income (in a $20,000 range)? ______to_______

9. What is your religious background? ________________

10. What is your ethnic background or heritage? ________________

12. What were the educational, professional and religious backgrounds of you parents?

    | Father | Mother |
    |--------|--------|
    | Education: | Education: |
    | Occupation: | Occupation: |
    | Religion: | Religion: |

13. How would you describe your upbringing?
# Appendix 3 - List of Interview Respondents

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>INVOLVEMENT WITH PARTY OR MOVEMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Toth (FV)*</td>
<td>Founder, secretary, candidate in all elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Toth (FV)</td>
<td>Founder, treasurer, 1996 candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alec Marshall (VI)</td>
<td>First treasurer, founding member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gary Thomas (VI)</td>
<td>Founding member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walter Kazun (LM)</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>John O'Flynn (LM)</td>
<td>President 1991-95, 1991 candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norm Herriott (LM)</td>
<td>Executive member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heather Stilwell (LM)</td>
<td>Party Leader, 1996 candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Stilwell (LM)</td>
<td>Executive member, 1996 candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gerhard Herwig (LM)</td>
<td>Executive member, 1996 candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian Zacharias (K)</td>
<td>Executive member, 1996 candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alan Idler (VI)</td>
<td>Executive member, 1996 candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vicki Podetz (VI)</td>
<td>Executive member, 1996 candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lila Stanford (FV)</td>
<td>Executive member, 1996 candidate</td>
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<td>Jim Hessels (LM)</td>
<td>Deputy Party leader, 1996 candidate</td>
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<td>Ed Van Woudenberg (FV)</td>
<td>Member, 1996 candidate</td>
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<td>Jim Kelly (LM)</td>
<td>Member, 1996 candidate</td>
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<td>John Krell (VI)</td>
<td>Member, 1996 candidate</td>
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<td>Paul Formby (LM)</td>
<td>Member, 1991 candidate</td>
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<td>Frank Wagner (LM)</td>
<td>Executive member</td>
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<td>Joe Holt (LM)</td>
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<td>Martin Dale (LM)</td>
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<td>Cissy Von Dehn (LM)</td>
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<td>Brecht Milton (LM)</td>
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<td>Sally Wong (LM)</td>
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<td>Humphrey Waldock (LM)</td>
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<td>Jessica Choo (LM)</td>
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<td>Shannon Onderwater (LM)</td>
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<td>John Onderwater (LM)</td>
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<td>Susan McDonald (FV)</td>
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<td>Gus Cunningham (SC)</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<td>Joe Jacques (K)</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<td>Louise McGauley (K)</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<td>NAME</td>
<td>INVOLVEMENT WITH PARTY OR MOVEMENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ron Galloway (K)</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<td>Cheryl Howard (VI)</td>
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<td>Brant Fotheringham (VI)</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leslie Idler (VI)</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lavinia Greenwood (VI)</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willie DeGroot (VI)</td>
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<td>Susan Serafini (VI)</td>
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<td>Nina Passerelli (VI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ida Lee Lawlor (VI)</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kari Simpson (LM)</td>
<td>Director, Citizen’s Research Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clyde Vint (LM)</td>
<td>President, Christian Coalition of British Columbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will Johnston (LM)</td>
<td>Co-Director, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurie Geschke (LM)</td>
<td>Past-President, REAL Women (BC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doris Darvasi (LM)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Higgins (LM)</td>
<td>Director, Westcoast Women for Family Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Markwick (LM)</td>
<td>Director, Catholic Civil Rights League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Sclater (LM)</td>
<td>Vice-President, Focus on the Family (Canada)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betty Green (LM)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Ryan (LM)</td>
<td>Director, Respect Life (Vancouver Archdiocese)</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Hof (LM)</td>
<td>President, Campaign Life Canada (BC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hilda Krieg (LM)</td>
<td>President, BC Pro-life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe Labrie (LM)</td>
<td>President, North Shore Pro-life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alan Garneau (LM)</td>
<td>Pro-life Activist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rita Point (LM)</td>
<td>President, Birthright (BC)</td>
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<td>Moira Garneau (LM)</td>
<td>Past-President, Birthright (BC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ann Waldock (LM)</td>
<td>Past-President, Birthright (BC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Van der Zalm (LM)</td>
<td>FCP member and spokesman, former Premier of British Columbia and Leader of the Social Credit Party of British Columbia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates geographic region in which the interview respondent lived at the time of the interview: (FV) = Fraser Valley, (K) = Kootenays, (LM) = Lower Mainland, (SC) = Sunshine Coast, (VI) = Vancouver Island.